

After Russia's Ban, Belarus Ramps Up Apple Imports From Moldova

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Apple exports are 24 times what they were a year earlier, while plum exports are six times higher, according to the EU mission for Border Assistance to Moldova and Ukraine.

Moldova, which lost its largest market for apples when Russia placed an embargo on its fruit this summer, is finding a new buyer for its produce in Belarus.

On Wednesday, Belarussian President Alexander Lukashenko headed a trade delegation to Moldova, where agreements worth \$50 million were signed, he said.

Russia placed an embargo on Moldova in July to punish it for signing a trade agreement with the European Union.

Since then, fruit exports to Belarus, which is in a customs union with Russia and Kazakhstan, have jumped. Apple exports are 24 times what they were a year earlier, while plum exports are six times higher, according to the EU mission for Border Assistance to Moldova and Ukraine.

Viorel Chivriga, an independent analyst, said the surplus fruit is likely being re-exported to Russia.

Lukashenko said Moldova and Belarus had trade worth \$360 million (euros 273 million) in the last year, adding that Belarus was not opposed to Moldova's move toward the EU.

Moldovan President Nicolae Timofte said there were plans to cooperate in agriculture, energy and transportation projects.

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