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Russian Grain Export Taxes Set at Zero for Wheat, Barley, and Corn

The Russian Union of Grain Exporters and Producers announced that export duties on key grain crops will remain at zero rubles for the period 18–24 February 2026.

According to the latest update, export taxes for wheat, barley, and corn have all been set at 0.0 rubles per tonne, with no changes compared to the previous week (11–17 February).

Market participants view the continued zero-duty policy as supportive for Russian grain exports, potentially improving competitiveness in global markets amid ongoing price pressure and strong international supply.

The unchanged tariff structure suggests stable government policy toward grain shipments in the near term, offering exporters short-term planning certainty. [5]

Rising Global Barley Demand Lifts Russian Export Prices

Growing import demand for barley is lending strong support to Russian export prices, driven by increased purchases from key Middle Eastern markets.

According to forecasts from United States Department of Agriculture, the 2025/26 season (July 2025–June 2026) is expected to see a sharp rise in global barley imports. Shipments to Turkey could reach 1.5 million tonnes, up 1.3 million tonnes year on year, while imports by Saudi Arabia are projected at 4.3 million tonnes (+0.3 million), and Iran at 2.5 million tonnes (+0.2 million).

Market activity is already reflecting these expectations. Since July 2025, Turkey has purchased more than 1 million tonnes of barley through tenders. Additional buying interest over the past week from Jordan and Tunisia has further supported exporter quotations.

As one of the world's major barley suppliers, Russia is benefiting directly from the demand surge. The over-the-counter BRFOB barley index rose from USD 202 per tonne at the end of January to USD 231.4 per tonne by mid-February.

From the start of the 2025/26 season through January, Russia shipped more than 4 million tonnes of barley abroad, including over 1.8 million tonnes to Iran, 0.5 million tonnes to Turkey, and 0.4 million tonnes to Saudi Arabia.

Analysts at Agroexport note that the higher export quota for 2026 — totaling 20 million tonnes for wheat, barley, and corn — should allow Russian exporters to further expand shipments and support food security in partner countries. [4]

Russia’s 2026/27 Wheat Harvest Forecast Raised to 91 Million Tonnes

Russia’s wheat production outlook for the 2026/27 agricultural season has been revised upward, reflecting improved expectations for the upcoming harvest.

The Institute of Agricultural Market Studies (IKAR) has increased its forecast for Russia’s wheat crop to 91 million tonnes, while export potential for the same season is now estimated at 47.5 million tonnes, up 1 million tonnes compared with 2025/26.

Preliminary figures from Rosstat show that total grain production in Russia reached 138.8 million tonnes in 2025. This included 90.9 million tonnes of wheat, 19.6 million tonnes of barley, 12.7 million tonnes of corn, nearly 1.0 million tonnes of rye, and 923,400 tonnes of buckwheat.

Meanwhile, output of leguminous crops climbed to a record 8 million tonnes, marking a sharp 48% increase year on year, underscoring broader growth across Russia’s grain and pulse sectors.[5]

Russia’s Oil and Fat Products Output Drops 7% in 2025 After Three Years of Growth

Production of oil and fat products in Russia declined by 7% in 2025, ending a three-year expansion cycle, according to a new report from BusinesStat.

Total output fell to 14.4 million tonnes, down from 15.4 million tonnes in 2024. The sharpest contraction was recorded in sunflower oil production, which dropped 12% year on year to 7.2 million tonnes, based on preliminary data from Rosstat.

Analysts attribute the decline primarily to adverse weather conditions and a deterioration in raw material quality. Additional pressure came from unfavorable processing economics. Independent agricultural market expert Alexander Korbut told Agroexpert that low crushing margins, combined with elevated sunflower seed prices, also weighed on production volumes.

Despite the downturn in sunflower oil, industry players are increasingly diversifying their operations. Record harvests of rapeseed and soybeans have been reported, signaling a gradual shift toward alternative oilseed crops.[3]

Russia’s Oilseed Plantings Seen Reaching Record 22 Million Hectares in 2026

Russia’s oilseed acreage is expected to climb to a historic high in 2026, driven by strong farmer interest and expanding processing capacity.

According to the first sowing structure forecast from the Institute of Agricultural Market Studies (IKAR), the total area planted with oilseed crops in Russia could reach 22 million hectares in the upcoming agricultural season.

Sunflower is set to remain the dominant crop, with plantings projected at 11.35–11.65 million hectares, exceeding last year's 11 million hectares and marking a new record. Soybean acreage may edge slightly lower to 4.6–4.7 million hectares, compared with 4.73 million hectares in 2025. The strongest growth is expected in rapeseed, where sowings are forecast to rise to 3.15–3.25 million hectares, up from 2.96 million hectares a year earlier.

The expansion follows a record oilseed harvest last season. Data from Rosstat show that in 2025 Russia produced 17 million tonnes of sunflower, 8.96 million tonnes of soybeans, and **5.6 million tonnes of rapeseed.

