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Cost-Conscious Russian Bakers Turn to Low-Quality Wheat

By The Moscow Times

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Russia's economic troubles have led bread manufacturers to use low-quality wheat, originally intended only as cattle fodder, to bake bread, the head of the country's grain trade union was quoted by the Interfax news agency as saying Wednesday.

The low-quality fodder wheat, also known in Russia as "fifth-rate" wheat, is mixed with slightly higher-quality fourth-rate wheat and with additives to make flour that is then used for baking bread at factories, the union's chief Arkady Zlochevsky said, Interfax reported.

"It's no secret to anybody that fodder wheat is being used to produce bread," he said.

Russia is reportedly drafting amendments to its food-quality standards, which would allow using "fifth-rate" wheat – currently intended only as cattle fodder and for "technical" needs – to make bread. The amendments would "enshrine the actual status quo in official guidelines," Zlochevsky was quoted by Interfax as saying.

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