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Russian Car Factory Gives Farmland to Furloughed Workers

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Sergey Karpukhin / TASS

A Russian car plant is handing out farmland to workers facing furlough after Western automakers left Russia over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

The Avtotor factory, based in Russia's western enclave of Kaliningrad, has earmarked 300 hectares (740 acres) for its garden giveaway.

Avtotor said that giving land so that workers could grow their own produce would help factory staff amid the "difficult economic situation."

"The plots are fully prepared for the planting season," the plant said in a statement Tuesday.

"A questionnaire for factory employees was conducted in advance and a list of those willing to take advantage of this support was drawn up."

Avtotor announced on April 28 that it would put some of its 3,500 employees on three-week paid leave starting May 1.

Founder Vladimir Shcherbakov has said his factory saw a threefold drop in volume on their assembly lines after BMW and General Motors halted production in Russia in early March. South Korean motor brands Hyundai and Kia and China's Nanjing Automobile Corporation, have continued to work with the factory despite issues with component deliveries.

The plant has already distributed 168 plots of land measuring 1,000 square meters each in the village of Kholmogorovka near the Baltic Sea.

The rest of the land, located in the nearby village of Lyublino, is scheduled to be raffled off to workers in May.

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