

Rosselkhozbank Seeks to Opt Out of Privatization Program

By [The Moscow Times](#)

April 07, 2013

The  Moscow Times

The head of the state-owned Rosselkhozbank, Dmitry Patrushev, has asked President Vladimir Putin to exclude the bank from the privatization program because it would deprive the agricultural sector of financial support, a news report said Monday.

Patrushev said in a letter to Putin that the sector could lose 150 billion rubles (\$4.75 billion) annually if the bank is privatized, which could jeopardize the state agricultural development program for 2013-2020 and threaten Russia's food security, a source familiar with the letter told Interfax.

Patrushev has also asked Putin to consider transforming the bank into a state corporation, a privileged type of state companies.

On April 2, Putin ordered Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, Finance Minister Anton Siluanov, and his aide Elvira Nabiullina to consider the proposal.

Russian Agricultural Bank, or Rosselkhozbank, is used as a tool for the development of the agriculture sector and is the biggest creditor in the industry.

In 2011 and 2012, government injected 40 billion rubles annually in Rosselkhozbank, which has many overdue loans. But Finance Minister Anton Siluanov has said that it should be financed by private investors in the future.

Under the Kremlin's current privatization program, the bank is due to be fully privatized by the end of 2016.

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