

Foreign Ice Cream Ban Mulled By Russian Agriculture Ministry

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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"Imported ice cream is only 2 percent [of the Russian market]," said Agriculture Minister Alexander Tkachyov.

Russia's Agriculture Minister said Saturday that Moscow had considered banning imports of ice cream from the European Union and some other countries in retaliation to Western sanctions, following calls to add a number of items to a Russian food import embargo.

"There was a proposal to ban ice cream. We began to consider it. [But] imported ice cream is only 2 percent [of the Russian market]. And that was it — nobody had any more questions," Agriculture Minister Alexander Tkachyov said to news channel Vesti on Saturday.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev on Thursday extended by a year a ban on imports of meat, chicken, fish, milk products, fruits and vegetables from countries that have sanctioned Moscow for its support of rebels in east Ukraine. The extension followed the EU's decision to prolong its sanctions on Moscow by six months last week.

Medvedev said the list of banned goods could be changed depending on Russia's relations with the EU and other countries sanctioning Moscow — prompting a rush of proposals from officials and producers to ban products including wine, chocolate, tinned fish and flowers.

Tkachyov on Saturday poured cold water on the suggestions, saying that since Russia imported large quantities of these goods the bans would lead to smuggling and huge price rises.

"Who needs that?" he asked.

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