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On July 28, Agriculture and Livestock Minister Alfredo Saltos told reporters that the government plans to restrict the use of additional land area for banana plantations. He said the move is justified in an attempt to avoid monoculture in certain regions of the country. According to the National Banana Program, in the past year land area dedicated to banana plantations increased from 79,000 to 95,000 ha. A large proportion of the new banana plantations was formerly dedicated to cultivation of coffee and cocoa, among other crops. In the first half of 1991, Ecuador exported 1,381,855 metric tons of bananas for $336 million in revenue. The two figures were 1,101,929 MT, and $236.9 million, respectively for the January-June period last year. (Basic data from AFP, 07/28/91)

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