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Russia’s Leningrad Region Boosts Grain Exports by 21% in Early 2025

Russia’s Leningrad Region has significantly increased exports of grain and processed agricultural products since the start of 2025. According to the St. Petersburg branch of the Federal State Budgetary Institution “Center for Quality Control in Agriculture,” exports through the region’s ports reached 834,000 tonnes by May 5, marking a 21% increase compared to the same period last year.

Wheat accounted for the majority of shipments, with 622,000 tonnes exported abroad. Other products shipped included barley, sunflower meal, wheat flour, grain malt, and rapeseed.

Export destinations covered 17 countries, including Morocco, Israel, Senegal, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Cameroon, China, Libya, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Türkiye, Mexico, Angola, and Congo.

In addition, beet pulp exports to Morocco resumed this year for the first time since 2024, totaling 27,000 tonnes.

Overall grain exports through the ports of the Leningrad Region reportedly rose by 38% in 2025, reaching 1.8 million tonnes. [3]

Rostov Region Nearly Fully Switched to Domestic Grain Seeds in 2026

The Rostov region has nearly achieved full use of domestically bred seeds for grains and legumes in the 2026 sowing season, excluding corn. The regional Ministry of Agriculture and Food сообщил this information to RBC Rostov.

According to the ministry, almost 100% of the grain and legume seeds used in the region were of domestic origin. By the end of 2025, the Rostov region had produced more than 86,000 tonnes of its own grain and legume seed material.

Officials noted that most seed supplies for major grain crops are sourced from the Rostov region itself, as well as from the Krasnodar and Stavropol Territories and the Volgograd region. Smaller volumes of seed imports continue to come from central Russian regions. [4]

Novorossiysk Grain Terminal Expands Export Transshipment Capacity

The KSK grain terminal, part of the Delo Group at the port of Novorossiysk, is expanding its grain export logistics capabilities with the launch of a new ship unloading system designed for “river-sea” vessels.

According to the company’s press service, the new equipment has a processing capacity of 400 tonnes per hour and allows the terminal to receive export grain cargoes delivered by inland and coastal vessels for further loading onto large ocean-going ships.

Previously, grain cargoes at the terminal were unloaded only from trucks and railway transport. The newly introduced system creates an additional logistics route, enabling grain deliveries from ports in the Volga-Don and Azov-Black Sea basins using small-tonnage “river-sea” vessels.

The company stated that the development of this transportation model could help redirect part of the cargo flow away from overloaded southern railways and highways toward inland waterways and coastal shipping. It is also expected to reduce dependence on offshore cargo transfer operations near the Port of Caucasus and support greater utilization of the “river-sea” fleet. [5]

Grain Traffic Toward Danube Ports Continues to Decline

Daily unloading of grain railcars at the ports of Greater Odesa increased slightly over the past week, according to Valerii Tkachev, Deputy Director of the Department of Transportation Technology and Commercial Operations at Ukrzaliznytsia.

As of May 7, the average daily unloading rate at the Greater Odesa ports reached 1,245 railcars per day, up by 12 cars compared to the previous week.

At the same time, the total number of grain railcars heading toward these ports declined by 270 units during the week, falling to 8,431 cars. Meanwhile, the average daily loading volume on the rail network destined for Greater Odesa ports increased by 34 cars, reaching 1,244 railcars per day.

Tkachev also noted a decrease in grain traffic toward Danube ports. The number of grain railcars moving in that direction fell by 133 units over the week, dropping to only 7 cars. The average unloading rate at Danube ports also declined slightly, decreasing by 14 units to 2 railcars per day.[2]

Food Inflation Continues in Ukraine Despite Slower Monthly Growth

Consumer prices in Ukraine increased by 1.4% in April 2026 compared with the previous month, according to data released by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine.

The monthly inflation rate was slightly lower than in March, when consumer prices had risen by 1.7%.

Food prices increased by 1.9% during the reporting month. The sharpest increases were recorded for sugar and bread, which rose by 3.6% and 2.5%, respectively. Prices for sunflower oil increased by 2.7%, while pasta, fruits, and vegetables each became 1.8–2.3% more expensive in April.

