

# Bans on Moldovan Imports Strike Canned Fruit and Vegetables

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia has suspended imports of canned fruit and vegetables from Moldova, the latest in a series of limitations on imports from the Western-leaning country.

The suspension, which went into force on Friday, follows Moldova's ratification of an association agreement with the EU earlier this month, a step that Russian officials warned would be met with "protective [trade] measures."

The suspension specifically targets four Moldovan companies — Sorvest-Agro, Alfa-Nistru, Natur Bravo and Coval&Co. — all of which failed to label the net weight of their products properly, Russia's Federal Consumer Protection Service said Monday in an online statement.

Another Russian agency, the Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Inspection Service, last

week announced that Moldovan fruit imports would be temporarily suspended as of Monday due to "systematic violations of international and Russian phytosanitary requirements." Imports of all plant products from Moldova in personal baggage were also restricted.

In an earlier move citing phytosanitary violations, Russia blocked wine imports from Moldova in November, widely seen as an attempt to dissuade Chisinau from signing an association agreement with the EU. Moldova signed the agreement, nonetheless.

Russian politicians have said that a free-trade zone with the EU, one of the measures included in the agreement, would threaten the Russian market with an overflow of Moldovan imports and even an influx of cheap, re-exported European goods.

Economists, however, have said that the free-trade zone poses no significant economic threat to Russia.

Following the ratification, First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov said that Russia could potentially levy a customs duty on Moldovan imports, which are currently shipped to Russia customs-free thanks to a free-trade zone with Russia and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

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According to some analysts, such a move would ultimately require the support of Belarus and Kazakhstan, the other two members of the Russia-led Customs Union and which so far appear uninterested in supporting the measure.

Sanitary and veterinary rules are not legislated on an international level, however, meaning that Russia can continue to informally ban Moldovan imports while citing health code violations.

**See also:**

[Russia Bans Fruit Imports From Moldova](https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/07/21/bans-on-moldovan-imports-strike-canned-fruit-and-vegetables-a37520)

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