

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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- 2

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Report Highlights:

Russia announces more Agricultural Attachés ...Russian Transportation Company forecasts 22.4 million tons of grain exports...Agreement on fish certification with China is implemented...Agricultural Minister Fyodorov shares his views with media on progress of agricultural plans...Russian Government appoints a new Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and new Head of the Federal Fishery Agency...Seed potato imports from the EU may be allowed under certain conditions...Armenia approves roadmap to join the Customs Union...Belarus bans pork from Lithuania...and Kyrgyzstan seeking transition support in joining the Customs Union

General Information:

Welcome to the Russian Agricultural Policy and Situation Bi-Weekly Update, a summary of issues of interest to the U. S. agricultural community. The report includes information that has been garnered during travel within Russia, reported in the local media, or offered by host country officials and agricultural analysts. Press articles are included and summarized in this report. Significant issues will be expanded upon in subsequent reports from this office. Minor grammatical changes have been made for clarification.

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Russia Announces Expansion of its Agricultural Attaché Program.

On January 17, 2014, in Berlin the Russian Agriculture Minister, Nikolai Fedorov, reported that Russia will triple its number of agriculture attachés at Russian embassies around the world as a result of Russia's World Trade Organization accession. Russia already has agricultural attachés in 11 countries, but will boost this to about 30. The new diplomats will be needed to help develop agriculture exports from Russia and co-ordinate Russian participation in agriculture-linked exhibitions and events. http://en.ria.ru/russia/_/Russia-to-Triple-Number-of-Agricultural-Attaches.html. Media reports that in the future, the network of Russian agricultural attachés may resemble the network of agricultural attachés in the Foreign Agricultural Service/United States Department of Agriculture. <http://agronews.ru/news/detail/131278/>.

Russia May Export up to 22.4 Million Metric Tons of Grain in Marketing Year July 2013 – June 2014, According to Russian Agricultural Transportation Company “Rusagrotrans”

According to Igor Pavensky, Deputy Director of Russian agricultural transportation company Rusagrotrans, in the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014, Russia may exports up to 22.4 million metric tons of grain. From July through December 2013 Russia exported 16.36 MMT of grain, including 12.56 MMT of wheat, 1.93 MMT of barley, and 1.68 MMT of corn. <http://agronews.ru/news/detail/131316/>

The Ministry of Agriculture Reports Order Comes Into Force On the Issuance of Certificates of Origin for Fish and Seafood Exported from the Russian Federation to China

This measure is introduced to support a joint agreement concluded on December 6, 2012, between the Governments of Russia and China on cooperation on the issue of preventing illegal, unreported and unregulated harvest of live marine resources. This document stipulates a number of measures to combat poaching, one of which is mandatory issuance of certificates of origin.

These certificates for Russians exports to China will be issued only when an exporter provides to the territorial fishery agency in Primorye necessary information, including the name of the vessel, its number, the shippers name, type of live catch, catch permit and other information that enables authorities to determine the legality of the catch. If an exporter fails to provide this certificate, under the agreement Chinese authorities will not allow imports of such shipments to its territory. The introduction of this measure is expected to reduce the level of illegal and unregulated fishing of live marine resources that causes enormous damage to the economies of the two countries.

<http://mcx.ru/news/news/show/19787.355.htm>

Nikolay Fyodorov, Russian Agricultural Minister, Shared his Views on the Development of Russian Agriculture in 2014 with *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* Newspaper

