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Culture Ministry Backs New Russian Holiday Marking 'Patriotic' Food Embargo

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Darko Vojinovic / AP

Russia's Culture Ministry has backed plans for a new "day of national patriotism" to mark the beginning of Russia's food embargo on Western countries.

The new holiday would fall on Aug. 6, the day in 2014 on which Russian President Vladimir Putin signed the ban on Western food imports.

In a letter addressed to Russia's State Duma, First Deputy Culture Minister Vladimir Aristarkhov said that the plans "deserved attention."

However, the politician warned that Russia's economic uncertainty could jeopardize the proposal. "Russian holidays and anniversaries require funds from the federal budget," he said. "The financial and economic feasibility also need to be examined."

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The new holiday is an initiative from the Avanti Association of Entrepreneurs for the Development of Patriotic Business.

Association president Rahman Yansukov told politicians in November that Western nations wanted to "weaken [Russia's] role in the world" to "bring about the collapse of its economic stability and political integrity."

He claimed that the embargo was a "signal" to "patriotic businessmen" to rally for Russia's economic independence.

Russia is currently boycotting food imports from the United States, European Union, Australia, Canada and Norway. The ban, which includes fruit, vegetables, meat, poultry, fish, salt, milk and dairy is expected to last at least until the end of 2017.

The move was a response to sanctions placed on Moscow after the annexation of Crimea. The sanctions include travel bans and asset freezes for a number of prominent Russian figures and companies.

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