

Russia Turns to Latin America to Up Food Imports

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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SANTIAGO — Russia's government met with various Latin American embassies this week to discuss the possibility of looking for more food providers in the wake of its ban on many Western products, the head of Chile's trade body said Thursday.

Russia has banned all imports of U.S. food products and certain goods from the European Union, Australia, Canada and Norway after President Vladimir Putin ordered retaliation for sanctions against Moscow over the Ukraine crisis.

"What we had was a meeting yesterday [Wednesday] between the Russian government and various Latin American embassies, where of course Chile was invited," Andres Rebolledo, the head of the Chilean government's Direcon trade body, said in an interview.

"They said there were looking for the possibility of more food providers," Rebolledo added.

He did not specify which embassies were at the meeting.

Russia's ban presents an opportunity for meat and grain exports from agricultural powerhouse Brazil and a smaller one for its Latin American neighbors.

"One of the things they told our embassy is that they would give us a list of products that they saw as more of a priority. ... The Russian government said it would hand us [the list] in the coming days," said Rebolledo.

Chile, a possible alternative for European fruit, exported \$643 million of goods to Russia in 2013, mainly processed foods, salmon and fruit, according to Direcon data. However, seasonal variations — the southern hemisphere is in mid-winter — may make full replacement of Western products challenging, fruit exporters said.

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[Russia's Food Ban Against EU, U.S. Provides Huge Opportunity for Brazil](#)

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