

Russian Food Sanctions May Not Be Extended – Deputy Prime Minister

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Reuters

Russia’s embargo against Western food imports may come to an end in the near future, according to Russia’s deputy prime minister.

The news comes after warming relations with the West following Donald Trump’s victory in the U.S. presidential elections.

“The time has probably come to understand that the sanctions may soon be halted,” Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov [said](#) today at the Gaidar Forum, an economic conference held in Moscow.

However, this change will not come immediately. Legally, the sanctions end on December 31, 2017, and Shuvalov did not exclude the possibility that they could be further extended.

Still, his words give hope to Russians longing for the taste of Italian parmesan or Polish apples – both of which disappeared from supermarket shelves after the embargo’s

imposition.

“All players on the market should be prepared for [the sanctions’ cancellation],” Shuvalov said. “Whether they’ll be extended or not – that’s a question of politics.”

In August 2014, Russian authorities imposed sanctions against food products produced in the European Union, the United States, and several other Western countries. The embargo came as a response to Western sanctions on Russia for annexing the Crimean peninsula and intervening in eastern Ukraine.

The sanctions led the authorities to summarily bulldoze and otherwise destroy pallets of food products deemed illegal under the embargo. It also [contributed](#) to a rapid decrease in the quality and safety of food sold in Russian supermarkets.

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But the sanctions have also been a [partial boon](#) for Russian farmers and food producers, who found increased demand for their goods.

As a result, annulling the sanctions would “create long term problems,” Shuvalov said at the forum.

“Players on the market have gotten used to these [sanctions], and that is very bad,” he added.

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