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Russia Issues Sweeping Ban on Armenian Imports After Pashinyan's Victory

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Nuts. **Alexander Avilov / Moskva News Agency**

Russia will restrict imports of most food, seeds, flowers, wood and fertilizer from Armenia starting on Friday, less than a week after Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's Civil Contract party secured a parliamentary majority in elections seen as a test of Yerevan's pivot toward the West.

The federal agricultural safety agency Rosselkhoznadzor said the sweeping ban was issued in response to the "systematic detection" of pests in products imported from Armenia since May. It claimed that, in June alone, three separate cases of khapra beetle infestations were discovered in dried food shipments.

"The ban will remain in effect until a specific framework is developed to ensure the safety and traceability of shipped goods," the agency said in a statement on Thursday, adding to an already long list of Armenian goods recently banned for import to Russia, including produce,

flowers, mineral water and alcoholic products.

Freshly banned goods include fresh and dried fruits, fresh and chilled vegetables, grains, cereals, grain-derived products, coffee and cocoa beans. The embargo also covers live plants, fresh cut flowers, planting seeds and plants used for pharmaceuticals and perfumery.

In addition, the restrictions cover soil, peat, organic fertilizers, timber, lumber, wooden packaging, as well as insects, live pathogenic bacteria and viruses intended for research purposes.

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Russia plans to block the transit of the targeted products through its territory to Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan — all of which are members of the Eurasian Economic Union, alongside Armenia and Russia.

Rosselkhoznadzor criticized Armenian authorities for "inefficient" export oversight and accused Yerevan of endangering the agricultural and environmental safety of both Russia and the broader Eurasian Economic Union.

While Moscow claims its mounting import restrictions against Armenia are based on health and safety concerns, the measures increasingly resemble an economic pressure campaign targeting Yerevan over its pursuit of closer ties with the European Union.

On Sunday, Pashinyan's Civil Contract party won 49.8% of the vote in widely watched parliamentary elections. Brussels, with which the prime minister has sought closer ties, welcomed the results and announced financial aid and relaxed trade barriers for Armenian goods.

Moscow has accused the West of interfering in the elections and pressuring Armenia's largely pro-Russia opposition forces.

Friction between traditional allies Russia and Armenia has grown since Azerbaijan regained control of the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh in 2023. Armenia accused Russia and its peacekeeping forces of failing to deter Baku's military offensive and, in 2024, froze its participation in a Moscow-led regional security bloc.

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