

Supermarket Founder Named Governor

August 11, 2011

The  **Moscow Times**

President Dmitry Medvedev has named Vladimir Gruzdev, the multimillionaire co-founder of the Sedmoi Kontinent supermarket chain, as the next governor of the Tula region, the Kremlin [said](#) Thursday.

The appointment came as no surprise because Gruzdev was named acting governor after Vyacheslav Dudka stepped down last month amid corruption allegations and inquiries into his subordinates.

Gruzdev's candidacy has to be confirmed by the local legislature, which is controlled by the pro-Kremlin United Russia, Interfax reported. The vote is expected next week.

Gruzdev, 44, is a senior official with United Russia and a lawmaker in its State Duma faction. He has a background in the intelligence services but traded the state job for entrepreneurship in the early 1990s, accumulating a considerable fortune that was estimated by Forbes magazine in April at \$950 million.

He said his main tasks as governor would be to prepare Tula for the winter season, the new school year and the upcoming State Duma and presidential elections, United Russia [reported](#)

on its web site.

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