U.S.-CUBA AGRICULTURAL TRADE
ECONOMIC POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF A CHANGING TRADE ENVIRONMENT

March 21, 2016
PROGRAM

Welcome and Introduction
CARON GALA
NATIONAL C-FAR REPRESENTATIVE

Distinguished Speakers
BRYCE COOKE
ECONOMIST
USDA ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE

WILLIAM A. MESSINA, JR.
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIST
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA/IFAS

LUIS A. RIBERA
ASSOC. PROF. & EXTENSION ECONOMIST
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Open Forum

Closing
CARON GALA

NATIONAL C-FAR IS a nonprofit, nonpartisan, consensus-based and customer-led coalition that brings food, agriculture, nutrition, conservation and natural resource stakeholders together with the food and agriculture research and extension community, serving as a forum and a unified voice in support of sustaining and increasing public investment at the national level in food and agricultural research, extension, and education. For additional information, go to www.ncfar.org; or contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director, at tom@vanarsdall.com.
ABSTRACT—Cuba’s agricultural sector has significant production potential; however, despite domestic policy adjustments domestic production volumes have not increased significantly. As a result, Cuba is heavily reliant on food imports; and their expenditures on imported ag and food products in 2015 were nearly $2 billion. U.S. ag products have been allowed for export to Cuba since passage of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act (TSRA) in 2000, and U.S. firms have shipped over $5 billion worth of food and ag products to Cuba over that period. However, U.S. policy barriers have limited trade opportunities, and the value of U.S. ag exports to Cuba has been falling steadily since 2012. In 2015, only a little over a year after executive action aimed at normalizing U.S.-Cuba relations, U.S. ag exports to Cuba were at their lowest level since 2002. Presenters will review research on the structure and function of Cuba’s ag sector, U.S and Cuban policy, current issues on the Cuban food system, and U.S.-Cuba trade. Speakers will provide different perspectives on what role U.S. farms, ranches and firms have in supplying Cuba’s food import requirements. The researchers will also summarize infrastructure investments that Cuba is making. Finally, they will offer insights re the short-, medium-, and long- term effects of normalized relations on total and sector-specific ag trade.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Bryce Cooke is an Economist with the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) in the International Demand and Trade Branch. He is responsible for managing U.S. ag trade data releases and is the program coordinator for the quarterly “Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Trade” publication. He also oversees short run U.S. import forecasts for U.S. ag products, and has studied U.S.-Cuba trade relations, as well as other trade and trade policy topics. He received a M.Phil. in Economics from GW University and a B.A. in Economics and Psychology from the U. of Virginia.

William A. Messina, Jr. is an Agricultural Economist with the Food and Resource Economics Department at the University of Florida where he works on ag trade, development, policy and marketing issues. He is Co-Director of the Department’s comprehensive research initiative studying the ag and fisheries sectors in Cuba, which is conducted in collaboration with researchers at the University of Havana. Bill has traveled to Cuba frequently and testified before Congressional committees and the U.S. International Trade Commission, and staff briefings at USDA and State.

Luis A. Ribera, Ph.D., is Assoc. Prof. & Extension Economist for Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension and Texas A&M Transportation Institute. Dr. Ribera also serves as Director of the Center for North American Studies and Director of International Programs. He has BS and MS degrees from the U. of Arkansas and a Ph.D. from TAMU in agricultural economics. Dr. Ribera is working on economic impacts and infrastructure needs on the increased produce trade through Texas ports of entry and impacts of potential increases in ag trade with Cuba.
SEMINAR SERIES DESCRIPTION

National C-FAR’s Seminar Series regularly presents leading-edge researchers to address pressing issues confronting the public and Congress. National C-FAR and the Seminar Series serve as a resource to policymakers and staff.

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