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Ukrainian Goods to See Mass Checks

By The Moscow Times

April 05, 2015

Russia's consumer protection watchdog has ordered its regional offices to seek out and inspect 15 categories of Ukrainian goods in the apparent next stage of an ongoing trade war between the two countries, news agency RBC reported Friday.

A spokesman for the Federal Consumer Protection Service confirmed to RBC that the watchdog had sent a letter to this effect. Unidentified sources in two national retailers told the news agency that they had also received the letter.

The letter, which was sent on March 3 and signed by the watchdog's deputy head Irina Bragina, ordered local health inspectors to "urgently organize measures to detect the Ukrainian-produced products designated ... and to carry out inspections," RBC reported, citing a copy of the document.

According to the report, the order lists 15 types of goods produced in Ukraine, including cosmetics, perfume, feminine hygiene products, soap, cleaning agents, wallpaper, furniture and bedclothes.

Last year Ukraine exported more than $205 million worth of wallpaper and paper wall coverings, $122 million of feminine hygiene products and children's diapers, and $51 million of cleaning products, RBC said, citing data from Russia's Federal Customs Service.

Russia and Ukraine have launched a full-blown trade war since political relations collapsed last year following Russia's annexation of Crimea and backing of separatists in eastern Ukraine.

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