

# *U.S. Agriculture Coalition Calls Lifting of U.S. Blockade of Cuba*

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Washington, January 15 (RHC) — The U.S. Agriculture Coalition for Cuba, USACC, founded a year ago and grouping 25 agricultural organizations, recently held a press conference in Washington D.C. to explain the importance of lifting the U.S. blockade of Cuba and reestablishing bilateral trade relations.

An article posted on U.S. media, echoed by The Cuban Handshake webpage explains that coalition members affirmed that “U.S. trade sanctions against Cuba have failed and have harmed not only agricultural and other business opportunities in the island country but the 11 million people of Cuba.”

Devry Boughner Vorwerk, vice president of corporate affairs for Cargill and USACC chairman, said the coalition re-energizes the U.S. agricultural community’s long history of support to change the status quo of U.S.-Cuba policy and offer high-quality, affordable, safe food to the Cuban people, the article reads.

“What we believe is that through greater openness and normalization of relations, that allows not only U.S. agriculture but other U.S. businesses across manufacturing, medical technology, etc., to take advantage of that opportunity in the market and to also help the Cuban people begin to grow their incomes and enhance their standards of living,” she said.

Current restrictions require the Cubans pay for agricultural products before delivery in cash through a third-party bank. The lack of return shipments of Cuban goods increases transportation costs, and damages the competitiveness of U.S. products against those from countries like Brazil and China.

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