

30 years in farming business

EkoNiva's establishment
and evolution

Pages 3, 20-21



Skimming the cream off

The Group continues receiving
accolades and extending
its SKU range

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AGROZNAK – mark of quality

EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding
launches its own spare parts
trademark

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Stefan Dürr: On my way from the USSR, I already felt eager to return

After my internship in the USSR in 1989, I think I felt eager to return already on the way back home. I realised that I wanted to associate my life with this country in some way.

The Iron Curtain had just got lifted in West Germany, my homeland, and nobody there really had any idea about the life in the USSR. We had been told that people in Russia were poor, gloomy and never smiled. But the reality proved different.

After a month of internship on a collective farm near Moscow, I already spoke some Russian and really enjoyed communicating with locals. Wherever I came, I met friendly, open, sincere and helpful people. Yes, products were scarce on the shop shelves, however, the tables set for guests were always full of treats. It was the paradox: the refrigerators were filled with food while the stores were empty. How come?

In the Russian countryside, I saw a lot of strong-spirited and kind-hearted people and quite a high level of agricultural production. I was lucky to have time to evaluate the Soviet operation system and learnt a lot from it: for example, how to manage a big enterprise and big teams of people. As there were no large farms in West Germany, we hadn't been taught such skills.

My first mentor was agronomist Petrovich, with whom we still keep in touch. Our first job together was rapeseed sowing and I remember him saying, 'Let's first work on a small plot of around 50 hectares.' I was shocked as our entire farm in Germany had just 12 hectares.

On the one hand, I encountered enough problems in the system: low accountability and salaries that didn't incentivise, very little initiative and motivation only by order from the top. But on the other hand, the scale of opportunities was unimaginable: the endless fields stretched beyond the horizon, fertile soil, hard-working people – so much space for working and creating. I remember realising at that moment: if farming has a future, this future is here. Thus, I decided to give it a shot.

To be honest, that period wasn't the best time for it. Doing business in Russia was a very tough task for a foreigner in the early 90's. There were no established rules of business to say nothing of the legal framework. It was a very hard time for agriculture: amid chaos and confusion, land was privatised, although there was a unique chance to manage it competently. There was no state support. All the Soviet legacy got destroyed.

Exporting gas and importing food was a desired economy model. Under such conditions, we started our business. I often heard then, 'You are a foreigner – your opportunities are different. Oil, gas and telecommunications are the most prospective sectors, why did you choose agriculture?' They twisted a finger at a temple and considered me a weirdo. I can't say I had a long-term plan – I just followed my gut and passion. It was hard at the beginning, but step by step, our business started taking off.

Thirty years later, the situation in the country, its farming sector and our company has drastically changed. Agriculture is the priority sector for the government.

Everybody understands now that the country must be self-sufficient in food. Despite all the hardships we have gone through in Russia, I can declare that no western country has comparable conditions and opportunities for farming business.

Young people have started to take interest in agriculture. Generally, people's mentality has transformed, I can see this in our employees. What has remained unchanged is the ability of Russian people to overcome difficulties and solve problems. They never give up and always find a way out of a seemingly hopeless situation. I am learning this, too.

Stefan DÜRR,
President of EkoNiva Group



Stefan Dürr and Mikhail Shirkov, Director of Niva agricultural firm, Kursk region, 1991

Spring fieldwork in full gear



EkoNiva farms are busy with spring fieldwork planning to harvest 465,000 ha across 13 regions of operation.

As soon as the weather conditions are right, EkoNiva subdivisions kick off fieldworks across various regions of Russia. The production enterprises in Voronezh oblast were the first ones to get down to work. They have over 18,000 ha of winter crops including wheat

(2/3 of the area), rye, triticale and annual forage grasses, all demonstrating good emergence.

In Kursk oblast, the farm started side dressing the winter wheat, the total area of which makes 4,800 ha in the region. The purpose of winter crop side dressing is to ensure enough

nitrogen for the plants to boost the vegetation and make them stronger, which will ultimately improve the yields. After that, the team will move on to tillage before spring sowing.

'Before side dressing, our agronomists evaluate multiple parameters: for instance, the weather forecast for the next several days, plant viability based on the monolith regrowth, crop development stage, sugar amount and so on. Pursuant to these data,

we calculate the fertiliser amount required and the optimum application timing', says Aleksandr Anpilov, Crop Production Director of EkoNiva Group.

In 2024, EkoNiva enterprises are planning to harvest 465,000 ha across 13 regions of operation allocating over 190,000 ha for fodder crops, over 220,000 ha for cash crops (with 69,000 ha of winter crops) and over 40,000 ha for seed growing.

Wholesome milk from Anna



More EkoNiva processing facilities are allowed to sell the produce to the neighbouring countries. After the audit by the representatives of Russian Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance, Anna milk processing plant has been certified as complying with the requirements of the Customs Union and Abkhazia. Now these countries can import a wider range of delicious products including the curds.

Anna milk processing facility supplies its various dairy to all federal retail chains and brand shops in many regions of Russia. Moreover, a growing number of foreign countries including China can enjoy the wholesome EKONIVA milk from Anna.

The Group started to deliver UHT milk, cream and butter to the CU countries in 2019. In September 2022, Anna facility launched the curds plant with an area of 300 sq.m. and a production capacity of 10 tonnes per day. With the fully automated line, the plant puts out 5% and 9% curds. The product can be packed in 180-gramme bricks or 300-gramme and 750-gramme 3-seal bags. All the curds items can now be shipped to Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Later, in May 2023, EkoNiva had its cheese plant in Voronezh oblast certified to export to the CU countries, and currently, the

variety of dairy eligible for shipping to the CU includes semi-hard and hard cheeses.

Besides, the list of EKONIVA product importers now features Abkhazia, as Anna milk processing plant has received all the necessary permits to sell UHT milk, UHT cream, butter and curds to the republic.

'The exports to the neighbouring countries actively developed since 2022 have been demonstrating positive dynamics. The geographic proximity is an advantage enabling to devise efficient logistic chains and deliver fresh dairy of short shelf life. We see good prospects of this business and expect a wider range of our delicious dairy to become available for the population of Abkhazia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan', comments Aleksey Maslennikov, Deputy Director General for Marketing and Sales, EkoNiva-Food.

By Eleonora DUBININA

EkoNiva expands portfolio

New EN Altais, EN Isida winter wheat and EN Avior soya bean varieties bred by EkoNiva Plant Breeding and Seed Maintenance Centre have been entered into the State Register of Plant Breeding Achievements in 2024. They are allowed for use in the Central Black Soil and Middle Volga regions.

The main difference between the new winter wheat varieties and those already available in EkoNiva-Semena's portfolio is that the spike of the former is awnless. The novelties are recommended for intensive cultivation and in terms of baking quality belong to the class of valuable wheat. The varieties feature high winter hardiness, plasticity and good lodging resistance.

'It is important to underline the resistance to grain shattering and sprouting, good tillering capacity and increased milling yield of the new varieties. EN Altais and EN Isida are resistant to major fungal diseases in the field conditions', says Andrey Zvyagin, Originator

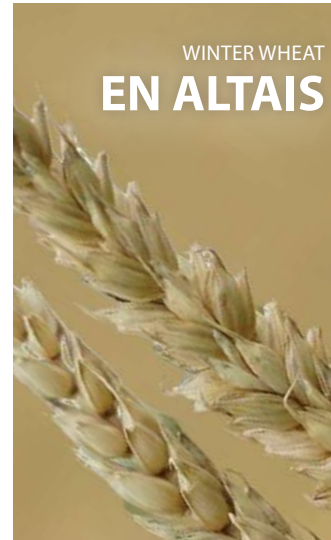
of Varieties and Head of Cereal Breeding and Seed Maintenance Department at EkoNiva.

The maximum yield of EN Isida reached 12.44 t/ha at Zashchitnoye, Kursk oblast, in 2023.

The record output of EN Altais in the last agricultural season – 12.63 t/ha – was also delivered in Kursk subdivision of the Group.

