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Green

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Russia Defers Razing of Seed Repository

By [ELISABETH ROSENTHAL](#)

Associated Press Svetlana Arbuzova, a scientist at the Pavlovsk Research Station, weeds near a cherry seedling.

A quick update on the battle to save a Russian seed bank, the Pavlovsk Research Station outside St. Petersburg:

Scientists from across the globe have been appealing to President Dmitri Medvedev to rethink a government decision to allow the seed bank, home to the largest collection of European fruits and berries in the world, to be plowed away to make way for luxury homes. And that has now apparently had some effect: this week, the Russian Housing Development Foundation, the agency auctioning the land for the construction of apartments, decided that it would delay destruction of one parcel, according to the Global Crop Diversity Trust, a group that has been leading the global campaign to halt the project.

The delay will allow the government to further study the value of the crops at the site, which is run by the N.I. Vavilov Research Institute of Plant Industry, officials said.

Yet the decision affects the collection of plants for animal feed rather than the more important fruit and berry collection, said the trust, which characterized the development as “One step forward, several more needed.”

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