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Egypt Wants to Inspect Grains at Russian Ports

By The Moscow Times

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The state-run wheat buyer in Egypt, the world's biggest importer of the grain, wants to inspect Russian cereals slated for export at ports in the Eastern European country, Russia's Grain Union said.

A delegation from Egypt's General Authority for Supply Commodities met with officials from the union and the Agriculture Ministry in Moscow on Tuesday, said Alexander Korbut, the industry group's vice president. On Wednesday they are to travel to Rostov-on-Don and the Black Sea port of Novorossiisk, he said.

The delegates will discuss technical organization of pre-loading inspections in Novorossiisk this week, Korbut said. Russian wheat failed to meet Egyptian quality standards on some occasions, he said.

"We, at least, have not heard from them that GASC does not want to buy Russian wheat,"

Korbut said.

The presence of ragweed in exported Russian wheat was a particular issue regarding Egyptian standards, according to Korbut.

"They said they are ready to admit all participants to tenders, but request them to stick to quality and safety standards established by Egypt," Korbut said.

The delegates expressed a preference to resolve disputes with representatives of grain industry groups rather than individual traders, according to Korbut. The union agreed to exchange information on the grain market with the authority, he said.

Egypt has bought 360,000 tons of Russian wheat in two tenders this month.

The authority purchases between 5 million and 6 million tons of wheat a year on behalf of Egypt's government via international tenders because local production is too low to meet demand. Egypt, which has a population of about 80 million people, uses the imported wheat to make subsidized bread.

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