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Machinery Blamed for Losses

By The Moscow Times

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Russia foregoes 15 million to 20 million metric tons of grain it could harvest annually because of equipment deficiencies, according to agricultural sciences institute Rosselkhozakademia.

The losses, together with 1 million tons of meat and 7 million tons of milk, are attributable to "simplified, extensive technologies and an extremely low level of modern equipment in agricultural production," Ivan Gorbachev, an academic in the institute's agricultural equipment department, said Thursday at a conference in Moscow.

Russia needs 280,000 new tractors and 90,000 combine harvesters to gather all the grain it has the potential to produce, according to Gorbachev's presentation.

"We need vehicles or will develop agriculture with shovels," he said.

Russia's grain crop may reach 90 million to 92 million tons in the year through June, with consumption at 72 million tons, Viktor Zubkov, first deputy prime minister, said Tuesday.

(Bloomberg)

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