

Russian Court Bans Anarchist Farmer's Self-Made Currency

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A Moscow regional court ruled on Wednesday that Mikhail Shlyapnikov, a farmer who made a name for himself by effectively introducing anarchist self-rule to his village, cannot print or use his own currency.

The decision was posted online in the court's records. Shlyapnikov told news site Gazeta.ru that he plans to appeal the ruling.

Fed up with his struggling farm village's capacity to stay afloat amid the economic crisis, Shlyapnikov introduced *kolions* — exchange notes used by villagers instead of cash — last year.

The *kolion*, the name of which is derived from the name of the village Kolionovo, was pegged to the potato. One *kolion* equalled 10 kilograms of potatoes and could be exchanged for labor or other food.

Shlyapnikov, a former Moscow businessman who took up farming 10 years ago, denied that *kolions* could be called “money,” describing them instead as loan receipts. In an interview

with The Moscow Times in June, he explained that local authorities are simply envious of the media attention he got and want revenge.

Together with other villagers, Shlyapnikov established a self-sustainable community in Kolionovo, devoid of any government rule. When government bureaucrats would attempt to enter the village, Shlyapnikov demanded they produce various documents, including the results of tuberculosis tests, in order to be allowed in.

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