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# Russian Agriculture Minister Unveils 5-Year Cheese Plan

November 08, 2017



**Kiselyov Sergei / Moskva News Agency**

Russia's Agriculture Minister has said the country will produce enough cheese for the domestic market within the next five years.

Moscow in 2014 imposed an import ban on food products, including dairy, in retaliation to Western sanctions over its role in Ukraine. The measure was seen as a boon to domestic production, but food lovers have lamented the proliferation of "fake cheese" — dairy products made with milk-substitutes.

Agriculture Minister Alexander Tkachyov said on Wednesday he had "felt with [his] own hands" the boom in cheese factory production adding it would take just five years for Russia to become self-sufficient.

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“We’ll forget about this [cheese shortage] problem entirely in five years,” Tkachyov was cited as saying by the state-run RIA Novosti news agency at an international dairy forum near Moscow, adding there would be a “cheese cluster” in the Moscow region.

Tkachyov said some “exclusive” cheeses would still need to be imported from other countries. “Let there be Swiss cheese on our store shelves,” he said.

The minister also predicted cuts in state subsidies in the dairy industry in five years, while simultaneously predicting Russia’s export potential.

“Our milk exports will be 100 percent, 1,000 percent, to the Persian Gulf countries, China, and other countries,” he was cited as saying by the state-run TASS news agency.

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