

## The President of Latvia and the Minister of Agriculture discuss the transit of Ukrainian grain

Published more than 1 year ago

Published: 31.07.2023.



On 31 July President Edgars Rinkēvičs met with Minister of Agriculture Didzis Šmits at the Riga Castle. During the meeting, the parties discussed current issues in the agricultural sector in Latvia, in particular the increase in prices of food produced in Latvia in supermarket chains, the impact of the prolonged drought and frost on the harvest of cereals, fruits, and vegetables, as well as the possibility for Latvia to secure the transit of Ukrainian grain.

Since Russia's withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the targeted destruction of Ukraine's port infrastructure, Ukraine has been raising the issue of alternative grain export routes at all levels, including through Baltic ports. President Rinkēvičs expressed the opinion that Latvian ports have a significant capacity to ensure the transit of Ukrainian grain and Latvia is interested in supporting Ukraine in the development of alternative grain export routes.

"Latvian ports are capable of handling significant volumes of Ukrainian agricultural production," emphasised E. Rinkēvičs. The officials also discussed the need to reduce administrative barriers and to streamline or transfer veterinary and phytosanitary controls to ports.



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