

Cuban Agriculture Rises But Still Not Recovered



Havana, August 25 (RHC) — Agricultural production in Cuba grew 17.6% during the first half of 2014 over the same period of 2013, but still has not reached the level of seven years ago, says an analysis published in the *Juventud Rebelde* daily.

The index of agricultural production volume grew by 17.6 percent compared to the same time last year: One million 930,700 tons of tubers and vegetables harvested in the first half of this year - but still did not reach the 1 million and 950,800 tons produced in 2007 — this increase, although good, was not close to the needs of Cuban agriculture.

The analysis assigned this effect to external and internal problems that have affected the Cuban countryside since 2007: the structural crisis of the world economy, the steady increase in the prices of equipment, supplies and fuel; and the lack of access to favorable international credit as part of the intensification of the US blockade.

With regard to the demand for agricultural products, the analysis indicates the demand remains unmet and has also increased exponentially with the emergence of new economic actors in the restaurant industry; tourism growth and the potential for producers to sell directly to these facilities; piloting new forms of marketing; and state policy to reduce crop contracts, among other factors.

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