

They Are Slaughtering the Cattle Again! — and the agro-holdings grow fat

AGRO-CORPORATIONS & THE STATE

# They Are Slaughtering the Cattle Again!

— and the agro-holdings grow fat

*In the Volga region and Siberia, thousands of head of livestock are being destroyed on so-called sanitary grounds. Farmers are blockading roads. They have seen no documents. Compensation is a pittance. History rhymes with frightening precision.*

Eastern Post Editorial · March 2026 · London

They are slaughtering the cattle again. Not merely the ruin of the small farmer — the outright destruction of Russia's independent agriculture has been proceeding in recent years with astonishing speed. Probably no drought, however severe, ever ruined as many peasant households as the present policy of "sanitary" livestock confiscation.

Against the farmer have combined all the most powerful forces of the modern age: the agro-holdings, which have seized processing, logistics and retail networks; the war state, conducting its costly operation in Ukraine and piling every unbearable burden onto the working masses; and, finally, the bureaucratic machine, which has learned perfectly not how to fight the disaster, but how to fight those who want the truth about it.

## I. What Is Happening — The Bare Figures

Since the beginning of 2026, in the Novosibirsk, Omsk, Sverdlovsk regions and the Volga area, farmers have been having their cattle seized and immediately destroyed. The official grounds: pasteurellosis, rabies, "possibly foot-and-mouth." The count is already in the thousands of head. But here is what is curious:

Pasteurellosis is treated with antibiotics — not a single veterinary law provides for mass slaughter on account of it.

Rabies is transmitted only through a bite — one sick animal is isolated, not the entire herd put to the knife.

The quarantine order carries a “for official use only” classification — the farmers cannot examine it.

Animals are slaughtered in the owners’ absence. Compensation: 173 roubles per kilogram of live weight, at a market price three to four times higher. Police have set up checkpoints at village entrances. People are blockading roads. The Investigative Committee opens an inquiry — and closes it in silence.

**FORBES.RU · MARCH 2026 · WORDS FROM THE SCENE**

*“Slaughter carried out without legal grounds can be challenged... If the slaughter was conducted on the pretext of pasteurellosis, the governor’s decree can be contested, since no such measure exists in law.”*

— Lawyer Andrei Kuzmin

*“Pasteurella is a bacterium that is treated with antibiotics. A quarantine is declared with preventive and treatment measures; the disease does not require mass slaughter.”*

— Alexandra Pyanova, National Veterinary Chamber

The governor of Sverdlovsk Region did not lose his composure. He announced that foot-and-mouth had “entered Russia as part of a sabotage operation through the feed of a German firm.” Comment is superfluous. Mr. Sipyagin, in his time, was never at a loss for explanations either.

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## **II. When Confiscation Was a Necessity**

Before we continue, a word of justice regarding the seizure of grain and livestock in 1932, which to this day serves as the principal instrument of anti-Soviet propaganda. Walter Duranty — the New York Times correspondent in Moscow, an eyewitness to those events — left in his 1944 book a testimony that must be known.

**WALTER DURANTY · USSR: THE STORY OF SOVIET RUSSIA · 1944**

*Orders were given in March, at the beginning of the spring sowing period in the Ukraine and North Caucasus and Lower Volga, that two million tons of grain must be collected within thirty days because the Army had to have it. It had to be collected, without argument, on pain of death.*

*That was the dreadful truth of the so-called 'man-made famine'... Japan was poised to strike and the Red Army must have reserves of food and gasoline. Stalin had won his game against terrific odds, but Russia had paid in lives as heavily as for war.*

*Their animals were dead — there wasn't a cat or a dog in the whole village. They had eaten their horses and oxen, what was left of them. They were starving.*  
— Walter Duranty, 1944

Japan had seized Manchuria in September 1931. By 1932 the Soviet leadership was convinced that Japan proposed to follow its Manchurian action with a drive through Outer Mongolia to the Russian area south of Lake Baikal. The Red Army had not enough food reserves to fight a war — and the Japanese did not know it. The bluff worked: Japan turned south, into China. The countryside paid a terrible price — but the Soviet state held.

That was a forced military measure in the face of a real threat — not the caprice of a dictator. The present mass slaughter of livestock in Siberia and the Volga region is dictated by no military necessity whatsoever. A quite different logic is at work.

