

Kremlin Wary of Ruining New Year Holidays With Turkish Food Ban

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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An unidentified high-ranking official told Vedomosti that sanctions on food imports could be minimized to avoid impacting celebrations of New Year, Russia's biggest holiday.

Sanctions on food imports from Turkey may be watered down to avoid hitting Russians' menus during the New Year holidays, the Vedomosti newspaper reported Monday.

Officials in Moscow are finalizing a package of economic measures against Turkey after it shot down a Russian warplane over the Turkish-Syrian border last week, leading to the deaths of two Russian servicemen.

The measures already ordered are sweeping, and include canceling visa-free travel to Russia for Turkish citizens and restrictions on their right to work in the country. Russian travel agencies have also been barred from selling tours to Turkey.

But an unidentified high-ranking official told Vedomosti that sanctions on food imports could

be minimized to avoid impacting celebrations of New Year, Russia biggest holiday. Turkey is a major supplier of fruit, vegetables and other foods to Russia, and restrictions would likely push up prices and decrease availability and product range in stores.

“The government is intent on acting carefully, considering the approaching holidays,” the official told the paper.

Many of the sanctions imposed by Russia, both on Turkey and on Western nations over the Ukraine crisis last year, have damaged Russians' quality of life. Embargoes on produce from the European Union fueled food price inflation, and restrictions on tourist travel to Turkey and Egypt — the most popular cheap holiday destinations among Russians — mean fewer people will venture overseas.

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