The sector is also entering a new investment phase. Dmitry Rylko said processing capacity for oilseeds is expected to increase by an additional 2–3 million tonnes over the next three years, reflecting continued capital inflows into the industry.[6]

Ukraine Corn Exports Jump in Early February as Wheat Shipments Decline

Corn exports from Ukraine surged in the first half of February 2026, while shipments of wheat and barley moved lower, according to operational export data.

During the first 15 days of February, Ukraine exported just over 1.7 million tonnes of corn, up 42% compared with the same period in January 2026 and 41% higher year on year.

By contrast, wheat exports weakened to 265,700 tonnes, down 9% from early January and 57% lower than in the first half of February 2025. Barley shipments remained limited at 10,200 tonnes, compared with zero exports in early January and 41,400 tonnes a year earlier.

Overall, exports of the three main grain crops — corn, wheat, and barley — reached 1.98 million tonnes in the first half of February. This represents a 33% increase from early January volumes and a 6% rise compared with the same period last year, highlighting strong momentum in corn shipments despite softer wheat and barley flows.[2]

Ukrainian Sunflower Prices Extend Weekly Gains on Strong Processor Demand

Sunflower seed prices in Ukraine continued to rise over the past week, supported by higher oil quotations at ports and sustained buying interest from domestic processing plants.

Bid prices at crushing facilities increased to 29,000–29,800 hryvnias per tonne CPT, depending on oil content. Minimum offers were reported at 28,600–28,800 hryvnias per tonne CPT for seeds with 48% oil content, while top prices reached 30,000–30,500 hryvnias per tonne CPT for batches with oil content of 50% or higher.

Market participants said farmer selling picked up in several regions after a brief slowdown the previous week. However, supply volumes remain insufficient to fully meet processors' requirements for the coming months, keeping upward pressure on prices.[2]

Kazakhstan Wheat Export Activity Remains Subdued as Barley Prices Firm

Export activity in Kazakhstan's food wheat market stayed muted over the past week, with most shipments tied to previously signed contracts, according to a weekly digest from APK-Inform Asia.

The report said prices for Class 4 wheat were assessed at $230 per tonne DAP Saryagash, while Class 3 wheat with 23–24% gluten was quoted at $240–245 per tonne DAP.

In the feed barley segment, prices strengthened to $240–250 per tonne FOB Aktau and $230–235 per tonne DAP Saryagash, reflecting firmer demand.

On the domestic grain market in Kazakhstan, prices showed little change. Class 3 wheat traded at 92,000–98,000 tenge per tonne EXW (averaging 95,000), Class 4 at 85,000–90,000 tenge (average 87,000), and Class 5 at 80,000–85,000 tenge (around 82,000). Feed barley was quoted at 85,000–90,000 tenge per tonne EXW.

Analysts noted that government transport subsidies continued to provide underlying support to prices, helping stabilize the domestic market despite weak export momentum.[2]

France Winter Crop Conditions Hit Three-Year High, Boosting 2026 Harvest Outlook

Winter crop conditions in France have reached their strongest levels in three years, signaling improved production prospects for the 2026 season, according to FranceAgriMer.

As of February 9, 91% of soft wheat, 88% of winter barley, and 87% of durum (hard) wheat were rated in good or excellent condition. These figures mark a significant improvement over last year, when the respective ratings stood at 73%, 68%, and 84%.

Industry experts attribute the rebound to favorable weather patterns and timely field operations, which have supported crop development across key growing regions.

Analysts say the strong condition of winter crops lays the groundwork for a successful 2026 harvest and could enhance France's export competitiveness on global grain markets in the months ahead.[1]

European Wheat Export Outlook Worsens as Global Competition Intensifies

Prospects for soft wheat exports from the European Union continue to weaken, as mounting global competition weighs on shipment volumes.

Consulting firm Expana has cut its 2025/26 EU soft wheat export forecast by a further 1.2 million tonnes, bringing the total down to 27.6 million tonnes, marking the fourth consecutive monthly downgrade. The revision was reported by Reuters.

In its latest monthly report, Expana noted that while competition from Russia and Ukraine has eased compared with previous seasons, pressure from the United States and southern hemisphere producers remains intense.

The firm has also lowered its production outlook for all major grain crops in the EU for the 2026 harvest. The downgrade is largely linked to revised sowing area estimates following winter crop losses caused by freezing conditions in Poland and the Baltic states in recent weeks.

Analysts say the combination of tighter production prospects and fierce export competition could further undermine Europe's position in global wheat markets in the coming season. [6]

China Cuts Import VAT on Sunflower and Rapeseed Oils to Boost Domestic Processing

China has reduced import value-added tax (VAT) on 16 agricultural products, including refined and crude sunflower oil as well as refined rapeseed oil, in a move aimed at lowering costs for key agri-food commodities.