Meat and meat products rose in price by 1.9%, while milk prices increased by 0.7%. At the same time, prices for hard cheese and cottage cheese declined by 0.5%, and butter prices fell by 1.5%.

Eggs showed the largest monthly decrease, dropping by 3.4% in April.

Overall, consumer prices in Ukraine increased by 4.9% during the first four months of 2026, while food prices rose by 5.5% over the same period. [2]

Soybean prices in Ukraine stabilize as global competition intensifies

Ukraine's corn market continues to strengthen as European buyers return to secure stable supplies amid growing concerns over global availability, according to analysts from the PUSK agricultural cooperative operating within the Ukrainian Agrarian Council (UAC).

Demand from EU countries — particularly Greece, Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands — has become the main driver of the market, supporting prices at around $225-226 per tonne, levels analysts currently describe as market equilibrium.

At the same time, the global corn market remains under pressure due to tight supply conditions. Analysts noted that global production and consumption are currently almost balanced, leaving minimal carryover stocks and increasing the market's sensitivity to any production disruptions.

According to PUSK, buyers are already reacting proactively to the risk of future shortages. The situation is being further complicated by expected reductions in corn planting areas in several major producing countries, including Romania, France, and potentially the United States.

Against this backdrop, Ukraine remains a strategically important supplier for the European market. Analysts emphasized that the EU heavily depends on imports from Ukraine and the United States, which together account for up to 75-80% of the bloc's corn imports.

European processors are therefore closely monitoring Ukraine's planting campaign and potential production outlook. So far, analysts do not expect acreage reductions in Ukraine. On the contrary, corn sowing areas may expand by 300,000-500,000 hectares, although weather conditions remain a key uncertainty for the upcoming harvest.

On the new crop market, indicative prices are currently forming at $218-220 per tonne CPT, while some forward contracts for October-November delivery have already been signed at $223-224 per tonne CPT.

PUSK analysts believe the market still has upward potential, forecasting average prices in the new marketing season at around $240-245 per tonne CPT, particularly in the second half of the season. However, they advised producers against rushing into forward sales due to ongoing weather and harvest uncertainties. [2]

European Soybean Meal Prices Retreat After Reaching Record Highs

European soybean meal prices have started to ease after reaching record highs at the end of April, pressured by weaker offers and declining premiums from major exporting origins.

According to Platts, part of S&P Global Commodity Insights, FOB Netherlands soybean meal prices peaked at Eur372.50/tonne on April 29, marking an increase of 11.8% since the beginning of March. Meanwhile, EXW Spain soybean meal prices reached Eur382/tonne, up 13.6% over the same period.

Both assessments marked the highest levels recorded since the launch of the Platts soybean meal benchmarks for the Netherlands in May 2025 and Spain in October 2025.

Since then, however, the market has shown signs of softening. FOB Netherlands soybean meal prices declined to Eur364/tonne by May 6, while Spanish prices remained comparatively firmer, with only minor fluctuations reported in early May.

Market participants attributed the earlier rally to a combination of geopolitical tensions, rising freight rates, stronger CBOT soybean futures, and tighter supplies from key exporters such as Brazil and Argentina.

