

# Russia Steadily Expands Restrictions on Ukrainian Food Imports

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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As tensions between Kiev and Moscow continue to flare over the unrelenting conflict in Ukraine's restive east, Russia's food safety watchdog on Thursday moved to clamp down further on the flow of Ukrainian exports to Russia.

The state watchdog has decided to restrict imports of plant products from Ukraine in handbags, backpacks, luggage and even by mail beginning on July 28, Alexei Alexeyenko, an assistant to the head of the Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Inspection Service told RIA Novosti on Thursday.

This is just the latest in a series of import bans that Russia has imposed on Ukraine leading up to and following the former ally's signing of an association agreement with the European Union on June 27, and it is unlikely to be the last.

Alexeyenko told RIA Novosti on Wednesday that Russia may completely halt food imports from Ukraine for as long as the country's negotiations on integration with the EU continue.

Meanwhile, Anna Popova, head of the Federal Consumer Protection Service, said Wednesday that Russia would "most likely" expand its list of banned Ukrainian imports after detecting hygiene violations in a variety of Ukrainian products such as juices, beer, fish and dairy products.

Russian politicians have claimed that the association agreements Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia signed with the EU, which stipulate the creation of free-trade zones with the 28-state bloc, would pose a threat to Russia's domestic economy.

Moldova, the first of the former Soviet republics to ratify the ban, was struck with bans on fruit and preserves imports earlier this week.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev on Wednesday reiterated earlier statements that Russia would take protective measures to shield itself against a hypothetical flood of cheap EU goods via Moldova and Ukraine.

"We consider the risks to be quite serious, especially in regard to technical regulations, standards, sanitary and phytosanitary measures," Medvedev said, Prime news agency reported.

Should a complete import ban follow, its effects would sting. About 24 percent of Ukraine's exports, or \$15 billion in products, go to Russia each year.

**See also:**

[Russia Could Widen Ban on Ukraine Food Imports](https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/07/24/russia-steadily-expands-restrictions-on-ukrainian-food-imports-a37649)

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