EN Avior, an early-ripening soya bean variety, has also been added to the State Register. It is regionally adapted for the Central Black Soil Region.

'It is important that EN Avior is the first achievement of the breeding programme involving photoperiodic response genetics with the



use of molecular markers', emphasises Vladislav Rosenzweig, one of the Originators of the variety, EkoNiva Plant Breeder.

The new soya bean variety can be a good predecessor to winter crops, has high resistance to lodging and a high protein content of 39-43%. Its average yield exceeds 3.5 t/ha.

'The approval of our varieties by the State Variety Testing Commission confirms that we have chosen the right breeding programmes and that our work is valuable and useful. Our plant breeders create competitive marginal varieties capable of producing stable



yields in different agroclimatic conditions', stresses Vitaliy Voloshchenko, Director of Plant Breeding and Seed Maintenance Centre of EkoNiva Group.

Today, EkoNiva's portfolio comprises 9 winter wheat and 4 soya bean varieties of in-house breeding. Several more varieties have been submitted for state trials to the State Variety Testing Commission. In addition to the breeding programmes for winter wheat and soya beans, the company has commenced an endeavour to develop new varieties of lentils, spring soft wheat, lupine and chickpeas.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

Made in Russia

EkoNiva has participated in the first Made in Russia festival and fair in China. The innovative event aimed at promoting Russian-made goods featured numerous cooking shows and tastings of Russian products, including dairy and cheese.

From 27 January to 5 February, Shenyang, Liaoning Province, hosted the Made in Russia festival and fair organised by the Russian Export Centre (REC, VEB.RF State Corporation) and supported by the Government of Russia and the People's Government of Liaoning. Overall, more than 130 companies from 30 regions of Russia took part in the pilot festival and fair. In total, about 1,500 items including various sweets, drinks,

natural dairy, fresh seafood and other products from Russian manufacturers were presented at the event. Chinese residents can buy these goods in the national Made in Russia stores in Tmall, Taobao, WeChat, JD and Douyin Store marketplaces.

'We offer China the best that is Made in Russia: our hospitality, traditions and natural, high-quality, delicious food produce. We are confident that this will bring our countries a little closer to each other',



says Veronika Nikishina, Director General of the Russian Export Centre.

'We believe that direct interaction with customers facilitated by such events enables us to introduce Russian milk and dairy products to as

many consumers as possible. Our natural and wholesome dairy of premium quality is valued by discerning Chinese consumers', comments Aleksandra Averyanova, Export Director of EkoNiva-Food.

By Eleonora DUBININA

AGROZNAK – mark of quality

EkoNiva dealership holding has launched its own trademark of spare parts and technical fluids. It is equally important that the production is entirely based in Russia.

After numerous farm machinery manufacturers had withdrawn from the Russian market 2 years ago and the sanctions had been tightened, many agricultural producers were concerned about the spare part availability. Fortunately, EkoNiva had foreseen the risks. To ensure an uninterrupted operation of its partners' businesses, in 2022, the company launched production of its own spare parts and technical fluids under AGROZNAK brand, which currently offers over 2,500 items of oils, lubricants, filters, transmissions and its components, gaskets, fittings, chains, etc.

To provide farms with necessary spare parts on time the company cooperates with 44 facilities to manufacture approved components and 30 more to run preproduction tests and trials of new



items and launch them into production promptly afterwards.

'Farmers opt for AGROZNAK for the quality and guarantee of smooth machine operation without any downtime throughout

the season', comments Dmitriy Fetisov, Manager of Import Substitution Division at EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding.

'We adhere to the stringent standards of materials, production process and quality control

for each item. Thus, we can provide extensive warranty on each component. We offer affordable prices as we produce good-quality spare parts here in Russia at a lower cost. At the same time, we invest into the domestic economy.'

Our internal quality assessment system leaves no room for defects: the materials and spare part parameters are verified at our own labs. The gearbox and axle parts are subject to field tests. Besides, we have a system in place to monitor component hours in service.

The range is going to be further expanded and is expected to reach 6,000 items of essential stock in the short term and 40,000 items in total ultimately.

Together with the company's extensive warehouse chain, the new brand ensures that our customers get necessary spare parts promptly and keep their peace of mind throughout the season.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV



+12 regions

EkoNiva dealership holding has opened new branch offices in 12 more regions of Russia. Considering the complicated situation with the withdrawal of many foreign farm machinery manufacturers and increasing sanction pressure, the company invests a lot of efforts in supporting agricultural producers.

The timely provision of quality spare parts, consumables and expertise is essential for any farm to ensure an uninterrupted equipment operation in the season. Currently, these issues are extremely challenging and require efficient response more than ever. The response of EkoNiva-Tekhnika and EkoNiva-Chernozemye includes expansion into new territories – 12 additional subsidiaries have been opened to cover the total of 37 regions in Russia. New subsidiaries were launched in Samara, Saratov, Nizhniy Novgorod, Oryol, Bryansk, Rostov-on-Don, Volgograd, Lipetsk and Tambov.

'To be closer to our partners, assist them in building up the technical fleet and properly prepare it for the season, we are expanding into new areas of responsibility and implementing upgraded technological solutions', says Maksim Gudukin, Executive

Director of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'We are improving the logistics and infrastructure and looking for new suppliers. Besides, contributing to the import substitution, we have registered our own spare part trademark. The expansion of our network and the volume increase enable our partners to reduce their expenses as the cost per component becomes lower.'

Currently, the company employing 840 highly qualified specialists services a total of 26,500 units. This includes defect identification, repairs, preventive maintenance on schedule, availability of critical and quick wear part stock in close proximity.

In other words, EkoNiva-Tekhnika's partners can be positive that the dealer does its best to secure their dynamic development at any moment.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

Launch of the year

EkoNiva has been announced the winner of the Agriinvestor of the Year 2023 award in the category ‘Launch of the Year: Services for Agricultural Sector’. Last autumn, EkoNiva was the first company in Russia to start commodity stock auctions for raw cow milk and dairy products, which were organised by the National Commodity Exchange (the NCE is a subsidiary of Moscow Exchange Group).

The trading sessions are carried out online at the NCE in the second half of each month. The sessions are accessible for EkoNiva Group contractors registered on the platform. The Group keeps developing the tool expanding the delivery bases and inviting more partners from various Russian regions. EkoNiva is planning to sign and perform all the spot contracts through the commodity exchange.

‘The milk trading launch at the NCE is a bold step for the industry and is perceived as innovation in the exchange trading development. EkoNiva team’s business acumen and determination to excel

ensure their progress and further growth’, comments Nikita Zakharov, Director of the National Commodity Exchange.

‘Stock trading is an effective tool applied by various agricultural producers. The Agriinvestor of the Year award proves our project importance and, as we hope, will bring more companies to the NCE platform’, says Mikhail Matveyenko, Deputy Director General of EkoNiva-APK Holding.

The national annual Agriinvestor of the Year award has been held by Agriinvestor magazine since 2019. The



award is created for both large agricultural holdings and small farms and its mission is to promote entrepreneurship in the farming sector putting the most successful projects and managers in the limelight. The award in the Launch of the Year category is the

company’s third victory: in 2021, Stefan Dürr, EkoNiva Group President, was announced the Man of the Year; in 2023, EkoNiva Group received an accolade in the Crop Exporter category.

By Eleonora DUBININA

Harvesting medals



The six-month-aged Dürr hard cheese and EKONIVA 3.2% kefir have been awarded a medal and Moscow Quality Certificate at the Prodexpo 2024 international trade fair.

The last day of the exhibition is always marked by The Best Product award ceremony. The 6-month-aged Dürr hard cheese was granted a diploma and a gold medal. The fine cheese is produced at EkoNiva’s plant in Schchuchye village, Voronezh oblast. After its release in late 2021, it has become many consumers’ choice. The

six-month-aged Dürr cheese of Bergkäse type is made with Brevibacterium linens strain which forms orange-shaded smear rind and imparts unique flavour to it. The cheese has a pungent flavour with spicy herbal overtones and a firm, eyeless texture.

