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Deborah Tyroler

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by Deborah Tyroler
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On Feb. 6, Francisco Aguilar, a cotton grower from Chinandega department, told reporters that 700 cotton growers in Chinandega and Leon departments had opted to indefinitely postpone planting due to high production costs and low world market prices. Up to 50,000 agricultural workers will be affected by the growers' decision, said Aguilar. During the 1977-1978 agricultural cycle, area planted in cotton totaled 217,500 ha., and the crop accounted for 60% of all agricultural export income. Between 1979 and 1990, domestic consumption crop area was increased at the expense of cotton cultivation. In 1983, for example, only 116,000 ha. were dedicated to cotton. Aguilar said that during last crop cycle, area planted in cotton was down to 28,000 ha., a record low since cotton production began in Nicaragua in the 1950s. (Basic data from Agencia Centroamericana de Noticias-Spanish news service EFE, 02/06/92)

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