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### III. Three Versions — One Beneficiary

Version one, official: a sanitary threat, a state necessity. In November 2025, Agriculture Minister Oksana Lut declared that Russia expected growth in the production of meat, milk and eggs. Four months later — mass slaughter across several regions. Words and deeds diverge, as is customary.

Version two, the market version: Russia has seen signs of milk overproduction. The agro-holdings are feeling price pressure. The small farming households of Siberia and the Volga are their direct competitors. The state veterinary apparatus is a convenient and cheap instrument for eliminating those competitors. Forbes.ru names the version outright: “there is a version circulating on social media that the customers behind the slaughter are large companies disposing of their rivals.”

Version three, the export version: a real outbreak of foot-and-mouth that cannot be acknowledged officially, because acknowledgement would immediately close Russian meat and dairy exports to China. Rosselkhoznadzor names pasteurellosis — a disease for which mass slaughter is not prescribed by law, yet one that a farmer has virtually no means of contesting. This is not veterinary medicine. It is politics.

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*There is a simple rule of political economy: when the state acts against obvious common sense — find who stands to gain.*

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## IV. Sipyagin Lives. He Has Changed His Office

A reader acquainted with Russian history will be surprised by none of the foregoing. As long ago as 1901, Interior Minister Sipyagin issued his famous circular on “combating the starving” — and set out, with remarkable candour, the same logic that the Ministry of Agriculture is pursuing today.

At that time, the zemstvo of Vyatka Province calculated the population’s need at 1.1 million puds of grain. The Ministry allocated 782 thousand. In Ufa Province the zemstvo put the need at 2.2 million puds — the Ministry allocated 800 thousand, exactly four times less. That is not a miscalculation. That is a system.

Today: the Ministry of Agriculture pays compensation of 173 roubles per kilogram against a market price of 450–600 roubles. The farmer receives between a third and a quarter of the real value of his destroyed property. And this is called “compensation.” Mr. Sipyagin likewise called his handouts “aid to the starving.”

**LENIN · 'A REVIEW OF HOME AFFAIRS' · ZARYA NO. 2–3, DECEMBER 1901**

*“The peasants are already selling off their livestock — and yet the government stubbornly continues to declare that the province has had a good harvest.”*

*“It is not difficult to imagine how the local volost authorities treat the starving peasants who have accumulated arrears and are demanding relief loans after such a declaration by the governor!”*

*“This is not a struggle against famine — it is a struggle against those who want to give real help to the starving.”*

— V.I. Lenin, 1901

Replace “volost authorities” with “veterinary services,” “arrears” with “sanitary orders without documentation,” “governor” with “the Ministry of Agriculture under a restricted-access stamp.” The text was written one hundred and twenty-five years ago — yet it describes the events of March 2026 with the precision of a chronicle.

## V. He Who Gains Is He Who Ordered It

The small farmer in Russia already exists in conditions where his ruin is merely a question of time. The land market is monopolised. Credit is inaccessible. Sales channels are controlled by retail chains affiliated with the same agro-holdings. State subsidies go predominantly to the large producers.

The present mass slaughter is not an exception to the rules. It is the rule, applied with particular brutality. A farmer who has lost a herd of fifty head will not return to production. He has neither

the capital (the compensation does not cover even a third of his losses), nor the credit, nor the time. The vacated market share will be taken by an agro-holding — quietly, without a word.

This is precisely how consolidation of production is accomplished in a country where no functioning institutions of property protection exist. Not through honest competition — through the state apparatus, used as an instrument of redistribution. The Buguruslan district of Samara Province in 1901: land there was rising sharply in price and being bought up at the very moment when the peasant masses around it were being ruined by famine.

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*“The starving peasants and the unemployed workers may console themselves: the treasury’s money will not be squandered unproductively on relief — no, it will flow into the pockets of...”*

— Written in 1901. Fits 2026 just as well.

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## **VI. Against Those Who Speak the Truth**

According to reports from Forbes.ru and Kedr.media, independent veterinarians who dare to say that the slaughter is medically unjustified, and journalists who write about it, run straight into a wall of blocked access to information. Rosselkhoznadzor does not respond to enquiries. Documents are classified. Local officials say only what they are told to say.

Mr. Sipyagin in 1901 likewise thundered against the philanthropists who “endeavour to arouse in the population discontent with existing conditions.” Today the word “philanthropist” has been replaced by “foreign agent” or simply “scaremonger,” but the substance is the same: a police government fears every truthful word addressed directly to the people.