The measure, introduced by the General Administration of Customs of China, took effect on February 2. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, VAT on most of the affected products was cut from 13% to 9%, providing support to China's domestic edible oil market and processing sector.

As part of the change, authorities created a new 10-digit tariff line specifically for refined sunflower oil, allowing it to clear customs under the reduced 9% VAT rate. Previously, the product had been classified under a broader HS code subject to the higher 13% tax.

The revised VAT policy also applies to crude sunflower oil, rice bran oil, fennel oil, walnut oil, peppercorn oil, apricot kernel oil, grapeseed oil, peony seed oil, as well as vegetable shortenings and microbial fats and oils.

However, the Foreign Agricultural Service noted that agricultural products from the United States remain subject to additional retaliatory tariffs despite the VAT reduction.[1]

Legume Prices Jump in India on Crop Concerns and Harvest Delays

Prices for key legume crops in India have climbed sharply over the past month after trending lower earlier in the year, according to The Economic Times.

Pigeon peas led the rally, rising by around 20%, driven by expectations of reduced output in India and other producing countries. Chickpea and mung bean prices also advanced in January, gaining 9% and 11%, respectively.

The Indian Association of Producers and Importers of Grains and Legumes (IPGA) said pigeon pea and mung bean prices are likely to remain elevated in the near term, while chickpea prices could soften once the new harvest reaches markets from late February.

Producers attribute the recent surge partly to prolonged rainfall, which delayed harvesting and tightened short-term chickpea availability. Output of mung beans has also come in below expectations, adding further pressure to prices.

Industry data show that high-quality lentil prices across various provinces rose by 9.7% to 23%, though annual comparisons remain mixed, with some regions still reporting lower prices than a year ago.

India remains heavily reliant on imports to meet domestic demand, sourcing peas from Myanmar and African suppliers, mung beans from Myanmar and Brazil, lentils from Australia, and yellow peas from Canada and the Black Sea region.

Market participants are now watching whether higher prices in India will encourage increased exports and help reduce global stocks, particularly as record legume harvests in Russia have recently weighed on producer margins.[7]

Cheaper South American Supply Clouds Outlook for Ukrainian Corn

Future price movements for corn from Ukraine will largely depend on export competition and the pace at which new South American crops enter global markets, according to Spike Brokers.

In particular, corn from Argentina for April–May delivery is currently trading more than $15 per tonne cheaper than Ukrainian origin, raising concerns over competitiveness. Brokers noted that the next direction of prices will be determined by how Ukrainian corn performs against supplies from the United States and the growing availability of South American grain.

Market momentum has weakened in recent weeks, Spike Brokers said, as logistics remain stable and port infrastructure continues to operate smoothly. Trading activity has slowed, with prices easing by $1–2 per tonne from midweek highs. Some buyers have begun adjusting bids lower on a week-to-week basis.

Meanwhile, White Brokers reported that purchase prices on DAP port terms were mostly steady at $214–215 per tonne for much of last week, though several traders started trimming price indications toward the end of the period.

Brokers expect farmer selling to increase seasonally as producers seek liquidity to finance spring fieldwork. However, they cautioned that this strategy may not fully materialize, as some farmers could prioritize sales of sunflower and wheat while continuing to hold corn.

They also pointed to last season's experience, when producers achieved their strongest prices in May–July, reinforcing expectations that a similar pattern could emerge this year and encouraging growers to delay corn sales.[1]

Brazil Strengthens Global Grain Position with Record Soybeans and Rising Corn Consumption

Brazil is reinforcing its position as the main agricultural rival to the United States, with a record soybean harvest and rapidly rising domestic corn consumption, according to the latest outlook from Companhia Nacional de Abastecimento (Conab).

In its fifth report on the 2025/26 season, Conab forecast Brazil's soybean production at a historic 178 million tonnes, up 6.5 million tonnes from the previous cycle. Favorable weather in Mato Grosso — the country's largest producing region — has accelerated harvesting, with 47% of planted areas already threshed and yields broadly matching optimistic expectations.

Oilseed plantings expanded by 1.5 million hectares, offsetting a slight decline in average productivity from 4,310 kg/ha to 4,244 kg/ha, analysts said.

Corn production is expected to edge lower to 138.4 million tonnes, down 1.9% year on year. However, domestic consumption has surged from 84 million to 90.5 million tonnes, marking a record high. Conab highlighted that this increase is being driven primarily by the rapid expansion of corn-based ethanol production — a structural shift in Brazil's grain market.

Despite the modest drop in output, Brazil's corn export potential for 2025/26 is projected to rise to 46.5 million tonnes, compared with 41.5 million tonnes last season, supported by efficient logistics and strong demand from China and other importers.

Overall grain production across all crops is forecast at a new record of 353.4 million tonnes, fueled largely by expanded planting areas.[1]

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