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Honduras: U.S. Cuts Sugar Import Quota

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Sept. 22, National Association of Sugar Producers manager Rene Cruz confirmed that the US reduced its import quota for Honduras by 30% for the Oct. 1 1990-Sept. 30, 1991 period, to 16,592 metric tons. Cruz said the cutback did not come as a surprise and that the industry had, in fact, anticipated a quota of only 12,500 MT. According to Cruz, Washington has agreed to attempt a change from a quota system to "contingency tariffs." The objective, he said, is to keep sugar imports down, while charging prohibitive tariffs on each quintal (hundredweight or 100 lbs.) above a given nation's quota. Sugar is currently selling for \$22 per quintal (100lbs) on the US market, and at \$10-\$12 in Europe. Sugar producers estimate that this year's crop will yield 4.8 million quintals, 5 million more that were produced last year. (Basic data from ACAN-EFE, 09/22/90)

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