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Press Release

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Media Inquiries, Contact

Sera Deva, Farmer Programs Association
(828)208-0220
farmer-programs@organicgrowersschool.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—Organic Growers School offers a Cuba trip focused on Organic Agriculture in March 2018

Asheville, NC. [Organic Growers School](#) is partnering with [Food First](#) and [Altruvistas](#) to offer “Organic Revolution—A 9-Day Trip to Cuba,” from March 26 to April 3, 2018, with a focus on the country’s intensive sustainable agriculture practices. The tour, to be comprised of community members who are passionate about food and farming, will begin in Havana and travel to destinations such as Pinar del Rio, Artemisa, and Matanzas. The cost of the trip is \$2,900 and will serve, in part, as a fundraiser for Organic Growers School (OGS), a 501c3 non-profit organization.

“Organic Revolution—A 9-Day Trip to Cuba” offers participants on the ground exposure to Cuban agriculture and the food sovereignty movement and will highlight their connection to the global food system. The intention is for participants to acquire the knowledge and strategies to create just, sustainable, local, and healthy food systems in their own communities.

“We’re excited to share this trip with our local Western NC community,” says Jerry Johnson, an OGS Board Member. “It’s a great opportunity to learn about this country-wide commitment to sustainable agriculture that’s been happening for decades. It will broaden and deepen our region’s wisdom and inspiration to thriving food systems.”

Local hosts will provide an overview of Cuban history, culture, politics, agriculture, and ecology. Additionally, the group will meet with specialists who will provide background on the country’s transition into agroecological farming practices and the national policies that prioritize organic farming and the remediation of hunger. With a firm commitment to sustainability and justice, this

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PO Box 17804, Asheville, NC 28816 ■ (828) 214-7833

tour will connect participants to farmers, consumers, activists, NGOs, policymakers and experts working to transform the global food system.

Tour highlights will include the following:

- Discuss agroecology with Fernando Funes, co-author of Food First's book *Sustainable Agriculture & Resistance in Cuba*.
- Visit community permaculture and agricultural education, and food conservation projects.
- Discuss changes in US-Cuba relations and how they might affect the future of tourism and agriculture in Cuba.
- Meet with the National Association for Small Farmers (ANAP) and the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Meet with a variety of small farmers and farmers' cooperatives.

For those less familiar with Cuban agriculture, the country has had a focus on organic production methods since the 1970s. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 ended Cuba's access to agricultural inputs overnight, propelling them into what is now known as the "Special Period"—a crisis of reduced resources and increased hunger. The country embarked on a massive and rapid conversion to agroecology in an attempt to boost food production. The tour will focus on small farmers, sustainable food systems, and national security. The lessons and insights for the development of a secure and sustainable food system worldwide are many.

For the purposes of this trip, OGS is partnering with [Food First](#), a "people's think tank" dedicated to ending the injustices that cause hunger and helping communities to take back control of their food systems. Food First has been offering tours to Cuba for more than 20 years with the organizing assistance of [Altruvistas](#), a socially responsible and philanthropic travel company that has facilitated 20,000 travelers to Cuba.

OGS will be hosting an [Information Session](#) on Cuban Agriculture & Sovereignty with Eric Holt Gimenez, Executive Director of Food First, on January 28th, 2018. "Food First and Altruvistas are the perfect partners for Organic Growers School," says Sera Deva, Tour Coordinator, Farmer Programs Associate, and Conference Coordinator for OGS. "Our various expertise -- from food justice issues to organic and sustainable education -- will provide an inspiring, streamlined, and thought-provoking trip into the intricacies of the Cuban agricultural climate."

Potential tour participants can visit the OGS [FAQ page](#) which answers questions such as, "Why Cuba?," "What are the legal considerations when traveling to Cuba?," "Why Travel with Organic Growers School?," "What does the tuition cover?," and "What can I expect to experience?" Traveler testimonials from previous trips, the full itinerary, as well as a photo gallery can also be found on the website.

For more information on the "Organic Revolution—A 9-Day Trip to Cuba with Organic Growers School," visit www.organicgrowersschool.org/events/travel-to-cuba, call (828) 214-7833, or email farmer-programs@organicgrowersschool.org.

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