The increasing generation of municipal solid waste (MSW), mainly in the big cities, constitutes a reason of concern because of the serious health and environmental problems that carries their inefficient management. The City of Havana, the political, administrative and cultural centre of the country, also is the centre of many of the economic activities of the nation: industrial, services, scientific and tourism. Everything contributes to a higher generation of MSW in connection with other Cuban cities. The non-existence of appropriate and efficient solutions for the final disposal and treatment, as well as the inadequate handling of the same, increases the risk and possible contamination related to this problem. The main difficulty in the development of a system of integral management of the MSW lies in the lack of knowledge of the chemical composition of the wastes that are generated in the country and, especially, in the City of Havana, a fundamental basis for any decision making. In this study the results of the characterization of the organic fraction of the municipal solid waste (OFMSW) of the City of Havana carried out in 2004, for evaluating the potential of their valorization, are exposed. For the physical chemical characterization (20 indicators) of the OFMSW, samples from agromarkets and houses of this city were selected, obtaining results of indicators that, for the first time, are obtained in the country, in that kind of wastes and contributing with concrete data of the potentiality of these wastes for biogas production.

Mots clés
Municipal solid waste, organic fraction, characterization, biogas, environment.