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John Neagle

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Cuba Launches Program For Rice Self-sufficiency

by John Neagle

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According to the Cuban government's most recent estimates, Cuba produces some 550,000 tons of rice per year, compared to annual consumption of nearly 900,000 tons. With the cooperation of the Soviet Union and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Havana has launched a program for rice self-sufficiency. Components of the program range from acquisition of improved seeds, and constructing dams and sophisticated land terracing systems. Rice production in Cuba prior to the 1959 revolution was practically non-existent. All rice was imported from the US. Cuban officials have estimated that rice consumption by 2000 will surpass 1.14 million tons per year. (Basic data from Prensa Latina, 04/03/89)

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