《双语：日本方形西瓜300倍高价受俄罗斯富人追捧》

Pity the nouveau riche Russians who missed last week's bargain on Japanese-grown, cube-shaped watermelons at high-end Moscow markets: Just $700.

But news of the novelty, a couple of weeks before the start of Russia's watermelon season, has boosted the price in recent days to around $860, according to news reports.

That's more than 300 times the price of your standard melon, the Kyodo news agency said.

Japanese like to give watermelons as presents, especially during the summer gift-giving season known as ochugen.

Early in their development, the melons are put into transparent boxes, where they grow to maturity.

Why the cube? To save space in the small refrigerators found in the cramped quarters of most Japanese. Compared with Russia, the melons are a steal: about $80.

Before The Moscow Times carried an Interfax news agency report Friday on the strange fruit, they weren't leaping out of the bins.

"There has been no rush," an assistant said at one of the unidentified chain's stores. A few customers had bought them "just for fun."

Over the weekend, the price jumped about $150 as demand rose.

Not bad for something intended only as a decoration: The melons were picked for export to Russia before they were ripe, the BBC notes.

简答网 jiandongshicai.cn

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