

Harvest Down 31% So Far

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Farmers have reaped 41.5 million metric tons of grain so far, 31 percent less than a year earlier, after the country's worst drought in at least a half-century damaged crops, the Agriculture Ministry said Wednesday.

Production had reached 60.5 million tons at this point last year, the ministry said in a statement on its web site. This year's harvest is halfway through, and yields are 22 percent lower. Wheat output reached 29 million tons, or 26 percent less than last year, and barley 5.9 million tons, for a 47 percent drop.

Russia has declared drought emergencies in 32 crop-producing regions and has cut its grain-crop forecast to 60 million to 65 million tons from 97 million tons. The country banned grain and flour exports from Aug. 15 through Dec. 31 to ensure domestic supply and damp prices.

In the Volga Federal District, production slumped 59 percent to 6 million tons as yields plunged 31 percent, the ministry said. In the Central Federal District, output dropped 48 percent to 9.7 million tons. The figures relate to bunker weight before the grain is dried and

cleaned.

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