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Russia Charges 4 Egg Producers With Price Fixing

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Shoppers in central Russia's Ryazan region. **Alexander Ryumin / TASS**

Four Russian egg producers face anti-monopoly charges for price fixing, authorities said Friday, just a day after President Vladimir Putin was forced to apologize on television for surging costs of the staple good.

The Federal Anti-Monopoly Service (FAS) announced charges against two companies based in Crimea, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014, and two companies in central Russia's Kirov region, located some 1,000 kilometers east of Moscow.

FAS accused the egg producers of violating Russia's market competition laws by allowing wholesale prices to increase by 94% in the case of the Crimean companies, and 60% in the case of the other two.

Across Russia, the price of chicken eggs has gone up by 45% since the start of the year, caused by a range of issues, from higher costs of labor and transportation, to the rising price of chicken feed and antibiotics, which were imported from Europe before the war

The four companies charged on Friday face steep fines if they are found guilty of price fixing, FAS said.

During his end-of-year press conference on Thursday, Putin blamed increased demand and insufficient imports for the rise in egg prices.

“I’m sorry about this problem. This is a setback in the government’s work,” Putin said, vowing to solve the issue.

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