

# Belarus Demands Cancellation of 'Indecent' Russian Import Restrictions

By [The Moscow Times](#)

December 03, 2014

**The**  **Moscow Times**

Moscow's ban on imports of meat from Belarus could be partially lifted, Russia's sanitation watchdog said Wednesday, following a tirade from Belarussian President Alexander Lukashenko.

The watchdog, Rosselkhoznadzor, has restricted imports of a range of meat imports from Belarus over African swine fever fears and demanded that Belarussian exports passing through Russia to Kazakhstan be subject to border checks.

Moscow says food products banned by Russia this summer in response to Western sanctions are being smuggled into the country through Belarus.

Belarus is part of a Customs Union with Russia and Kazakhstan that has abolished internal border checks for transit shipment.

Lukashenko branded the restrictions "indecent" and unfair treatment of his country, slamming "crooks in Russia who want to make hay by increasing their prices," and saying supplies from Belarus were "holding prices down," the TASS news agency reported Wednesday.

Moscow's import bans on Western produce, along with the ongoing devaluation of the ruble currency, have seen food price inflation rocket to up to 20 percent this year.

After the outburst, Rosselkhoznadzor chief Sergei Dankvert told TASS that Russia could lift the food import ban from some Belarussian facilities "if certain conditions were met."

Having got public browbeating out of the way, Lukashenko on Wednesday ordered his government to resolve the food import issue within 10 days, Interfax reported, citing Belarussian Deputy Prime Minister Mikhail Rusy.

Rusy also said Rosselkhoznadzor's Dankvert and Russian Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich would meet with Belarussian officials to discuss the issue on Thursday.

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