The Best Product 2024 medal is not the first accolade of the 6-month-aged Dürr. In January 2022, it was granted 3 stars out of 3 at Superior Taste Award in Brussels with a score of 93.4 out of 100.

On the second day of Prodexpo, Moscow Quality competition announced its winners. EKONIVA kefir claimed second place in the Milk and Dairy Products and the 3.2% Kefir categories. Now the company has a certificate entitling it to put Moscow Quality 2024 mark on the packaging of the said product. The competition was organised by the Moscow Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The nominated products were selected in several steps including a survey of Moscow residents and professional expertise.

By Eleonora DUBININA

Ramping up organic production



Savinskaya Niva organic enterprise, part of EkoNiva Group, has increased the herd productivity and stepped up raw milk production. Such growth stems from a successful experiment on improving nutritional values of feedstuffs and completion of the conversion period for the cattle brought to the dairy last year. As a result, the daily milk yields rose by 50%.

In 2022, Savinskaya Niva reaped the first yield of organic faba beans. The following season, this successful practice was scaled up and the crop was planted on 250 hectares. The beans grown in 2023 provided

the cows with high-quality protein for the entire winter. In addition, the farm continued supplementing the rations with ground flax, which helps to protect the cows' mucous membranes and is an excellent source of energy due

to the fat content reaching up to 40%. Finally, it is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, in particular alpha-linolenic acid essential for both human and animal diets.

In late January 2024, the herd which had been

previously brought to Savinskaya Niva completed its transition from conventional to organic farming. The enterprise received 108 Simmental pregnant heifers, 115 young heifers and 6 bulls in July 2023. The cattle successfully adapted to the new conditions and the pregnant heifers had their progeny. Currently, there are about 430 dairy cows at Savinskaya Niva.

'Prior to the arrival of the new herd, we produced around 4.5 tonnes of organic milk per day, and by the end of the year the yields rose to 5 tonnes. Now, we harvest approximately 6.8 tonnes, and the data analysis shows that the key growth factor was not so much the herd increase as the introduction of new crops to the animals' diet and overall improvement in fodder quality. After the harvest, we have reviewed our experience of 2023 and are set to reach new heights in the upcoming season', says Valeriy Gushchin, Director of Savinskaya Niva.

The company houses its herd in free-stall barns in the most natural environment possible and makes sure that its organic livestock farming and crop production practices comply with the stringent rules of the respective Russian and European standards.

By Talgat MUSAGALIYEV

Safety culture

Aleksandr Borodikhin, Deputy Head of State Labour Inspectorate for Voronezh oblast, has paid a visit to EkoNivaAgro, Voronezh subdivision of EkoNiva Group as part of Stop Risk project.

During a machinery repair shop tour, Aleksandr Borodikhin shared his experience in carrying out production site inspections and provided guidelines for organising safe working processes. Later, a meeting was held with managers and occupational health and safety specialists of the business unit and managing company, where

the parties discussed current changes in the legislation and implementation of the new regulatory instruments.

Arranged by EkoNiva within the initiative on developing safety culture and occupational safety management system, the visit served as a preparatory step towards a scheduled inspection of the agricultural enterprises by the Labour

Inspectorate. The meeting format proved to be productive and enabled the specialists and division managers to raise their awareness on occupational health and safety issues and feel confident about the upcoming oversight activities. A number of meetings are scheduled to be held soon between the Labour Inspectorate's

and EkoNiva's managers of different levels, since both parties are interested in cooperation and concerned with promoting workplace safety within the team.

'During the moratorium on inspections, the Labour Inspectorate still must oversee the safety practices and help to prevent production-related injuries. We strongly support the employers who take a proactive approach to raising safety awareness in their companies', sums up Aleksandr Borodikhin.

Building stronger community



Last year, Shchuchye, the cradle of EkoNiva's dairy business, was recognised as the best village in Voronezh oblast. The settlement offers comfortable infrastructure for its residents: a new kindergarten, a park, a museum, sports facilities and a newly opened modern culture and leisure centre.

The former community hall in Shchuchye was built in 1974 and over time, the building became dilapidated. In 2020, the regional and district administrations settled on establishing a new culture and leisure centre and launched it last September.

The construction was financed under the state

programme Comprehensive Rural Area Development, with more than 100 million rubles in aggregate allocated from the federal, regional and district budgets. EkoNiva also contributed to the project, investing over 10 million rubles.

'Occupying an area of 2,100 sq. m, the new building

is twice as big as the old one. There is an extensive library with a collection of over 13,000 books, a museum of village life, a costume room, a storage of sets and props, a concert hall of 300 seats, rooms for hobby groups, drawing, choreography, music classes and a spacious lobby which is perfect for holding

dance events', says Viktor Zhuravlyov, Director of the Culture and Leisure Centre.

The Centre will attract the communities of the village and the entire Liski district. Concerts and amateur talent shows are an integral part of every holiday. In the long run, plans are afoot to set up a music band and a recording studio and broadcast feature films in the concert hall.

Now, the locals can fully unlock their creative potential. The new culture centre offers children and teachers many more opportunities. They do not have to wait their turn to rehearse or join a hobby group – there is enough space for everyone.

'We are most grateful to EkoNiva for supporting the activities of our previous community hall and continuing to do so today. In addition to financing the facility, the company helps us with costumes and sets, arranges transport for our teams and buys all the necessary equipment for our children', points out Viktor Zhuravlyov.

By Viktor BARGOTIN

Boosting up crop

In the run-up to the new season, EkoNiva-Semena took part in two trade shows in Kazakhstan – AgriTek/FarmTek Astana 2024, in the capital of the republic, and KazAgroZhambyl 2024 in the city of Taraz, Zhambyl oblast. The company presented the entire portfolio of varieties, many of which have already proved their worth in the fields of Kazakhstan.

Due to the last year's challenging weather conditions, the republic has faced a shortage of high-quality seeds. The industry-specific trade shows had a key role to play in handling the problem.

EkoNiva-Semena has been operating in the Kazakh market for almost ten years, with the sales and popularity of the company's seeds growing every year. The range includes varieties suitable for the soil and climatic conditions of the republic's regions. Spring wheat and barley form the core of EkoNiva's seed exports to Kazakhstan, while there is also an increasing interest in

soya beans, peas, lentils and chickpeas. This year has seen a demand for grass seeds: alfalfa and sainfoin.

Good performance of the republic's farms speaks of the high efficiency of the cooperation between the supplier and local growers.

'The previous season was marked by challenging conditions – a severe drought during the growing period and high humidity upon harvesting. Despite that, our spring wheat varieties yielded from 3 to 4.5 t/ha in east and north Kazakhstan. Under favourable weather conditions here, their average output exceeds 5 t/ha. An additional advantage of

EkoNiva's winter wheat is minimal grain sprouting', says Aleksandr Suntsov, Sales Rep at EkoNiva-Semena.

Soya bean varieties developed under the company's in-house breeding programme are also

a preferred choice of growers in Kazakhstan. Farmers in the south of the republic have already evaluated EN Argument last season – even harsh weather did not prevent it from producing a crop of over 1.5 t/ha. In 2024, plans are afoot to scale up its area.

During the trade shows, EkoNiva-Semena's booths welcomed several hundred farmers. Numerous cooperation agreements were reached as a result of a series of meetings.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO



EkoNivaAgro: towards new records



At Bobrov community centre, EkoNivaAgro, the Group's Voronezh branch summarised the business results of the year 2023. The annual solemn ceremony brought together the heads of the regional and district administrations, numerous guests and employees, including those successfully working in the company for over 20 years.

Today, EkoNivaAgro is the largest raw milk producer in Voronezh oblast, which is clearly reflected in its performance figures. Thus, the gross milk yield in 2023 amounted to over 500,000 tonnes. Besides, the export geography of Anna plant expanded into Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Belarus. In crop production, another major area of the branch's activities, 343,000 tonnes of fodder grasses was harvested last year. Remarkably, the yielding capacity of winter wheat (8.9 t/ha) and sugar beets (60.5 t/ha) broke all the records in the company's history. The performance of EkoNiva's cheese plant in Shchuchye village, Liski district, was also impressive: cheese production was boosted sevenfold compared to 2022 and totalled 8,300 tonnes of finished goods.

