

China and CELAC to enhance bilateral cooperation in agricultural and fishery

22 July 2024 | News

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China and CELAC have achieved significant results in bilateral agricultural cooperation. The role of the China-CELAC Ministerial Forum on Agriculture has been continuously strengthened, with China establishing bilateral agricultural cooperation mechanisms with 19 CELAC countries. Economic and trade cooperation in agriculture has grown rapidly, while cooperation in areas such as agricultural mechanization, new variety breeding and promotion, and rice production has deepened.

The third China-CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) Ministerial Forum on Agriculture was held in Weifang, Shandong Province, in early July this year. A total of 290 individuals attended the forum, including 24 ministers or vice ministers and 13 ambassadors from 25 countries, and representatives from domestic and international agricultural research institutes, companies, and regional organizations.

Han Jun, Secretary of the CPC Leadership Group of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) said "China-CELAC agro-trade doubled to over \$81 billion from 2014 to 2023. The two sides have achieved great coordination on issues such as food security, green and low-carbon development, and trade facilitation, thus sounding a strong China-CELAC voice."

To further enhance China-CELAC cooperation in agriculture and fishery, Secretary Han put forth **four initiatives**:

- 1) Step up efforts to align strategies and build mechanisms; plan and implement a number of agricultural cooperation projects on food security, green development, and other issues of common concern.
- 2) Boost agro-trade and investment cooperation; strive to double the value of agro-trade over the next decade.
- 3) Strengthen sci-tech exchange and capacity building with a focus on areas such as agricultural mechanization, soil health, green development, and aquaculture.

4) Deepen cooperation in poverty reduction and promote the implementation of the Global Development Initiative, to make a bigger contribution to building a world free of poverty and hunger.

The forum's theme was "Promote Mutually Beneficial Multilateral Cooperation, Achieve Win-Win Green Development". The forum also included thematic meetings on economic and trade cooperation in agriculture and poverty reduction and development. The *China-CELAC Ministerial Consensus on Agricultural Priority Areas* and the *Action Plan on Strengthening China-CELAC Agricultural Cooperation* were released.