

Russia Bans Candy Imports from Ukraine's Roshen

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Ukrainian candy has gotten a bitter welcome in Russia after the Federal Consumer Protection Service banned all imports from confectionary giant Roshen over safety concerns.

"Quality and safety requirements have been violated. We have reason to believe that our country's existing legislation for the protection of consumer rights has been systematically violated," consumer protection head Gennady Onishchenko told Interfax on Monday.

Products originating in four Roshen factories were taken from the shelves of Russian retailers and tested by investigators, Onishchenko said. They reported a range of violations, including the presence of the carcinogen benzopyrene, a cancer-causing chemical created in small levels when reheating fat, in Roshen milk chocolate.

Allegations first surfaced on June 11, when Onishchenko publicly expressed concern over the quality of Ukrainian candy imports.

Roshen, whose brands include Mont Blanc and Variety, then defended its safety standards and facilities in a statement on its website, noting that it had not received any official complaints.

Observers believe the candy ban is linked to a Ukrainian import tax on automobiles. The World Trade Organization has allowed countries affected by the tax to levy similar taxes on Ukrainian imports, and Onishchenko's remarks about Ukrainian candy on June 11 came a day after Russia threatened to impose a duty on Ukrainian chocolate of up to 0.1 euros (\$0.13) per kilogram as part of a response to the car tax.

A similar Russian ban on imports from seven Ukrainian cheese manufacturers in February 2012 was interpreted as political maneuvering by Ukrainian politicians.

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