

# Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba

## growing cities – growing food

### Background information:

**Location:** Northern Coast of Cuba

**Climate:**  
mean annual temperature: 25° C  
annual rainfall: 1,400 mm

**Total Population:** 2,2 million

**Population Density:** 3,014 pers/km<sup>2</sup>

**Size of the city:** 721 km<sup>2</sup>

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*In La Habana there are 20 of these units with high returns.*



*Raising rabbits. Part of the animal protein program, which includes poultry, pig, rabbits, sheep and goats.*



*Center for the production of seedlings. With assistance of cooperation projects, five seedling centers have been established and six more are planned.*

### The main urban agricultural systems

- Horticulturists organized in groups.
- Production units for intensive vegetable growing "organoponics"
- On-site farms for self-supply of state institutions and organizations
- Credit and service cooperatives, in which farmers owning private land are organized
- Livestock production units on land given on loan for productive use only
- State farms for the production of vegetables, meat, cereals and fruit
- The "Mi Programa Verde" (my green program) program for urban forestry.
- Network of agricultural advisors, veterinarians and centers for the production of biological agents
- Strong development of organic agriculture.
- Development of cooperation projects between NGOs local and international (basic element in the development of the UA program in La Habana).
- Further improvement of commercialization to reach more and more consumers directly from the production site.
- Systematic training of producers, technicians and extensionists in close cooperation with scientific institutions.



# Technical support services

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In Cuba 80% of the population lives in urban areas, and 20% of the total population live in La Habana. The capital requires the largest possible supply of fresh vegetables, fruits and other agricultural products.

The UA program comprises 26,000 people and an integrated system organized by the municipalities, popular councils, research institutions, extension networks and service networks among others.

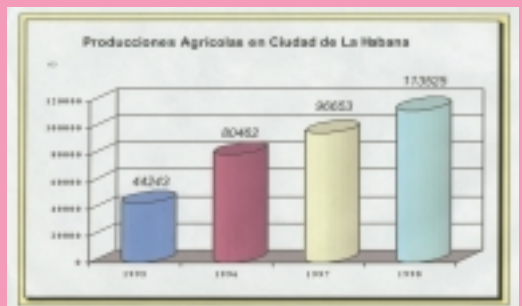
The basic strategy is to develop a sustainable increase of the production by following the concept of "neighborhood production, by the neighborhood and for the neighborhood".

For each element, strong government (national and provincial) support has been decisive as well as a solid educational base that allows rapid progress in technical knowledge and its practical applications.

*Agricultural Services: In La Habana 26 service shops offer consultancies, technical extension services, biologically prepared seeds for sale as well as agricultural inputs.*



*Agricultural Production in La Habana (in tons).*



*Organoponics attended to by elderly from the Santovenia home.*



*Practical application of the concept "neighborhood production, by the neighborhood for the neighborhood": a marketing point distributing vegetables.*

## Lessons Learned with Relevance to Other Cities

- Integration of everybody involved in agriculture.
- Strong government support.
- Provision of land on loan for productive use.
- 68 extensionists working on local community level providing veterinarian, phytosanitary services as well as transferring technology.
- Promotion of individual and collective participation of the population in urban forestry.
- Linking production units with youth groups and schools in order to improve nutrition and promote better eating habits.
- Research at the service of the producer.