'I'd like to express my sincere gratitude to all the employees of our team. Owing to you, EkoNiva is now at the forefront of Russia's farming business. And more than that, we have shown an example of how a stable social environment contributes to efficient production. Today,

our immediate goal is export development. No doubt, we can supply natural dairy products to the whole world', says Stefan Dürr, President of EkoNiva Group.

The festive occasion culminated in a ceremony honouring the best



performers. In 2023, EkoNivaAgro's employees received a total of 196 awards of various degrees, over 80 of which were presented during the event. Viktor Logvinov, Deputy Chairman of Voronezh Oblast Government, presented the Honorary Worker of Voronezh Farming Sector badges to Stefan Dürr and Aleksandr Rybenko, Regional Director of EkoNiva Group for

Voronezh oblast.

'EkoNiva is a driver of agricultural development in the region and even Russia. We are proud that our region has become a stronghold on the Group's way to success. Today, its Voronezh branch boasts a share of over 56%

in the local milk production, which is a record in itself. I wish EkoNiva to keep producing high-quality dairy products, growing brand awareness and striving for leadership', quotes Viktor Logvinov the address of Aleksandr Gusev, Governor of Voronezh Oblast.

The heads of district administrations extended a lot of warm wishes to EkoNivaAgro's employees. The

words of Anatoliy Balbekov, Head of Bobrov District, were particularly heartfelt: 'In fact, everything stems from the village. And where there is livestock farming, there is a village. Thank you for your valuable work, for the fact that people can start their day with delicious and wholesome EKONIVA milk, cheese and butter and for the caring attitude to the villagers.'

'This is not the first time I have received a commendation from the governor of Voronezh oblast. I have been working at EkoNiva for 12 years, starting out as a combine operator. Now, I repair machines, do welding and turning jobs. There is nothing better for me as the chief technician than seeing that all the equipment units operate properly during the spring campaign', shares Dmitriy Slezin, Machinery Repair Shop Manager at EkoNivaAgro-East.

Aleksandr Rybenko emphasised that apart from working hard and delivering outstanding performance, the company's specialists cherish their deep-rooted traditions.

'Our corporate motto is "We are responsible for our land" and I always stick to it. I have every reason to be proud of my wonderful team. Besides, we stay friends with and support the older generation, who worked diligently on collective farms. I wish all our employees good health, peace, prosperity and great happiness', concludes Aleksandr Rybenko.

By Irina KRASNOSHCHYOKIKH

End-to-end solution for agribusiness



EkoNiva Group has demonstrated a cutting-edge solution for livestock farming at Agros 2024. During the three days of the trade show, the company's booth hosted numerous productive business meetings.

Guided by its basic principle – ‘from field to shop shelf’ – EkoNiva Group developed an end-to-end solution for the agricultural industry comprising pedigree cattle, seeds, agritechnologies, high-performance machinery, consulting and maintenance.

‘Farmers opt for EkoNiva because what we offer is not just a product or service – it is a comprehensive solution including all the required consulting and support. Above all, the best seeds from leading plant breeders, excellent pedigree cattle genetics and reliable machines enable any enterprise to make the most of the production’, emphasises Yevgeniy Kucheryavenko, Executive Director of EkoNiva-Semena.

The company's seeds are currently grown in the fields of farms and large agricultural holdings in 72 regions of the country, as well as in Belarus and Central Asia. EkoNiva's portfolio features over seventy high-yielding varieties of field crops, including those bred in-house.

One of the newest and most rapidly developing holding's businesses is pedigree cattle breeding. Over the past few years, the demand for the company's heifers has risen by several times. The sales geography

keeps expanding – the animals have already been rated very highly by industry leaders in the Central, Southern, Volga and Siberian Federal Districts. Last year alone, the Group supplied over 14,000 head of cattle to Russian farmers.

‘The genetic potential of our cows meets the world's highest standards. The animals are well adapted to Russia's diverse climate and commercial farms. In 2024, plans are afoot to sell about 20,000 head. Besides, we are thinking about starting export to the countries of the Customs Union in the long run’, says Viktor Voronin, Cattle Sales Division Manager at EkoNiva-APK Holding.

Farm manager Natalya Zubareva from Shushenskoye district, Krasnoyarsk area, travelled about 4,000 kilometres to take part

in Agros 2024 and hurried to EkoNiva's booth right away.

‘For over six years, we have been closely cooperating with EkoNiva, purchasing high-quality seeds and always getting bumper crops. Last year, we bought 300 heifers from the company for the first time. The results exceeded our expectations: 85% of heifer yield instead of 75% stated in the terms of reference. The average milk production in the herd is also pretty good – 31 litres. We are set to enhance our cooperation’, says Natalya.

Recent years have seen great progress in maximising livestock farming profitability due to comprehensive solutions. The company keeps up with the time and supplies quality machinery for every segment of the

farming sector. The focus is on import substitution and finding partners from the countries that are committed to cooperating with Russia.

‘Today, we place a premium on promoting Chinese brand LOVOL. We offer 85 hp to 260 hp tractors and combine harvesters. These are reliable machines which are easy to operate and maintain. We also represent telescopic handlers manufactured by SANY, China, and MST, Turkey. They are designed for tackling various tasks in different operating conditions. Our portfolio also includes a full range of foreign and Russian trailed equipment’, says Sergey Skrobkin, Central Region Sales Department Manager, EkoNiva-Tekhnika.

First-rate service is the company's top priority.

‘Reliable and high-performance machines are a big help to any farmer, but they also require proper and timely maintenance. EkoNiva provides the best servicing always having spare parts and consumables in stock’, shares Aleksandr Antoshchenko, Director of Pungino farming enterprise in Verkhoshizhemye district, Kirov oblast.

Agros 2024 was marked by a great number of productive meetings and agreements concluded. Traditionally, to create a cheerful mood, the booth offered to taste EKONIVA natural dairy made from milk produced on the Group's own farms.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO



New Chinese partner



EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding's dealership portfolio has been expanded with a new brand in the road construction machinery segment. The company has started cooperation with the distributor of Chinese producer – Xiamen Engineering Machinery Factory (XGMA). This farming season, the clients will see the machines in action at the demo shows.

Machinery Sute Construction Xiamen Co., Ltd., established in 1951, is a part of Xiamen CCRE Group ranked among the Fortune Global 500. XGMA has entered the international market in 2008. The Group owns seven hi-tech factories in Chinese provinces Fujian, Henan, Shandong, and engages over 6,000 employees in the production.

The versatility of the XGMA machinery makes it an asset across multiple industries: construction, agriculture, mining, etc. Compatibility with a wide range of attachments significantly expands its functionality. The in-house R&D centre ensures reliability of the company's excavators, wheel loaders and forklifts.

The XGMA machinery will be available in 28 regions of EkoNiva-Tekhnika and EkoNivaSibir: Novosibirsk,

Tomsk, Omsk, Irkutsk, Kemerovo, Arkhangelsk, Vologda, St. Petersburg, Kaliningrad, Kirov, Novgorod, Pskov, Vladimir, Moscow, Kaluga, Kostroma, Ryazan, Smolensk, Tver, Yaroslavl, Ivanovo, Tula oblasts as well as Altai, Krasnoyarsk, Perm areas, the republics of Karelia, Khakassia and Tyva.

'We offer front-end loaders, backhoe loaders, excavators, graders and soil compactors. The range of products imported to Russia is going to be expanded soon', says Aleksey Gorshkov, Head of Road Construction Machinery Sales at EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding.

Front-end loaders are the flagship items of the Chinese producer manufactured at a rate of over 50,000 units per year. The numerous advantages and technical features of the XGMA loader

make it competitive with its counterparts.

