

Cuba starts rationing food and other products

13th May, 2019



Cuba's government has announced that it is starting the rationing of food and other basic products. Cuba's Commerce Minister, Betsy Diaz Velazquez, said beans, chicken, eggs, rice, soap and other goods would be

rationed. She said Cuba is facing a serious economic crisis. There are many shortages of food and other things in Cuba. Ms Velazquez said this was because the USA has changed how it is trading with Cuba. Velazquez said the U.S. trade embargo means it is very difficult for Cuba to buy a lot of food. However, many economists say there is a bigger reason for the shortages - the cut in fuel aid from Venezuela. The crisis in Venezuela has led to a two-thirds cut in shipments of cheap fuel to Cuba.

Cuba imports about two-thirds of its food from other countries. A lot of this used to come from the USA. Cuba spent about \$2 billion a year on importing food. The US embargo and the crisis in Venezuela means it is difficult for Cuba to import food. The shelves of many stores and supermarkets are empty. Many people have to stand in long lines when shops get a food delivery. The government has started rationing to stop people hoarding food. If people buy too much of one thing and then hoard it, there is less food for others. One store in the capital city Havana limited people to just four packets of powdered milk, four packs of sausages and five packets of peas per person. One shopper said life was "tough".

Sources: bbc.com / voanews.com / reuters.com

Writing

Cuba should grow its own food instead of importing it. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

government / rationing / products / soap / economic crisis / embargo / shortages / imports / countries / crisis / supermarkets / delivery / capital city / sausages / tough

True / False

- a) Cuba's Commerce Minister said beef would be rationed. T / F
- b) Cuba's Commerce Minister blamed the USA for the shortages. T / F
- c) Many economists also blamed the USA for the shortages. T / F
- d) Venezuela has cut cheap fuel shipments to Cuba by half. T / F
- e) Cuba imported about \$2 billion a year importing food. T / F
- f) Shelves in supermarket stores in Cuba are still well stocked. T / F
- g) People in Cuba are hoarding food. T / F
- h) Havana shoppers are limited to four packets of peas each. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. basic | a. paid out |
| 2. rationed | b. difficult |
| 3. crisis | c. ban |
| 4. embargo | d. bare |
| 5. fuel | e. essential |
| 6. spent | f. customer |
| 7. empty | g. gas |
| 8. hoarding | h. limited |
| 9. shopper | i. stockpiling |
| 10. tough | j. emergency |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about Cuba?
- b) What would food rationing be like?
- c) What food could you not live without?
- d) Has your country ever faced an economic crisis?
- e) What would you do if there was a food shortage?
- f) What is a trade embargo?
- g) What do you know about the crisis in Venezuela?
- h) What advice do you have for Cubans?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. the rationing of food and other | a. and other things |
| 2. soap and other goods would | b. of cheap fuel |
| 3. There are many shortages of food | c. hoarding food |
| 4. there is a bigger reason | d. life was "tough" |
| 5. a two-thirds cut in shipments | e. capital city Havana |
| 6. The shelves | f. for the shortages |
| 7. when shops get a food | g. basic products |
| 8. stop people | h. delivery |
| 9. One store in the | i. of many stores |
| 10. One shopper said | j. be rationed |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you know about Cuba-USA relations?
- Where does food in your country come from?
- Should countries grow all their own food?
- Would you ever grow your own food?
- Have you ever waited in line for food?
- When has your life been tough?
- What questions would you like to ask Cuba's president?

Spelling

- other bisca products
- other goods would be adoernti
- the U.S. trade eagorbm
- many isosmoetnc say
- a bigger reason for the rgtshaoe
- a two-thirds cut in shipments of cheap ufel
- the srisc in Venezuela
- The hslesev of many stores
- to stop people orahdnqi food
- One store in the itlcaap city
- four packets of wrdedeop milk
- One shopper said life was outgh

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. h	3. j	4. c	5. g
6. a	7. d	8. i	9. f	10. b

Role Play

Role A – Beans

You think beans are the worst thing to be rationed. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why rationing their things isn't as bad. Also, tell the others which of these is OK to ration (and why): chicken, rice or soap.

Role B – Chicken

You think chicken is the worst thing to be rationed. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why rationing their things isn't as bad. Also, tell the others which of these is OK to ration (and why): beans, rice or soap.

Role C – Rice

You think rice is the worst thing to be rationed. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why rationing their things isn't as bad. Also, tell the others which of these is OK to ration (and why): chicken, beans or soap.

Role D – Soap

You think soap is the worst thing to be rationed. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why rationing their things isn't as bad. Also, tell the others which of these is OK to ration (and why): chicken, rice or beans.

Speaking – Rationed

Rank these with your partner. Put the worst products to be rationed at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- powdered milk
- sausages
- peas
- rice
- beans
- chicken
- eggs
- soap

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.