

Import restrictions on certain Ukrainian cereals and oilseeds

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EU removes restrictions on imports of Ukrainian cereals and oilseeds

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) [2023/1100](#) of 5 June 2023 introducing preventive measures concerning certain products originating in Ukraine

Update

The EU currently allows quota-free and tariff-free import of Ukrainian agricultural goods. In June 2023, it put in place measures to prevent the release of wheat, maize, rape, and sunflower seeds from Ukraine onto the market in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia. The aim was to manage the increased imports of these products from Ukraine, and their effects on local farmers in EU Member States.

Following a review, on 15 September the Commission lifted these restrictions. However, Hungary and Poland have introduced import bans of these products on grains. Slovakia also announced import bans, but subsequently withdrew these measures.

Impacted products

wheat, maize, rape, sunflower seeds

What is changing?

In response to Russia's attack against Ukraine in 2022, the European Union has provided quota-free and tariff-free import of Ukrainian agricultural goods since June 2022 (first under Regulation [2022/870](#), then under Regulation [2023/1077](#)).

In June 2023, the EU placed temporary limits on Ukrainian grain imports. Under Regulation [2023/1100](#), wheat and meslin (CN customs code 1001), maize (1005), rape or colza seeds (1205) and sunflower seeds (1206) could not be released into the European market by customs authorities in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, or Slovakia, although products were allowed to transit through those countries, and to be released onto the markets of the other EU Member States.

On 15 September 2023, the European Commission reviewed the temporary restrictions and concluded that the problems had been resolved and the restrictions could be lifted ([European Commission 2023](#)). At the same time, agreement was reached with Ukraine to put in place a licensing system that will limit grain exports. However, Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia did not support the Commission's decision, and put in place their own national import bans. In response, Ukraine requested consultations with these three countries at the World Trade Organization (the first step towards a potential legal case) ([WTO 2023](#)). Following this, Slovakia agreed to remove its restrictions ([Euractiv 2023](#)).

Why?

The restrictions were originally introduced as a surge in imports of grains from Ukraine created considerable logistical problems including insufficient transport and storage capacity. Local farmers in the five listed Member States were also economically affected by the imports. The measures were intended to help EU farmers in the short term, while maintaining EU goals of preserving supplies to the rest of the world and preventing food price increases.

Timeline

The restrictions on Ukrainian grain imports were lifted on **15 September 2023**. The Commission will continue to review the situation.

Background

The war between Russia and Ukraine has severely constrained trade through Ukraine's Black Sea ports. By liberalising trade with Ukraine, the EU is supporting Ukraine's economy and helping food supplies to reach other countries. The measures restricting trade in certain products respond to unilateral actions taken by Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia to stop imports from Ukraine.

Resources

Euractiv (2023) [Ukraine halts legal action against Slovakia amid grain import drama](#). Euractiv, 22 September.

European Commission (2023) [Following the expiry of the restrictive measures on Ukrainian exports of grain and other foodstuff to the EU, Ukraine agrees to introduce measures to avoid a renewed surge in EU imports](#). Press release, 15 September.

WTO (2023) [Ukraine initiates WTO dispute complaints against Hungary, Poland and Slovak Republic](#). Geneva: World Trade Organization.

Regulation (EU) [2023/1077](#) on temporary trade-liberalisation measures supplementing trade concessions applicable to Ukrainian products under the Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Ukraine, of the other part

Sources

Regulation (EU) [2023/1100](#) introducing preventive measures concerning certain products originating in Ukraine

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