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Truck Driver Salvages Banned Tomatoes From Destruction on Russian Border

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A truck driver sped back to Belarus when he found out that the cargo of tomatoes he was carrying would be destroyed in Russia as they lacked proper labeling, the Rosbalt news agency reported Thursday.

The incident happened on Wednesday night, the report said. When the cargo was examined, customs officers concluded that its labels had been torn off and it had not been properly marked. The driver was told that the tomatoes would be destroyed in accordance with a decree that President Vladimir Putin signed last week on contraband imported food. The driver immediately drove his truck back to Belarus, saving the tomatoes.

A food-destroying frenzy spread across Russia this week as authorities in different regions embraced Putin's decree with enthusiasm, rushing to burn, steamroll or bury hundreds of tons of cheese, meat and agricultural produce.

In many of the cases, no proof was found that the destroyed products fell under the Western food import ban: Officials appear to be equally eager to destroy products with improper labeling and incomplete documentation.

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