

U.S. Futures Up on Russian Grain Fears

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Tightness in Russian grain supplies has led to talk that the government may impose export restrictions with quotas, tariffs or even an outright ban. **Denis Grishkin**

CHICAGO — U.S. wheat futures rose nearly 2 percent on Thursday amid concerns about tightening stocks in Russia, one of the world's biggest wheat exporters, due to drought.

New-crop soybean futures set back from a 2.3 percent rise on Wednesday as more rains crossed the U.S. Midwest crop belt while corn prices were nearly unchanged.

Wheat futures advanced on news from Russia's SovEcon consultancy that Russian grain stocks at farms stood at 15.73 million tons as of Aug. 1, their lowest level since 2006. Wheat stocks fell to their lowest level since 2003 at 10.61 million tons.

Russian grain stocks were down 18 percent year on year while wheat stocks were down 30 percent after the sales volume increased by 60 percent.

The data renewed worries that Russia would take steps to curb grain exports. The stocks

figures followed two purchases in the past week by Egypt that traders said showed the determination of the world's largest wheat importer to secure competitively priced Russian grain before a small export surplus runs out.

"It's the same idea that it is going to lead to some kind of restriction at some point on the exports," said Dan Cekander, analyst with Newedge USA in Chicago.

"We broke out to the bottom the day before yesterday, and just getting back to the trading range probably stimulated some short-covering," Cekander said.

Also supportive was dry weather in western Australia, the country's main producing and exporting region, that could hurt the developing wheat crop there.

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