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Deborah Tyroler

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Agricultural Migrant Workers From Central American Neighbors Permitted To Remain In Costa Rica

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Dec. 3, Public Security Minister Luis Fishman told reporters that thousands of undocumented Central Americans including 20,000 Nicaraguans currently in Costa Rica currently working on coffee, banana and sugarcane plantations would be permitted to remain in the country. He said, "I would rather risk having a few undesirables enter the country alongwith the workers, than risk the harvest." Agriculture and Livestock Minister Juan Rafael Lizano said despite the availability of thousands of migrant workers, a labor shortage is expected for the coffee harvest. The ACAN-EFE news service cited unidentified Costa Rican union leaders as saying that reports of labor shortages are fictional, intended to obscure growers' preference for undocumented Central Americans who will work for lower wages. (Basic data from ACAN-EFE, 12/03/91)

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