

International Column

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Agribusiness development

Officials at Florida International University and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture signed a cooperative agreement to help small and medium-size Latin American agribusinesses compete at the international level. The cooperation will combine the university's resources with the institute's knowledge of agriculture. The institute was founded in 1942 by the Pan-American Union, the predecessor of the Organization of American States.

"This is all about helping small farmers develop agribusiness plans," said Jerry Haar, an FIU professor of management and international business.

Among issues to be addressed in this program will be bioterrorism safeguards that touch each stop up and down the chain of production and delivery; food safety concerns; professionalizing the food associations in the region and obtaining lending, Haar said. The program will not just be aimed at helping private companies export to the United States, but also at preparing them to sell products all over Latin America.