



“The Demand for Food in Cuba: Current Patterns and Future Trends”

U.S.-Cuba Agriculture Business Conference
September 11-13, 2019
Hotel Nacional, Havana

With U.S. exporters now permitted to use USDA programs to promote exports to Cuba, FocusCuba and the U.S. Agriculture Coalition for Cuba are presenting a conference to help Americans understand all aspects of demand for food in Cuba and to learn how FMD/MAP funds can be most effectively used in Cuba.

The conference will explore:

- **Consumer demand...**we will visit a series of markets to see how Cubans buy food through the state rationing/distribution system (heavily subsidized), in farmers markets (supply and demand pricing), and in state-owned hard currency stores.
- **Emerging local and tourist demand...**how food is supplied to the growing tourism and private restaurant sectors and to national consumers.
- **Cuba’s food imports...**the Alimport food purchasing enterprise, its role, the current structure of Cuba’s imports; and the role of the corporate retail chains.
- **Cuban producers’ response...**how Cuban agriculture is changing, the areas where Cuba has succeeded in boosting production, how these changes will affect the demand for imported food.
- **Food processing industry...**where Cuba sources food for processing...current output and future goals for domestic consumption and tourism.

Who should attend? Cooperators, producers, and exporters who want to understand the Cuban market and how FMD/MAP funds are best used in Cuba consistent with U.S. policy; anyone interested in agriculture and food security in Cuba.

Who will speak? We will have presentations and discussions with Cuban officials and enterprise executives responsible for importing and for agriculture policy; visits to farms and cooperatives; visits to new private restaurants to show this dynamic private sector that now accounts for one third of Cuban jobs; and breakout meetings between our participants and Cuban counterparts in their line of business. We will also learn about the current state of U.S.-Cuba relations by hearing from the Cuban foreign ministry and the U.S. Embassy.

Logistics. Conference sessions will be September 11-13 at Havana's Hotel Nacional, with evening welcome reception September 10. Participants make their own flight arrangements to arrive September 10 and depart September 14; those interested in extended program after the conference should inquire with sponsors.

Legal issues. The conference program complies fully with U.S. travel regulations; our travel fits under the "professional meetings" category for participants that have a professional connection to food and agriculture, whether commercial, academic, or nonprofit.

Additional participants, extended stay. If you are interested in staying extra days, or if participants wish to bring spouses or others who will not join the conference program, please contact us and we will make every effort to accommodate you.

Cost. The conference fee of \$3295 covers four nights accommodations at the Hotel Nacional, all meals, all program costs, and your Cuban business visa that will be sent to you in advance by FedEx. The fee does not cover airfare, taxis to and from the hotel and airport, bar bills at meals, or tips to waiters, porters, guides, and others whose service we receive.

Contact. For additional information please contact Paul Johnson and Phil Peters: info@focus-cuba.com.

Agenda

Tuesday, September 10

6:00 p.m. Welcome reception, Hotel Nacional

7:30 p.m. Depart for dinner, El Aljibe

Wednesday, September 11

Morning Welcome and introductory remarks:
Conference organizers, Ministry of Agriculture, U.S. Department of
Agriculture (invited)

Presentations:

U.S.-Cuba bilateral relations: Foreign Ministry representative

U.S. regulations and their impact on business, travel, and contacts in
agriculture: Philip Peters, FocusCuba

Foreign investment in Cuba's agriculture sector: Ministry of Trade and Foreign Investment, and Ministry of Agriculture

Lunch At hotel, Barraca restaurant

2:00 p.m. Presentations:

What Cuba imports, and how imports are done: Alimport food purchasing enterprise

Cuban agriculture: structure, policies, recent developments: Ministry of Agriculture

Sector breakout meetings with Cuban counterparts

7:00 p.m. Depart for dinner, Café Laurent

Thursday, September 12

9:00 a.m. Depart hotel for food market survey:
Visits to a farmers market (producers' surplus sold at market prices), a state food market (deeply subsidized staples per household rations), and a hard-currency store (imported food)

11:30 a.m. Private restaurant La Moraleja, discussion with owner/chef, followed by lunch

1:00 p.m. Depart for countryside, visit to private farm cooperative(s)

4:00 p.m. Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology
Discussion of vaccines and other Cuban-developed applications relevant to agricultural plant and animal health

7:00 p.m. Dinner, private restaurant Nero di Seppia

Friday, September 13

Morning Presentations:

Supplying the tourism sector: Ministry of Tourism

Cuba's processing industry: Ministry of Food Industries

11:30 a.m. Cooking demonstration, Hotel Nacional, followed by lunch, Salon Aguiar

3:00 p.m. Discussion with U.S. Embassy officials

4:00 p.m. Conference summary and wrap-up session

7:00 p.m. Farewell dinner, private restaurant Toros y Tapas

Saturday, September 14

Depart on our own for airport OR stay for extended program