The XGMA front loader lineup on sale in Russia comprises machines with engine power range from 81 up to 240 hp and a lifting capacity varying from 1.8 up to 7 t.

The XGMA backhoe loaders feature a 101 hp engine, a weight range of 9.12 - 10.6 t and a lifting capacity from 2.5 up to 3.5 t. The volume of the excavator bucket amounts to 0.3 m³. The digging depth reaches 5,200 mm, while the loading height can exceed 3,800 mm. Besides, XGMA backhoe loaders are fitted with pallet forks, a telescopic boom, cab air conditioning and heating systems for added operator comfort.

The XGMA tracked excavators come in the weight class of 21.5 - 51.5 t and engine power class from 152 up to 408 hp.

The manufacturer also offers soil rollers within a power range from 152 up to 190 hp and an operating weight from 13.3 up to 21.2 t. The roller weight in the portfolio models varies from 6.5 up to 11.2 t. The working width is 2,130 mm, it can be additionally equipped with a padfoot shell. In the XGMA grader lineup, units with a capacity from 180 up to 240 hp, a weight from 16.5 up to 20.5 t are available in 2WD and 4WD drivetrain configurations.

The advantages of the XGMA special-purpose machinery include high performance, low operating costs, easy maintenance, suitability for heavy-duty applications.

EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding is inviting its customers and partners to see the debut of XGMA machines at its demo shows this spring.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

Colours of Agromaslenitsa

Prior to the new farming season, Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika has hosted Agromaslenitsa 2024, a large-scale forum. The event gathered more than a hundred representatives of agricultural enterprises from Kirov oblast, Perm area, as well as the Komi, Chuvash and Mari El Republics.

In the lead-up to the spring sowing campaign, the forum acted as a platform for meetings and a constructive dialogue between farmers and machinery suppliers. The guests were welcomed with traditional Maslenitsa treats and cheerful public festivities. In front of the service centre, the most cutting-edge agricultural equipment was showcased – a record number of about four dozen self-propelled and trailed machines of different brands.

'At Agromaslenitsa, we demonstrate exciting novelties, get together and communicate with our clients and partners, discuss current service programmes, plans and tasks for the coming season. We do our best to help all the farms of our region be up and running for the sowing season', says Sergey Zykov, Manager of Kirov branch, EkoNiva-Tekhnika.

At the forum, the spotlight was on a spectacular parade of equipment, where the participants could see the machines in operation and look into their features. The Chinese brand LOVOL stole the show, presenting almost the whole range of models supplied to Russia today. All of them are designed with special attention to detail to ensure high

performance in the field. The display also featured the Haybuster H 1000 bale processor, an indispensable tool on any farm, and the 'waltz of loaders' showcasing the Turkish telescopic handler MST MH 7.35 and the SANY STH742, its Chinese counterpart.

As part of the event programme, the participants gained an insight into the company's basic business strategies for the current year. Besides, it was announced that a powerful LOVOL tractor with a capacity of 340 hp was to hit the Russian market in spring. After testing in local conditions, the tractor will be available for ordering.

'Our portfolio includes several dozens of trailed and self-propelled machinery brands. The top priority is to ensure smooth operation of all the units so that they can bring maximum benefit and tackle a full range of tasks. At the same time, we keep providing spare parts and servicing for the imported machinery that we have previously supplied to our clients', emphasises Maksim Gudukin, Executive Director of EkoNiva-Tekhnika.



One more strategic goal the holding has been pursuing is to promote import substitution. With that in mind, a workshop for machinery repair and production of farm equipment components has been successfully operating within Kirov branch for the second year running.

The company is positive that the availability of quality spare parts manufactured in Russia will help agricultural producers to be less dependent on foreign suppliers and carry out machinery maintenance more promptly. After all, timely servicing is the key to efficient functioning of machines in the field, which is EkoNiva-Tekhnika's main principle. Therefore, its partners have been choosing it for many years. One of them is Vladimir Limonov, Chairman of Novy breeding farm in Zuyevka district, Kirov oblast.

'Our fleet comprises about ten machines supplied by the dealer. These are robust and reliable units that enable us to make agricultural production more profitable. They are always on the go, for which a great deal of credit must be given to EkoNiva-Tekhnika's specialists. They guarantee first-class service, work 24/7, keep improving their skills and implementing new projects. It is a pleasure to do business with them – we are growing together', shares the farmer.

Vladimir Limonov and three other forum participants acquired great helpers for their farms – BVL mixer wagons.

The celebration of Agromaslenitsa 2024 was marked by one more tradition – a solemn ceremony of awarding prizes in the Success of the Year category for reliable partnership and retrofitting of agricultural production facilities.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO



Cooperating with the best

EkoNivaSibir supplies its customers with machinery that can increase the efficiency and profitability of their business. In today's realities, the company remains true to its principles and continues cooperating with leading manufacturers of agricultural machinery. One of them is the Indian company TAFE, which became EkoNivaSibir's partner last year. The dealer offers tractors in the 26-100 hp range to farmers in Novosibirsk, Kemerovo, Omsk, Tomsk oblasts and Altai area.



The TAFE 6022 tractor is currently available to Siberian customers. It is equipped with the Japanese 3-cylinder Mitsubishi engine delivering 26 hp of power. The manual transmission provides a speed of up to 26 km/h. The operator can perform a wide range of tasks while maintaining an optimum balance between

forward movement and reverse manoeuvring', says Aleksandr Burmak, Senior Sales Representative at EkoNivaSibir.

Despite its compact dimensions, the tractor can be coupled with mounted tillage implements, since the operation of the rear linkage is ensured by a separate 18 l/min hydraulic pump. The pump is oil-immersed to

eliminate performance loss. The maximum load capacity of the rear linkage is 739 kg, which makes the TAFE 6022 suitable for a diverse range of applications, including haulage, feeding, farm cleaning, forage harvesting, soil tillage, gardening and utility services. The machine is fitted with a dual-speed rear PTO with 540/750 rpm. It is designed

to drive high- and low-speed mounted implements, ensuring high performance with minimal losses.

The service and spare parts departments of EkoNivaSibir are fully prepared to work with the new brand. The spare parts stock is sufficient to ensure comprehensive support of the company's customers.

By Viktor BARGOTIN

Fodder-making wizards

In preparation for this year's farming season, EkoNivaSibir has organised a seminar on Fodder harvesting and cow nutrition for Omsk farmers. Over 30 representatives of the region's cattle breeding industry visited the event.

As part of the seminar, the attendees learned about cutting-edge forage harvesting technologies and new trends in animal feeding. Lev Kramarenko, Brand Manager for Forage Harvesting Equipment at EkoNiva-Tekhnika, shared practical advice on improving the efficiency of agricultural production. He revealed the intricacies of modern technological processes that are successfully applied on EkoNiva's dairy farms.

A great variety of machinery for the livestock farming needs was demonstrated during the seminar: front loaders from LiuGong; a wide range of implements designed for optimising forage harvesting from Pöttinger, among them

mowers, tedders, windrowers and balers; compact and reliable TAFE 6022 wheel tractors capable of handling a broad scope of work. A SANY telescopic handler and a versatile ENSIGN wheel tractor were presented too.

The demo show of the Haybuster Balebuster 2574 bale processor generated keen interest at the seminar. The distinctive feature of the upgraded model is its 2-metre wide bale chamber, which can quickly chop round and square hay bales of any quality. It cuts straw into pieces of desired length leaving a sharp edge that favourably affects the cow's digestion stimulation.

'We always use a mower and rakes manufactured by Pöttinger for forage harvesting,

and timely maintenance, required spare parts that are always available – these are just some examples of customer feedback, attesting to EkoNiva's reliability as a long-term partner. Moreover, any farming machine can be test driven during demo shows which will soon be held in all regions of the company's operation.

High-performance machinery, excellent service

and timely maintenance, required spare parts that are always available – these are just some examples of customer feedback, attesting to EkoNiva's reliability as a long-term partner. Moreover, any farming machine can be test driven during demo shows which will soon be held in all regions of the company's operation.

