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Customs Stop 'Gourmet' From Smuggling 350 Kilograms of Banned Western Food Into Russia

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A vendor sells meat at the city market in St.Petersburg.

A man from St. Petersburg who tried to bring banned Western food products into Russia, ostensibly for personal use, has been found out after inspectors discovered more than 360 kilograms of contraband foodstuffs in his minivan.

According to a statement on the regional food safety watchdog's website, inspectors from St. Petersburg discovered 272 kilograms of fish, 8 kilograms of cheese and 95 kilograms of various vegetable-based items — including artichokes, asparagus, mushrooms, watercress, radishes and onions — in the man's van, which he had driven from Estonia.

After the West imposed sanctions against Moscow for its role in the Ukraine crisis, Russia introduced a sweeping food ban on products from the EU, the U.S., Canada, Norway and Australia.

French cheeses, Norwegian salmon and Italian prosciutto ham have all been taken off the menu following the ban, which applies to meat, dairy, fruit and vegetables, though individuals are still allowed to bring in banned products for personal consumption.

Sadly for the alleged food lover in question, the customs officials ruled the man could not possibly have acquired such large volumes of products for personal use and decided to send it all back to Estonia.

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