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Huge Deficit in Wheat Supply Threatens Quality of Russian Bread

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Russia's flour producers are facing a crisis in the supply of wheat needed for bread flour, the Interfax news agency reported on Tuesday.

The president of the Russian Union of Flour and Cereal Enterprises, Arkadiy Guryevich, said producers face "staggering forecasts" for an unusually large grain harvest that will significantly lower the quality of flour, Interfax reported.

According to Guryevich, the annually declining quality of Russia's grain harvests will come to a head this year with a drastic shortage of third-class wheat needed for bread flour.

Russia's bulk yield of third-class wheat, Guryevich claims, has fallen from 48 percent of the grain harvest in 2012 to 34 percent in 2015 and — as of this month — made up just 18 percent.

Mixing third-class wheat with a heavier, weaker substitute will only lower quality, while Russia's deficit of the grain stands at 12.6 million tons, Interfax reported.

“This poses the question, should we or shouldn’t we?” Guryevich said, commenting on the option of mixing third-class wheat with inferior equivalents at the expense of bread standards.

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