

Sarkozy Presses Kremlin on Meat

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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PARIS — French President Nicolas Sarkozy on Thursday called on President Dmitry Medvedev to reconsider what he sees as unjustified trade barriers against French livestock and other meat products in Russia.

In a letter sent to Medvedev two weeks before he is due to visit France, Sarkozy pointed to several unjustified sanitary measures imposed by Russia on French cattle or meat products.

"These measures directed at French farmers and businessmen do not appear to us as justified. Their scientific basis is questionable," Sarkozy wrote in the letter sent Thursday.

Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel will meet Medvedev in the coastal town of Deauville on Oct. 18 to discuss security concerns and relations between the three nations.

Measures included an obligation for Russian importers of French cattle vaccinated against catarrhal fever — also called bluetongue disease — to vaccinate all cattle in a perimeter of 20 kilometers. Sarkozy called the measure "strongly dissuasive" for Russian breeders wanting to

buy French cattle.

Another measure concerned madcow disease, which has been controlled in France and should therefore not be taken into account in any age consideration, the French president said.

"These measures challenge the principle of reciprocity since the Russian Federation does not apply on its own production the same severity of controls it imposes on its trade partners, notably on poultry," Sarkozy said.

"At a time when ... your country wishes to join the World Trade Organization with our full support, the upkeep of these measures does not seem to fit the degree of trust that defines our economical and political cooperation," Sarkozy said.

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