Book "Empresarios del Caribe Colombiano: Historia Económica y Empresarial del Magdalena Grande y del Bajo Magdalena, 1870-1930"

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AUTHORS AND/OR EDITORS Viloria-De la Hoz, Joaquín Publication Date: Thursday, 11 of December 2025 In March 1891, a businessman from Santa Marta sent 1,500 bunches of bananas to New York, the first export of this product from Colombian territory. Lack of knowledge of proper transportation caused much of the fruit to be damaged before it reached its destination. Still, with this action, a local businessman became a pioneer in cultivating and exporting bananas in Colombia. This commercial failure caused him to lose 20,000 gold pesos, for which he was forced to sell some farms to English and American companies who had experience in cultivating and exporting bananas from Central America and the Insular Caribbean. This initiative was followed by several local and foreign businessmen, who turned the banana activity into the economic base of the department of Magdalena during the first half of the 20th century.

At the time of the first banana export, the Santa Marta railroad had been under construction for nearly a decade, and its length did not exceed 60 kilometers. The railroad project began to gain strength in the 1870s, a period characterized by the commercial decline of Santa Marta, in contrast to the boom in Barranquilla, where customs collection exceeded those of Santa Marta for the first time during the 1872-1873 period. In the final decades of the 19th century, traders, farmers, and cattlemen in Magdalena sought to reactivate their businesses by different means. However, they faced various problems, such as armed confrontations, migration of part of their elite to Barranquilla and other cities, and agroecological limitations.

This book will study the economy and business activities of the *Magdalena Grande and Bajo Magdalena*. The first subregion is located in the northeastern part of the Colombian Caribbean, formed by the current departments of Cesar, La Guajira, and Magdalena. The subregion is located on the right bank of the Magdalena River, bordered by the same river, the Caribbean Sea, the Venezuelan border (Mountains of Perijá or Oca mountains), and the last foothills of the Andes Mountains, under the jurisdiction of the department of Santander (the latter was divided into two territorial entities: Santander and Norte de Santander) (Maps 1 and 2) ...

Fuente: https://www.banrep.gov.co/en/publications-research/books/entrepreneurs-colombian-caribbean-economic-business-history