

Brazil, Once Top Rubber Exporter, Now Imports 2/3 of the Rubber It Uses

Contributed by Marina Sarruf
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Brazil may once again become a natural rubber exporter. According to the Brazilian Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply, Roberto Rodrigues, the country currently imports two thirds of what is consumed, however, has the capacity to have a competitive production.

"We have a formidable production potential that cannot be wasted," stated the Minister on Friday, August 5, at the Brazilian Rural Society (SRB) headquarters in São Paulo.

Eyeing this potential, the Brazilian government, together with entrepreneurs, inaugurated yesterday at the SRB the Sectorial Chamber for the Rubber Productive Chain, which aims at gathering together all the links in the sector's chain to improve the activity's development in the country.

"The idea is to create mechanisms to recover the internal production and then transform ourselves into exporters," said Rodrigues.

According to him, it is necessary to organize the rubber productive chain to make the final product more competitive and sustainable. The country produces annually 100,000 tons of rubber and consumes 300,000 tons.

According to the Rubber Sectorial Chamber and SRB president, João de Almeida Sampaio, Brazil has about 140,000 hectares of rubber trees for production and may reach 220,000 hectares in the next ten years.

The rubber productive chain generates between 70,000 and 80,000 direct jobs in the plantations and 150,000 in the product's industrial and transformation process.

According to Sampaio, the main producing countries are Thailand, with 2.4 million tons, Indonesia, with 2 million, and India, with 800,000 tons.

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