

Engage Cuba Kansas State Council

Today, the [Engage Cuba Kansas State Council](#), the Kansas chapter of a D.C.-based national coalition working to lift the Cuban embargo, applauded U.S. Rep. Roger Marshall (R-KS) for cosponsoring legislation that would make it easier for Kansas farmers to sell food to Cuba. Congressman Marshall signed onto the bipartisan *Cuba Agricultural Exports Act* following a recent trade delegation [trip](#) to Cuba.

Currently, Kansas farmers are able to sell agricultural commodities to Cuba, however, they are unable to offer private financing. The [Cuba Agricultural Exports Act](#) would remove these restrictions on offering private credit and make it easier for Kansas farmers to compete in Cuba's \$2 billion agricultural import market.

"Opening up trade with Cuba would strengthen Kansas agribusiness, which is an economic driver and job creator across the state. Kansas is a top U.S. exporter of agriculture goods and the largest wheat producer in the country. Kansas farmers should be allowed to compete in emerging Cuban markets without arbitrary government red tape," **said President of Engage Cuba, James Williams.** "After 55 years of failed policy, it's time for a change that benefits Kansans and the Cuban people. We applaud Rep. Marshall for advocating to make it easier for Kansas farmers to sell to a market only 90 miles away."

"Kansas wheat producers understand that the best way to reverse the downward trend in the Kansas ag economy is to increase trade and expand market opportunities" **said Ken Wood, a farmer from Dickenson County, President of the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers and member of the Engage Cuba Kansas State Council,** "Opening up the Cuban market to Kansas wheat and other agricultural products would provide a much needed export boost at a time when we need to create more demand."

In March 2016, Engage Cuba released a [report](#) highlighting the significant export expansion opportunities for Kansas farmers if the U.S. changed its policy towards Cuba. Cuba imports large quantities of wheat, soybeans, feed grain, and corn, all of which are among Kansas' top agricultural exports. However, restrictions of offering private financing for the export of food to Cuba prevent Kansas farmers from competing in Cuba's market.

Kansas' capacity for trade with Cuba extends well beyond agriculture. The Cuban government has expressed interest in building its renewable energy sector and has set a goal of generating 24 percent of its energy from renewable sources by 2030, including building 13 new wind facilities. The energy sector is Kansas' third-largest industry, and it ranks second in the U.S. for wind energy potential. Kansas is therefore uniquely positioned to be an international leader in export energy infrastructure and renewable technology to Cuba.

On Sept 19, 2016, Engage Cuba [launched](#) the [Engage Cuba Kansas State Council](#) comprised of top Kansas agriculture and business leaders. The council seeks to lift the travel and trade ban in order to allow Kansas farmers to regain lost market share in Cuba and support the Island's growing private sector.

About Engage Cuba

Engage Cuba is the leading coalition of private companies and organizations working to end the travel and trade embargo on Cuba. As a 501(c)(4) bipartisan non-profit whose funds are entirely dedicated to advocacy efforts, Engage Cuba is the only organization whose focus is U.S.-Cuba legislative advocacy. Engage Cuba is also committed to supporting the Cuban people and helping organizations and businesses navigate Cuban and U.S. regulations. The organization has the largest bipartisan lobbying operation working on U.S.-Cuba policy. Together with the Engage Cuba Policy Council of renowned experts, Engage Cuba provides timely updates on opportunities for U.S. business in Cuba, regulations, and market analysis. To get involved with Engage Cuba's mission or learn more, visit: <http://www.engagecuba.org>.