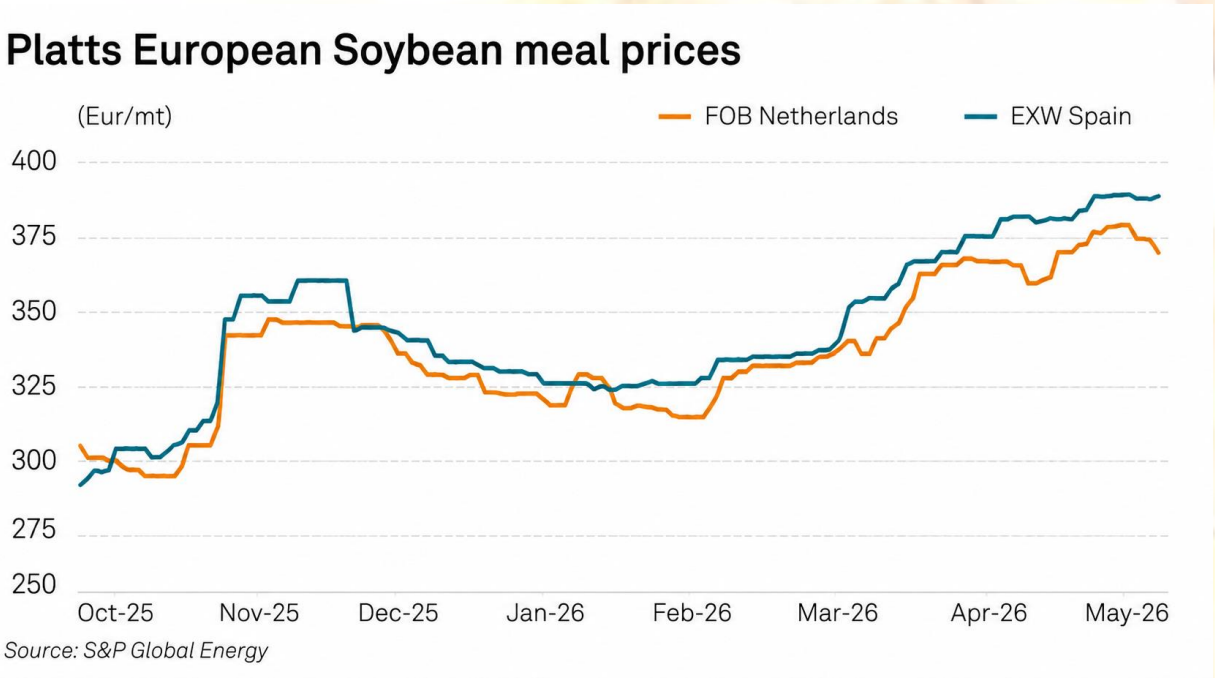
Traders noted that escalating tensions in the Middle East pushed freight costs up by approximately 20-25% during March, significantly increasing import costs for European buyers. Higher fertilizer costs and limited availability from Argentina also contributed to rising export premiums.

More recently, however, sentiment has started to weaken as Chicago soybean meal futures declined and offers from origins became more competitive.

Traders in the Netherlands reported softer offers at the beginning of May, signaling a shift toward a more relaxed market environment.

In Spain, the market remains inverted, with May soybean meal prices trading around Eur19-20/tonne above June values. Market participants expect large cargo arrivals during the second half of May, which could place additional pressure on nearby prices.

According to traders, many buyers are currently delaying purchases in anticipation that increased supply from South America's new crop may push prices lower in the coming weeks. [1]



South Korea's FLC Buys 132,000 Tonnes of Feed Corn

South Korea's Feed Leaders Committee (FLC) purchased approximately 132,000 tonnes of animal feed corn in an international tender held on Thursday, according to European traders.

The corn was bought from optional origins and is expected to arrive in South Korea in September.

One cargo of 65,000 tonnes was reportedly purchased from trading house Sucden at an estimated price of $268.30 per tonne cost and freight (C&F).

A second cargo totaling 67,000 tonnes was bought from Mitsui. Of this volume, 47,000 tonnes were reportedly purchased at an estimated $267.89 per tonne C&F, while the remaining quantity was bought at a premium of 215.50 U.S. cents per bushel over Chicago May corn futures.

Market participants noted that the figures reflect preliminary trader estimates, and final volumes and pricing details could still be revised. [1]

Canada's Oilseed Production Forecast to Decline in 2026/27

Canada's total oilseed production, including canola, soybeans, and sunflowerseed, is forecast to decline by 4% year-on-year in the 2026/27 season to 27.55 million tonnes, according to a report released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The forecast is based on Statistics Canada's seeding intentions survey for 2026/27 and assumptions that canola and sunflowerseed yields will return to their three-year averages, while soybean yields are expected to recover to average levels as well.