Minister Fyodorov reported that Russia's production of grains, including corn, sunflowerseeds, and rapeseeds increased significantly in 2013 compared to 2012. He also reported that the production of meat stabilized, and this allowed for reduced imports of pork by 16.6 percent, imports of beef by 7.2 percent, and imports of poultry by 5.7 percent. Meanwhile, the production of milk continues decreasing, which he said requires changing methods of support to the dairy industry. Minister Fyodorov stated that one priority for 2014 in the sphere of financing agriculture will be increasing investment credit subsidies. In order to improve control over agricultural debts, the Ministry of Agriculture will monitor carry-over debts, schedules of loan servicing and volumes of required subsidies. Another of the priorities of the Ministry of Agriculture will be monitoring the use of agricultural land. In the last 23 years sown area in Russia has shrunk by 16.4 percent, and the Ministry of Agriculture has proposed to amend the land legislation in order to increase fines for improper use of agricultural land and to give the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (VPSS) more authority to punish for violations in use of land. Another key priority will be continued social development of rural areas. He reported that the federal program the "Social Development of Villages through 2013" was one of the most successful support programs (according to rating of the Russian Ministry of Economic Development), and allowed to increased the access of rural houses to natural gas from 33.1 percent to 56.5 percent, and access to drinking water from 40.7 percent to 59.6 percent. He stated that the new Program "Sustainable Development of Rural Territories in 2014 -2017 and through 2020" will inherit the best features of the previous program and will support investments in development of working places in rural territories. <http://www.rg.ru/2014/01/15/pashni.html>.

On January 13, 2014, the Russian Government Appointed Andrey Volkov as a New Deputy Minister of Agriculture

By its official Order #9-P, GOR appointed new Deputy Minister of Agriculture Andrey Volkov. It is reported that the appointment of Andrey Volkov is to fill in deputy minister position that has been vacant since 2013 when former Deputy Minister Aldoshin resigned in March 2013. He was responsible for issues including Russia's WTO accession. The newly appointed deputy minister prior to his appointment to the new position served in the JSC "Unified Grain Company" (a state agent for implementing grain interventions, as well as a grain exporter). <http://government.ru/media/files/41d4b5069918fcd8302.pdf>
<http://www.agronews.ru/news/detail/131170/>

On January 17, 2014, by the Russian Government approved Deputy Minister Ilya Shestakov To Also Head the Federal Fishery Agency (Rosrybolovstvo)

Mr. Shestakov replaces former Head of the Federal Fishery Agency Andrey Krayniy, who had been in the position since 2008. Since May 21, 2012, according to government Order "On the Structure of Federal Executive Bodies," the Federal Fishery Agency with all its functions has been subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture. This new Resolution stipulates that the objective of the change is to optimize work of the Federal Fishery Agency and the Ministry of Agriculture and also increase efficiency of the development of the Russian fishery sector. <http://government.ru/docs/9787>

Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (VPSS) May Allow Shipments of Seed Potatoes from Some EU Countries if Additional Conditions Are Met

Major Russia importers of seed potatoes from Finland, Germany, Netherlands and some other EU countries have requested VPSS to lift the temporary ban on imports of seed potato from these countries. The temporary ban on imports of seed potato from EU countries has been in force since July 1, 2013 (VPSS news 6964). In response to the appeal of Russian importers, VPSS requested phytosanitary services of exporting countries to give additional information on particular shipments and to allow VPSS specialists to check the seed potato shipments at the points of departure.
<http://www.fsvps.ru/fsvps/news/8654.html> and <http://www.fsvps.ru/fsvps/news/8686.html>

Armenia Approves Roadmap for Customs Union Membership

According to ArmenPress, the Armenian government has approved the roadmap for Armenia's membership in the Belarus-Kazakhstan-Russia Customs Union. Prime Minister Sargsyan noted that 150 of 262 events must be realized before Armenia can join the Customs Union. For more information, see <http://armenpress.am/eng/news/747358/armenias-government-approves-timetable-for-roadmap-of-armenias-accession-to-customs-union.html>.

Belarus Suspends Pork Imports and Transit From Lithuania

According to the Belarusian Telegraph Agency, Belarus has imposed a ban on the import and transit of pork from Lithuania after African Swine Fever was identified in dead boars. For additional information, see <http://news.belta.by/en/news/econom?id=738449>.

Kyrgyzstan Asks for Support Fund to Join the Customs Union

According to Rosbalt, Kyrgyzstan is concerned with how competitive its manufacturers will be and is seeking a support fund to ease its transition into the Customs Union. For additional information, see http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=ru&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.alta.ru%2Fts_news%2F27952%20.