By Irina KRASNOSHCHYOKHIKH



Innovative material handling solutions



Telescopic handlers and front loaders are indispensable units at any agribusiness facility, be it a small farm or a large holding. In the face of changes in the farm machinery market, EkoNiva has been in search of new options to replace the well-known brands that have left the Russian market. Fortunately, no less effective and more affordable models from alternative manufacturers have come in their place.

Following a detailed research, verification of the benefits and rigorous testing in the Russian conditions, the Group now offers the best machinery units to replenish their partners' fleets.

In the telehandler segment, EkoNiva has opted for MST,

popularity with our clients.'

EkoNiva offers the MP and MH series telehandlers featuring the lifting capacity of 3.5, 4 and 4.2 tonnes. The maximum boom length, depending on the model, varies in the range of from 7.1 to 9.2 metres. Fitted with Deutz or Perkins engines, the

with 5.5 tonnes payload. The SL series mini loaders handling up to 1 tonne are also available. The equipment manufactured by UMG is fitted with modern dependable YaMZ engines. The machines are suitable for bulk grain and big bag handling, fodder distribution, farm cleaning, excavation and landscaping works.

Since the beginning of 2023, EkoNiva's portfolio has been extended to encompass loaders made by LiuGong, one of the leaders in agricultural machinery manufacturing in China with a 60-year history.

'The trade fairs and demo shows have proved the high demand among the Russian farmers for this brand's front loaders', comments Vasily Stepanov, Head of Sales Department of EkoNivaSibir. 'Models within the 68-220 hp

engine power range and a bucket capacity from 0.8 to 6.5 m³ are available. The units utilise components of Chinese, American, Japanese and German makes. All the machines in the lineup are low-maintenance, reliable and cost-efficient.'

For light-duty operations, five models of LiuGong skid steer mini loaders with a carrying capacity ranging from 0.79 to 2.14 tonnes are on offer.

Another bestselling unit comes from the Chinese top brand SANY. It is the STH742 telehandler featuring a 100 hp Deutz engine.

'The machine is ideal for a wide range of applications, from grain loading to mechanised works in livestock farming,' says Dmitriy Tokmakov. 'Compatible with a variety of attachments, it looks equally impressive on a construction site and at a recycling centre.'

The model's maximum lifting capacity is 4.2 tonnes and the reach is 7 metres. The boom is powered by a Variable Displacement axial piston hydraulic pump with a flow rate of 105 l/min.

The XGMA units of Chinese producer represent the backhoe loader segment. The dealer's portfolio includes models with a bucket capacity of 1.2 sq. m and a lifting capacity of 2.5 and 3.2 tonnes. Established over 70 years ago, XGMA currently operates 14 modern high-tech factories ensuring top quality and reliability of each model.

EkoNiva continues to introduce the most efficient solutions to Russian farmers: new demo shows, trade fairs and expert consultations are coming soon.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV,
Irina KRASNOSHCHYOKIKH



whose solutions have been real game changers in Russia in recent years.

'MST is a Turkish brand of agricultural and road construction equipment manufacturing telehandlers in line with the most cutting-edge standards', says Dmitriy Tokmakov, Senior Sales Manager at EkoNiva-Chernozemye. 'We have showcased a few MST models at industry trade fairs, and they immediately gained in

units are easy to maintain, manoeuvrable, comfortable and safe.

Russian solutions are not inferior to overseas counterparts in terms of their quality either, and the UMG loading equipment is a perfect illustration of it. EkoNiva's dealer portfolio comprises the UMG TLH series telehandlers with a lifting capacity of 3.5 and 4 tonnes, the WL front loaders, featuring a carrying capacity of 3 and 5 tonnes and the TL units





Benefitting from off-season

In the run-up to the farming season, EkoNiva-Tekhnika has arranged a client trip to China. It was mainly aimed at taking a closer look at LOVOL and SANY companies, the leaders of the machine building industry in the Celestial Empire.

The journey started with the LOVOL plant in Weifang. This is the largest manufacturer of agricultural machinery in China. Over the past few years, the number of LOVOL tractors supplied to the country has exceeded 8,000, which proves it to be one of the most favourite Asian brands in the Russian market.

The hosts welcomed the guests to the production site and gave an overview of LOVOL's history elaborating on its formation and early successes. They demonstrated the cutting-edge equipment, tractor and combine assembly line and the digital solutions implemented. The production scale impressed everyone: about 300 tractors come off the conveyor per day, which is 110,000 units per year.

The manufacturer's representatives showcased the LOVOL 8340 and LOVOL P7240 tractors with 340 hp and 240 hp, respectively. The four-wheel drive tractors are fitted with high-torque Weichai Power engines and the CVT transmission, which ensures speed of up to 40 km/h.

'Last year, we supplied the first LOVOL P7240 tractors, and some of our clients have already got acquainted with this model. The other novelty – the LOVOL 8340 – will arrive this summer, after which we will test and trial it out in the fields and on farms. The machine has impressive parameters, and we hope that it will live up to our expectations', says Sergey Skrobkin, Sales Department Manager at EkoNiva-Tekhnika.

The next point en route was Zhuhai, where the delegation visited one of SANY's production facilities and saw the assembly process of telescopic handlers and front loaders. In addition, there was a unique opportunity to take part in a test drive of a new product – the SANY STH935. The telescopic handler is fitted with the Deutz engine, has a boom reach of up to 9 metres and a lifting capacity of up

to 3.5 tonnes. The machine will be officially presented in Russia this year.

The group also saw the demonstration of the SANY STH742 telescopic handler. It operates perfectly in limited spaces due to a compact wheelbase of 2.75 metres and a small turning radius of 3.6 metres. The telehandler can be coupled with various attachments, which makes for carrying out numerous farm operations.

'It is always a pleasure to travel with EkoNiva. Having visited many production sites in different countries, I can say that Chinese plants are as good as western ones. We have learnt at first hand that LOVOL and SANY are indeed the leading manufacturers of high-performance machines in China', says Vladislav Skvortsov, Director of Voskresenye Agro.

In today's realities, such trips are essential for Russian farmers, clearing up all the doubts about new brands and yielding a complete picture of high-quality and reliable Asian farm machinery.

By Viktor BARGOTIN



Stefan Dürr, EkoNiva President, tested the Lovol-2604 in action. He is quite happy with the result

Crop of great opportunities



Vladislav Rosenzweig

The soybean acreage is rapidly increasing in Russia, particularly in the Central Federal district. If a decade ago soybeans were grown on a mere 100 thousand ha, last year the area reached 1.5 million ha. We have discussed modern trends in growing this crop with Vladislav Rosenzweig and Denis Goloyenko, EkoNiva Soybean Breeders.

In the black

In terms of the return on investment, soybeans currently surpass even the sunflowers, which are traditionally preferred for their profitability. The reasons for soybean expansion include such factors as improved cropping and breeding techniques. The development of efficient protection systems in the recent decades has brought the performance of conventional varieties to the level of transgenic glyphosate-tolerant ones. So, in Manitoba, which is the only Canadian province comparable to the Central Black Soil region of Russia in terms of the latitude (49-52° N), terrain (black soil steppe) and maturity groups, the yield

has lately fluctuated within the range of 2.0-2.5 t/ha. Meanwhile, the variety EN Argenta produced 3.1 t/ha on the area of 1,500 ha in Zashchitnoye-South division in 2023.

Narrow geographic range

In Russia, the production area is expanding predominantly due to the shift to northern regions. According to Soviet-era textbooks, soybeans were not supposed to be cultivated north of Kiev (50° N). However, nowadays this crop is successfully grown on tens of thousands of hectares in Ryazan and Novosibirsk oblasts (54° N). And it's not the consequence of climate warming since the summer temperatures over the two

centuries of meteorological observations have remained virtually unchanged. Thus, the average daily ambient air temperatures during the vegetation season in Kursk region have increased by approx. 1°C since 1830. The main factor limiting soybean movement northward is the day length or photoperiod.

