

North Koreans Want to Farm Amur

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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VLADIVOSTOK — A delegation from the North Korean Agriculture Ministry making a working trip to the Amur region has expressed its desire to rent hundreds of thousands of hectares in the Far East to grow food for North Koreans.

"The visit is related to the latest Russian tour by North Korean leader Kim Jong Il. It is a question of an agricultural project unprecedented for North Korea. They wish to rent several hundreds of thousands of hectares of land in the Russian Far East to grow grain and vegetables," the Amur regional government said late last week.

North Korea has a shortage of cropland.

The Amur region alone has about 200,000 hectares of unused land. "A third of these lands are owned by the region, a third by municipalities and a third by individuals," the government said.

"It is important to us that the land is used. We are also interested in investments in

agricultural machines and equipment. Another important condition is the mandatory registration of the new Korean company in the Amur region, which will bring taxes to the regional budget," said Igor Gorevoi, the Amur region's foreign economic relations minister.

"The land may be rented at an auction. That is the only legal mechanism for all farmers, both domestic and foreign. The final price of the Amur land will depend on the auction," he said.

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