

Putin Sees Cash-for-Clunker Tractors Program for \$125M

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The government plans to start a cash-for-clunkers program for farm equipment next year, similar to the incentives it offered for used passenger cars, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said.

The authorities may allocate 3.5 billion rubles (\$125 million) for the rebate plan to spur demand, Putin said Thursday in Rostov-on-Don, southern Russia.

The prime minister also said grain export might reach 15 million tons in the marketing year that starts July 1 after a "good" harvest this year.

The government will lift its ban on grain exports on July 1 and expects to harvest 85 million tons of grain this year, Putin said.

Russia will reserve the right to increase subsidies to domestic farmers after it enters the World

Trade Organization, or WTO, the prime minister said at the Zavety Ilyicha agricultural cooperative during his visit to the region.

"Our negotiators are experienced people, they are bargaining good terms, including on subsidies. This will enable us to increase subsidies to agricultural producers if necessary," Putin said.

"We have agreed upon everything we wanted to squeeze except for access for animal products to our market," he said.

"They are pressing us into preserving the existing access rules," he explained, adding that this position was "unsuitable" for Russia.

"If we see that some proposals might affect our agriculture, we will not accept them," he said.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov said the country might enact anti-dumping measures to protect dairy producers.

"There are large inventories of good, quality Russian cheese in a host of regions right now. We cannot constantly import large volumes. Our agricultural producers will suffer big losses," Zubkov told journalists in Rostov on Thursday, on the sidelines of the Russian Agrarian Movement's convention.

"The Russian government will seek mechanisms to assist domestic producers," he said. "We are thinking about how to do that so it doesn't push up prices," Zubkov said.

"I am opposed to raising customs duties tomorrow. There are other mechanisms. We will work inside the country, with all of our retail chains," Zubkov said, referring to grocery chains that are reluctant to buy domestic products.

But anti-dumping measures can be applied as needed, he said.

"Where we see clear-cut cases of cheese being dumped, we will apply anti-dumping measures. Our law provides that ability," he said, adding that the measures will not affect consumer prices.

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