The farther from the equator, the longer the day length in summer. The centre of origin of cultivated soybean (in East Asia) is located south of Russia.

So, the soybean is a short-day plant.

This means that upon direct attempt of acclimatising southern varieties in the north will come into bloom very late, form a lot of green mass, but yield no grain whatsoever. And vice versa, if a soybean variety adapted to northern latitude is sown much further south than the designated zone, it will blossom and ripen too early failing to develop a fully-grown plant. Thus, soybean varieties are restricted to narrow geographic ranges. A shift every 100-150 km along the meridian (around one degree of latitude) calls for a new variety lineup, and it is better to choose varieties of local breeding.

A matter of genes

The soybean plant's response to the daylight duration is regulated by a complex genetic system comprising around 10 genes which determine the overall duration and the ratio of vegetation stages (phenophases) at a given geographical latitude. The greater the number of dominant genes in the genome is, the more late-maturing

and adapted to southern latitudes the variety is. The earliest-ripening varieties listed in the national register approved for South Siberia have a full set of 'neutral' genes, which do not delay flowering and ripening even at round-the-clock lighting. Knowledge of the genetic basis of photoperiodic response enables breeders to create varieties more suitable for growing and delivering higher return on investment in the northern regions. EkoNiva Plant Breeding and Variety Maintenance Centre has developed photoperiodically neutral soybean varieties EN Argument (registered in the East Siberian region since 2022) and EN Krion (state trials in the same region underway).

At DNA level

As part of the soybean breeding programme, EkoNiva Plant Breeding and Variety Maintenance Centre is implementing a photoperiodic gene selection project involving molecular markers and artificial lighting to better reveal the effects of the genes. DNA markers allow to determine the presence or absence of the required photoperiodism genes with high precision in a lab. This significantly increases the breeding process efficiency ensuring that a variety matches a target climatic zone as accurately as possible. The breeding project has already produced its first result: the new variety EN Avior approved for the Central Black Soil region has been listed in the State Register since 2024. The work continues and new varieties bred within the Group are expected to be included in the national register soon.

Recorded by
TATYANA IGNATENKO



Dairy record-breakers



In 2023, EkoNiva surpassed its previous record producing 1.26 million of raw milk. The outstanding performance has been achieved by the herd of 112,500 dairy cows including some record-breakers yielding up to 76 kg per day. EkoNiva has published its second annual rating of high-yielding cows. The top producers are ranked based on the 305-day lactation results in 2023.

Number 5

Cow Anyutka arrived at modern Bushovka dairy farm in Kaluga oblast six years ago. She liked her new home immediately and adapted without a hitch. Several years later, Anyutka produced 18,460 kg tonnes of excellent milk (3.55% fat, 3.33% protein) over the reporting period delivering maximum 68 kg per day.



Number 4

Cow Majolica is an illustrative example of the company's breeders' efficiency and expertise. She moved to Kurskaya Vasilyevka dairy in Orenburg oblast from Kaluga oblast

three years ago. In 2023, her 305-day milk yield amounted to 19,043 kg with the maximum daily milk production reaching 70 kg (3.61% fat, 3.21% protein).



Number 3

Last year, EkoNiva launched Bortnikovo dairy farm in Moscow oblast, which today houses the herd of 3,800 dairy cows including its top-performer – cow Zhako transferred from Volchanskoye dairy farm in Voronezh oblast, her place of birth. The cow produced 19,365 kg of milk, yielding 73 kg per day at peaks (3.69% fat, 3.34% protein).



Number 2

Eight-year-old Milka, the most experienced cow in our rating, lives on Petrovskoye dairy farm where she still breaks records delivering 19,722 kg of milk (3.78% fat, 3.26% protein). Her maximum daily yield reached impressive 72 kg.



Number 1

Cow Alleya at the top of our rating is a five years' resident of Shatsk dairy in Ryazan oblast. She is an undisputed leader of the holding by both gross lactation production and daily milk yield – 20,278 and 76 kg, respectively (3.78% fat, 3.24% protein).



Valeriya Pavlova,
Breeding Department
Manager of EkoNiva
Group:

'EkoNiva puts special focus on the breeding and genetic improvement of the herd. To monitor the progress, we hold regular control milkings, check for milk fat and protein, evaluate the type traits, health and growth of the cattle. All these cows have a high genetic potential and their progeny can have a significant genetic gain if bred by properly selected sires.'

The outstanding milk production and proper performance are the result of comprehensive work and expertise of EkoNiva specialists that involves heifer raising, progressive cow management, health care and implementation of smart technologies including in-house designed EkoFeed and EkoCrop software for balanced nutrition and efficient fodder production.

By Viktor BARGOTIN

EkoNiva Academy launches spring sessions

EkoNiva's Spring Academy educational programme is implemented at the Group's enterprises in Voronezh, Ryazan, Kaluga, Novosibirsk and Orenburg oblasts and the Republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan. This year, about 200 students from 35 Russian higher and secondary vocational agricultural institutions are taking part in the project.

EkoNiva's instructors and specialists will conduct crash courses providing an in-depth introduction to the most advanced technologies in milk processing, livestock farming, agronomy, engineering and economics. The future herd specialists will learn how to use modern breeding tools. The agronomists-to-be will look into various crop cultivation technologies. The prospective technicians will study modern farm machinery. The attendees of the 'Academy of Processing'

will take a deep dive into the technological processes at Shchuchye cheese production facility and Anna milk plant.

The economists-to-be will take a course on the fundamentals of crop growing and cattle breeding economics to explore the correlation between the production and economic indicators.

At the end of the Spring Academy session, the students will be granted diplomas and gifts. Also, all the attendees will be entitled to apply for a



full-fledged summer internship at EkoNiva's enterprises.

'Spring Academy educational programme enables students to gain insights into the production processes, get hands-on experience in their respective field of studies and even make their career decision and join EkoNiva's team', comments Yevgeniy Bespalov, Head of Talent Pool

Management Department of EkoNiva-APK Holding.

The project was launched in 2017. Over 500 students from higher and secondary vocational agricultural institutions in Russia have taken part in it in seven years, many of them have pursued their careers at EkoNiva's operations.

By Irina KRASNOSHCHYOKIKH

Promoting agriclassses



Antonina Savoshchenko, Head of the Talent Pool Management Department, EkoNivaAgro, was invited to talk about EkoNiva's experience at the nationwide educational forum arranged for agrischool principals and heads of agriclassses as part of the extensive programme of RUSSIA exposition.

The development of agriclassses in Russia was one of the key topics

of the discussion. Antonina Savoshchenko talked about the launch of agriclass project

and shared her experience of running it in several regions where EkoNiva operates. Eight years ago, supported by the Group, agricultural universities and local schools, the educational project was launched as part of the internal training and mentoring programme.

'The first agricultural class sponsored by EkoNiva was opened at Maslyanino School No. 1 in Novosibirsk oblast in 2016. All year round, the Group's enterprises provide children with special platforms for studying crop farming, veterinary medicine and herd management. The learning process we organised in agriclassses is aimed at broadening the students' horizons and understanding of agriculture', says Antonina Savoshchenko.

In 2018, agriclassses were also set up in Voronezh

oblast including Bobrov and Liski districts. Apart from that, EkoNiva provides career guidance in Ryazan, Kaluga and Kursk oblasts. Schoolchildren visit the enterprises of the holding where they learn about modern agriculture, listen to lectures and receive hands-on training.

'The nationwide agriclass meeting has brought together representatives of schools, colleges, universities, large agricultural holdings and relevant organisations. Such an event helps everybody involved to be heard and contribute to the formation of the overall farming sector talent pool, effectively set up professional education programmes shape the future of our industry', concludes Antonina Savoshchenko.

By Viktor BARGOTIN

Yuriy Vasyukov: 'The idea of EkoNiva was conceived in Altai'



This year, EkoNiva turns 30, and we are launching a series of interviews with the people working for the company since its foundation. Our first guest is Yuriy Vasyukov – the company's first Director. Today he is EkoNiva Regional Director for Kursk oblast.