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## **In Place of a Conclusion**

They slaughter the cattle because they want the land. But the cattle are only the beginning. After the cattle comes the land, after the land comes the labour, after the labour comes the man himself — turned into a hired hand on an agro-holding. That is the logical end of a system in which the state apparatus is nothing other than a committee for managing the affairs of the ruling class.

Roselkhoznadzor is not guilty of the deaths of thousands of head of livestock. The governor’s circular stamped “restricted” is not guilty. Guilty is that system in which compensation of 173 roubles per kilogram is not the caprice of a bureaucrat, but the inescapable logic of the order of things. As long as the land, the processing and the sales channels belong to a dozen corporations — the farmer will be ruined. Ruined legally, by documentation, with the stamp of the veterinary service.

Let us work to ensure that every working man in the countryside — not only in the Volga region, not only in Siberia — clearly understands: no court appeal, no complaint to the prosecutor, no

deputy's inquiry will return a single slaughtered cow, so long as the one who gives the order for the slaughter and the one who receives the vacated market are one and the same person — merely sitting in different offices.

The small producer cannot win alone. He wins only when he understands that his enemy is not the veterinary inspector with his order, but the system that sent that inspector. Only the replacement of the system in which the state apparatus serves the interests of agro-holdings and oligarchs rather than the producer and the working man — only that will give the farmer genuine protection of his property, genuine compensation, genuine justice.

*The cattle are always slaughtered by those who want the land.*

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### **P.S. — From the Editors. To Those Already Crying “Dekulakisation”**

The editors can already hear the chorus. From London, Washington, Berlin and Kiev — and from Moscow kitchen tables — comes the familiar cry: “dekulakisation,” “1937,” “Stalin is back.” We answer in advance.

First — and most important. Those who cry “dekulakisation” either do not know what the word means, or pretend not to.

Dekulakisation was the destruction of the large rural proprietor in favour of the collective farm. The kulak was the village capitalist: he bought up land from ruined neighbours, lent grain at interest, hired labourers. By the standards of the 1920s village, he was the local monopoly. The state destroyed him.

What is happening today is the precise opposite. Today the large monopoly is destroying the small producer. Miratorg, Rusagro, EkoNiva — these are the kulak raised to industrial scale. This is the landlord whom the revolution of 1917 liquidated — returned now in the costume of a joint-stock company.

The farmer with a herd of fifty head is the very middle peasant whom Lenin categorically forbade touching. “The middle peasant is not our enemy” — that is not an agitprop slogan. It was a directive, for the violation of which officials were dismissed.

Stalin dekulakised the landlord and the rural capitalist. Today the rural capitalist — backed by the state veterinary apparatus — is dekulakising the middle peasant. History has been turned on its head.

Second. This is not a Russian peculiarity. It is the law of capital concentration, described a century and a half ago and unchanged by a single iota since: large capital absorbs small capital — not because it is evil, but because that is the mechanics of the system. In the United States this was called “farm consolidation” — between 1950 and 2020 the number of farms fell from 5.6 million to 2 million. The land went nowhere. It passed to corporations. Without a single veterinary circular — simply through the credit noose and price dumping.

In Russia the same process moves faster and more crudely — because there are no functioning institutions of property protection and no independent courts. Hence, instead of the credit noose — a sanitary circular stamped “restricted.” The instrument differs. The result is the same: the land passes to the large.

Third. When in 2008 the American government rescued Goldman Sachs and JPMorgan at taxpayer expense while simultaneously putting three million mortgage borrowers on the street — nobody cried “dekulakisation.” When British austerity policy in 2010–2015 ruined thousands of small farmers — the BBC did not run the headline “New Kulak Purge.” The mechanism is identical. The vocabulary differs.

Fourth. We do not defend the Russian state. We describe the mechanism. That mechanism is the same everywhere large capital gains access to the state apparatus. The difference between Russia and the West is not in the mechanism but in the speed and the candour. Here they do not bother with disguise.

Fifth. If you genuinely care about the fate of the Russian farmer — demand specifics: publication of veterinary orders, independent inspections, market-rate compensation. The cry “Stalin is back!” is not a demand. It is a way of not thinking and not doing anything. And above all — it is a way of not noticing that exactly the same process is under way at home. Only quieter.

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Article prepared by the Eastern Post editorial board based on materials from Forbes.ru, Kedr.media, Radio Liberty · March 2026

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