The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Ukrainian Rebel Republic Starts Removing Land Mines From Farmland

By The Moscow Times

March 09, 2015



Local residents walk with their cow on the road as military vehicle past near by near Artemivsk, eastern Ukraine.

A Ukrainian separatist breakaway republic has begun work to remove land mines from over 250 hectares of farmland ahead of the spring sowing season, a local news agency reported Sunday.

The Russia-backed Donetsk People's Republic (DNR), which last year formed its own independent government structures, is littered with mines and explosive materials after months of fighting with the Ukrainian army that cooled only recently after a peace deal was signed in Minsk last month.

DNR Acting First Deputy Agriculture and Food Minister Dmitry Konakov told the Donetsk News Agency that "De-mining efforts will not cease for a single day."

“With the assistance of Defense Ministry specialists, 250 hectares of agricultural land will be freed from explosive materials,” he added.

The spring sowing campaign will take “five working days” and involve over 2,000 tractors, 852 sowing machines, 880 cultivators and a variety of related equipment, the agency quoted Konakov as saying.

Acting Agriculture and Food Minister Maxim Savenko earlier said the region was facing fertilizer shortages as a local plant had stopped work amid the fighting, which began last summer. The only source for the region's fertilizer needs is Russia, Savenko said, the Donetsk News Agency reported.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/03/09/ukrainian-rebel-republic-starts-removing-land-mines-from-farmland-a44571