Despite a 1% increase in planted canola area, total canola production is projected to fall from 20.8 million tonnes in 2025/26 to 20.1 million tonnes due to lower expected yields.

In contrast, soybean production is forecast to increase from 6.79 million tonnes to 7.38 million tonnes, supported by a 1.8% rise in planted area to 2.38 million hectares.

Sunflowerseed production, which represents a relatively small segment of Canada's oilseed sector, is expected to decline by 13% year-on-year to 60,000 tonnes.

The USDA also expects changes in Canada's export structure. Canola seed exports are forecast to decline by 14% in 2026/27 as domestic crushing capacity continues to expand. Canada's canola processing capacity is projected to increase from 13.56 million tonnes in 2025 to 14.8 million tonnes by the end of 2026.

At the same time, total oilseed exports are expected to rise by 7%, largely driven by stronger soybean exports supported by growing demand for biofuel feedstocks in the United States.

The report highlighted the importance of China for Canada's canola industry. In 2023, considered the last "normal" trading year, China accounted for 65% of Canada's canola seed exports, 34% of canola meal exports, and 3.7% of canola oil exports, representing a combined trade value of approximately $3.7 billion.

However, trade relations between the two countries have remained volatile. China previously imposed a 100% tariff on Canadian canola oil and meal, while preliminary tariffs of 75.8% were introduced on canola seed in August 2025.

More recently, Beijing announced a temporary suspension of tariffs on Canadian canola meal from March 1 through the end of 2026. China also reduced its anti-dumping tariff on Canadian canola seed from 75.8% to 5.9%.

Nevertheless, Canadian canola oil continues to face a 100% tariff in the Chinese market, the USDA report noted. [1]

US Wheat Production Expected to Decline Sharply in 2026

Winter wheat farmers across the central and southern Great Plains are facing one of the most difficult seasons in recent years after extreme weather severely damaged crops across key producing states, particularly Kansas and Oklahoma.

Merrill Nielsen, a farmer in north-central Kansas, said his wheat crop initially developed well after beneficial autumn rainfall. However, an unusually warm and dry winter followed by sharp

temperature swings between spring-like warmth and freezing conditions placed severe stress on the crop.

According to a crop insurance assessment, Nielsen's wheat fields are expected to yield only around two bushels per acre, compared with normal yields of 40-55 bushels per acre. As a result, he decided to abandon harvesting the crop altogether.

Farmers across the region are reporting similar conditions. Kansas and Oklahoma experienced their second-warmest period on record between March 2025 and March 2026, while March temperatures were reportedly 10-11°F above normal. Meteorologists noted that prolonged heat and drought intensified crop stress and worsened moisture deficits.

The US Department of Agriculture's latest crop condition report rated 44% of Kansas wheat and 49% of Oklahoma wheat in poor or very poor condition, among the weakest ratings in recent history and comparable to the severe drought year of 2023.

Kansas remains the largest producer of hard red winter wheat in the United States, a key bread-making wheat variety also widely grown in Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, and Nebraska.

Experts warn that reduced planted acreage, drought damage, and abandoned fields are likely to significantly lower US wheat production this season. Earlier this year, the USDA projected total US wheat acreage at its lowest level since 1919.

Kansas State University wheat specialists estimate Kansas wheat production could fall to 200-220 million bushels, far below the state's 10-year average of 317 million bushels.

Analysts also noted that wheat acreage in the United States has been declining in recent years as farmers shifted toward more profitable crops such as corn and soybeans. However, current low grain prices and rising production costs are now affecting profitability across nearly all crop sectors.

Meteorologists and researchers increasingly point to climate change as a contributing factor behind the unusual weather patterns. Farmers reported that inconsistent rainfall, prolonged warmth, and sudden freezes disrupted normal crop dormancy and increased vulnerability to damage during critical development stages.

Despite concerns over this year's harvest, the United States is not expected to face immediate wheat shortages due to large carryover supplies from last season's strong crop. However, analysts warn that continued weather instability could create longer-term risks for US wheat production.[1]

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