

Most Mexican Beef Escapes Russia Ban

By [The Moscow Times](#)

April 11, 2013

The  Moscow Times

MEXICO CITY — The lion's share of Mexico's beef exports to Russia will not be blocked by a Russian ban on meat imports it fears may contain traces of the feed additive ractopamine, according to an official advisory received by the Mexicans.

Russia had warned it would only import beef from five of the 25 processing plants from which it had previously bought, and from two of the four horse meat plants, said Enrique Sanchez, the head of Mexico's agricultural safety agency Senasica.

However those five beef plants account for about 80 percent of Mexico's beef exports to Russia, Sanchez said.

Officials from both countries will now meet next week to try to defuse the spat, he added.

"This morning they sent us a report with their observations, and of course we don't agree," Sanchez said Wednesday, adding that the Mexican beef industry does not use the additive.

Last week Russia announced plans to ban meat imports from most Canadian and Mexican suppliers as it seeks to outlaw meat reared on ractopamine.

The growth stimulant is used to make meat leaner, but is banned in some countries on concerns that residues could remain in the meat and cause health problems, despite scientific evidence indicating that it is safe.

Mexico, which according to official data sent 25 tons of beef and 7.7 tons of horse meat to Russia in 2012, makes up 5 percent of Russia's meat imports.

In total, Mexican meat exports to Russia were worth \$251 million last year, according to official data.

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