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Red Tape Snatches Yogurt From the Mouths of U.S. Winter Olympians

By The Moscow Times

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A paperwork oversight means that huge amounts of Chobani Greek yogurt have not been delivered to the U.S. Winter Olympic team.

More than 5,000 tubs of Greek yogurt were once destined for Winter Olympic greatness and digestion in the stomachs of potential gold medal winning U.S. athletes in Sochi. Now, they are stuck in New Jersey.

The Chobani Greek yogurt company says that planned shipments to U.S. team are being held in cold storage at Newark International Airport after Russian authorities said the dairy products could not go to the Olympics because the correct paperwork had not been completed.

U.S. officials have lobbied the Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Inspection Service to get special dispensation for the high protein product. However, Yevgeny Khorishko, a spokesman for the Russian Embassy in Washington, said there would be no rule bending, telling The New York Times that Russia was "a lawful country" and that Americans should "follow the rules."

The Greek yogurt, sometimes called strained yogurt, may be an appropriate symbol for current U.S.-Russian relations, which have become increasingly tense over the past year. In August, Russia granted asylum to U.S. intelligence leaker Edward Snowden, wanted in the U.S. on espionage charges, and also led opposition to potential U.S.-led intervention in Syria.

Chobani, based in upstate New York, has received particularly attentive and vocal support from state lawmakers like U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer, who reportedly enjoys the breakfast food with raisins.

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