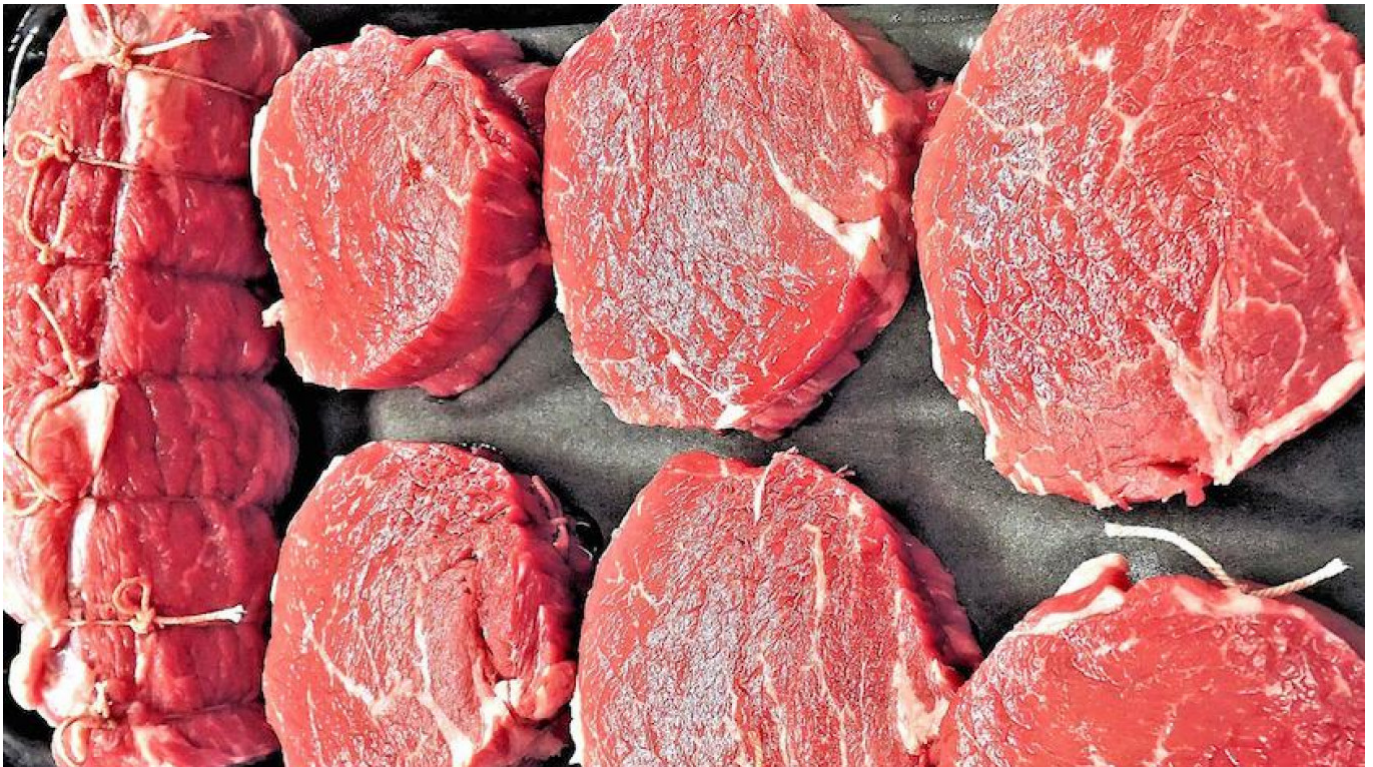


Russia Bans Imports of New Zealand Beef

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Russia has [banned the import](#) of beef and beef byproducts originating in New Zealand, Russia's Interfax news agency has reported.

Russia's state agriculture agency [Roselkhoznadzor](#) claimed that traces of ractopamine had been found in [samples](#) of beef on three separate occasions.

The drug, which is used to build muscle [mass](#) in cattle, is banned within Russia.

The ban could also be extended to cover fish and butter from New Zealand after samples were found to have high [levels](#) of bacteria, [Roselkhoznadzor](#) chief Sergei Dankvert told [Interfax](#).

Related article: [Warning: This Is Not Cheese. In Russia, Watch What You Eat](#)

A spokesperson for New Zealand's Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) [told the NZ Farmer](#)

[news outlet](#) that officials had not received prior notification about the ban.

He also stressed that ractopamine was not licensed for use in New Zealand cattle.

"New Zealand food standards are among the highest in the world and we are committed to producing high quality safe meat for domestic and overseas consumers," the spokesperson said.

New Zealand was one of nations hit by the Kremlin's ban on Western food products in 2014. The ban, which was introduced in response to sanctions placed on Russian businesses by Wellington after the annexation of Crimea, has been gradually relaxed for New Zealand farmers over the past three years.

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