

Putin to Sell Land to Farmers at Discount

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The government plans to offer farmers a chance to buy state land at a discount to encourage food and grain production.

About 24 million hectares of "undistributed lots" should be sold at below market prices to people already working the land, Putin told farmers at a conference in Tambov on Wednesday. The area is about the size of Britain.

Regional and municipal authorities should make sure unused, arable land is kept away from "speculators" and transferred to "all who want to become farmers," Putin said. "Those who will work on land, for whom agriculture is a source of wealth and a lifestyle, should receive the land."

President Dmitry Medvedev in January signed a law that allows authorities to confiscate arable land from owners who haven't used it for agricultural purposes for at least three consecutive years.

About 21 million hectares, or 21 percent of arable land, is unused, the country's Grain Union said Feb. 18.

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