

# Russia Bans Imports of Romanian Beef as Sanction War Escalates

By [The Moscow Times](#)

August 06, 2014



Russia halted imports of beef and cattle from Romania.

Russia's food sanitation watchdog on Wednesday halted imports of beef and cattle from Romania as the sanction war with the West over the crisis in Ukraine continued to escalate.

The Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Inspection Service said in a statement that the ban is due to "an outbreak of spongiform encephalopathy [mad cow disease] in Romania's Cluj county."

The ban will block imports of live Romanian cattle and corollary products, such as bone-in meat, dried blood, and meat and bone meal, as well as meat-based processed proteins used in animal feed.

The ban comes on the heels of the European Union's toughest sanctions yet against Russia

over its alleged backing of separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine, which has already seen Russia cut off some imports from the EU.

Russia last week banned most fruit and vegetables imports from Poland, dealing a blow to the Polish economy and raising the price of some products on the domestic market. A spokesman for the food sanitation service said because of poor sanitary controls Russia is considering restricting some or all fruits from the EU, of which Russia imports more than 2 billion euros (\$2.7 billion) worth a year.

Ukraine and Moldova have also been subject to a series of bans leading up to and following their signing of association agreements with the European Union.

The import restrictions are not without consequences for Russia. The Russian Central Bank on Tuesday warned that the ban on importing cheap products from abroad could make it harder to control inflation.

"We are particularly concerned that the slowdown in inflation was lower than expected in July," Interfax quoted the regulator as saying. Inflationary pressures usually ease in the summer thanks to the arrival of cheap fruit and vegetables.

The annual inflation rate fell to 7.5 percent in July, but it remains well above the 6.5 percent increase seen in 2013.

*Material from Reuters was included in this report.*

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