

Crimea Rice Crop Fails Over Water War With Ukraine

By [The Moscow Times](#)

May 06, 2014

The  Moscow Times

Water shortages in Crimea have practically destroyed this year's rice harvest, the agriculture minister said.

Shortages of fresh water in Crimea have destroyed rice crops and led to disappointing soybean and corn harvests, the Black Sea peninsula's agriculture minister said.

"The rice harvest can no longer be saved, even if we start pumping water now," Crimea's Agriculture Minister Nikolai Polyushkin said, RIA Novosti reported. "We can forget about rice this year."

He added, however, that the loss of rice crops was "not critical" for Crimea, which was expected to make up for shortages by importing supplies from the nearby Krasnodar region.

Crimea's annual rice harvest is about 85,000 to 120,000 tons, while Krasnodar produces about 1 million tons of rice, Polyushkin was quoted as saying.

Russian Agriculture Minister Nikolai Fyodorov said last month that Ukraine's near closure of the North Crimea Canal would devastate Crimea's agriculture, and cause substantial losses to Crimean farmers, though Russia would compensate them for a portion of those costs.

Ukraine cut the flow of water to Crimea last month to the lowest technically feasible volume, citing outstanding debt on water supplies owed by the peninsula, which Russia annexed this spring.

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