Nothing is more permanent than the temporary

I met Stefan in 1993, before the foundation of EkoNiva. Back then, I was a young scientist working on serious matters of plant breeding and seed quality at Nemchninovka Science and Research Institute of Agriculture. In the summer, I did an organic farming internship at a research institution of Wisconsin, and later we welcomed two American colleagues in Russia. At that time, Stefan was engaged in the cooperation of Russia and Germany in the agricultural sector and student exchange programmes. He was also advocating organic farming principles.

So, our group consisting of me, two American guests, Aleksandr Zhuchenko (back then Vice President of the VASKhNIL – V.I. Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences) and Stefan Dürr was invited to visit Novosibirsk Crop Production Institute and participate in the VASKhNIL external meeting in Barnaul. The audience was full of academicians who, in those years, were like Olympian gods to the ancient Greeks to us. When Stefan took the floor, he used a swear word in almost

every sentence. The academics were flabbergasted. After the speech, Aleksandr Zhuchenko asked Stefan where he had mastered his Russian. 'On the collective farm', answered Stefan. It explained a lot and the tension eased.

On our way back, we made a stop at the Katun river in the Altai Mountains. After swimming in the ice-cold water, Stefan said: 'Let's set up something in Russia and do organic farming.'

And we did start. Gradually, we restored and continued organic production at the Estate

of A.T. Bolotov (a prominent Russian agronomist). Then, Stefan suggested that we should take part in BioFach trade fair in January 1994. We needed to name the company urgently

After swimming in the ice-cold water, Stefan said: 'Let's set up something in Russia and do organic farming.'

to be listed in the catalogue. Thus, we came up with EkoNiva, though we were not excited about the name. However, Stefan said, 'Let it be for now just to get registered for the

trade fair – we'll change it later if necessary'... but the name stayed to this day.

Jumping in at the deep end

I don't really know how I decided to quit science. I had not deliberated anything – just at one moment, I jumped in at the deep end. On 24 December 1994, we got the company registered and I was appointed EkoNiva Director. We started organic farming business, growing organic buckwheat and millet, getting it certified and shipping to Germany, first as commodity. Later in 1997, we built a hulling mill on our partner's farm premises and started to export grit under our own BIO-MIKULA brand.

It must be mentioned that Stefan is a restless person of grand vision, and, in a while, he suggested that we should take up farm machinery trading. We resisted it, but Stefan insisted and got his way. So, I and my colleague Misha Ashikhmin set off to custom clear our

first combine. Our team was not big – about 10 -15 people and each one had to be a jack-of-all-trades. Thus, we launched our new business – farm machinery selling.



S. Dürr and A. Zhuchenko at the Katun river

With Siberian scientists



Non-accidental accident

At about the same time, we became involved in seed production, one could say – by accident. We had had our input into the development of the Law on Seed Production and hence were in close interaction with our state authorities and western breeding companies. So we got acquainted with Saaten-Union, a German seed breeding and production company. At one of the seminars, they approached us and said, ‘We have a fully loaded seed truck stuck in customs; if you get it out – you can have it.’ And we

to be chairman of a collective farm. The wish came true in 2000 – EkoNiva launched its first farm project – ‘Collective Farmer’s Dream’ – in Konyshévka district, Kursk oblast. We sowed malting barley, winter wheat, winter rapeseed and harvested a good crop. Konyshévka district soon moved up from underachievers to leaders in agricultural production. We imported machines from abroad, but local drivers did not know how to operate them. So, to harvest the crop, we had to bring in a team of operators from Germany.

by wind, rain and high waves. And in another five minutes, everything changes again. This is the way EkoNiva is – always progressing, upgrading, reshaping its business model. In our company, there is always a sense of a challenge coming: new projects, new goals, new tasks are regularly generated. And I like it. When you stop moving forward, you make the first step towards the end. We started with political

projects, then moved on to farm machinery dealership and branched out into agricultural production. Now, we are into processing and farm touring. When one business reaches its cruising speed, we tap into something new, and it pulls the company forward like a locomotive. So, the future always holds exciting new challenges in store for us.

Written down by
SVETLANA WEBER

Standing on the edge of the cliff, you are fascinated with beautiful boundless ocean and bright sunshine. Suddenly, a moment later, you are almost knocked off your feet by wind, rain and high waves. And in another five minutes, everything changes again. This is the way EkoNiva is.

did custom clear it. The batch included two wheat varieties with funny names – Aristos and Pegasus. The performance those seeds delivered in our fields significantly exceeded our domestic varieties. The next year, we imported malting barley Thüringen. Thus, we became the first to offer commercial seeds of western breeding. We were trying to ensure good quality and implemented our internal standard. It allowed no more than 10 weed seeds per 1 kg then – now if we find even one, we reclean the whole batch.

Owning the land

Actually, back in 1993, Stefan had said that he wanted

In 2002, we acquired farms in Kursk, Voronezh and Orenburg oblasts. And from then on, we moved into top gear.

At cruising speed

EkoNiva is not simply work, it is life. The fact that I contributed to the formation and development of the company, its corporate culture and spirit means a lot to me. I feel proud and rewarded.

I once went to Cape Roca in Portugal, the westernmost point of Eurasia. Standing on the edge of the cliff, you are fascinated with beautiful boundless ocean and bright sunshine. Suddenly, a moment later, you are almost knocked off your feet



Student stories

Managers of EkoNiva Group's subdivisions are highly respected people and top professionals. But there was a time when they were ordinary students. Today, they share some funny stories from their life back then.

Vyacheslav Ionov



Vyacheslav Ionov,
Director of
EkoNiva Agro-North
Operation:

'My friend and I were taking an exam in histology administered by an eminent professor, member of the New York Academy of Sciences. After it had finished, everybody in the group received their record books apart from the two of us. As we were waiting, the professor approached us with a tricky task... to clear the snow. About 300 square metres of waist-high snow! We couldn't have done that even in a week, so we needed a quick solution. We remembered about the bulldozer on a nearby farm. For a reward, the machine operator did his best to clear the snow, but also took down all the kerbs and concrete doorsteps. We fixed everything as much as we could and "commissioned" the work to the academician. To say that he was shocked is like saying nothing – we did it in an hour!'

Igor Saprygo,
Director of EkoNiva Cheese
Plant in Shchuchye:

'What comes to my mind is an innocent situation that happened to me during an

Igor Saprygo



inorganic chemistry practical. We were to carry out an analysis with an exothermic reaction. We were told to stop the reaction by cooling the flask externally under a stream of cold water. I decided to use distilled water to ensure sterile conditions. At that time, the water distiller was functioning only to a limited extent, so the professor got disappointed at seeing such wastage and commented: "Why is it that Count Saprygo is cooling flasks and test tubes with distilled water?" After this joke, the noble nickname "Count" stuck for a long time.'

Yuriy Vasyukov,
Regional Director of
EkoNiva Group for Kursk
oblast:

'In my fifth year of studies, there was a discipline called Scientific Communism, which was usually taught by retired KGB colonels aged 65 to 80. To relieve the terminal boredom during one of the classes, my mate and I tried to borrow magnetic chess from our friends who were playing nearby. "Kanistrov, give us the chess", we whispered yearningly and were met with a blank refusal. Next

Yuriy Vasyukov



Sergey Storozhev



moment, the dean's office employees came into the room to award me as the winner of a recent scientific conference, presenting me with... magnetic chess! I can't tell you how happy I was. It was as if the dean himself felt how much we needed that chess during the tedious lecture...'

Sergey Storozhev,
Executive Director of
EkoNiva-Chernozemye:

'When studying at Voronezh State Agricultural University, I never missed games of the Fakel football club. Once, right before an important exam, my friends and I went to the match between Fakel and Terek. At the end of the second half, someone from our group had a conflict with the guys sitting next to us. We got into a fight, so, after the game, I was not in the mood for studying. Unprepared for the exam, I went into the classroom and saw one of the guys with whom I had had an argument at the stadium. It turned out that he worked at our university and was substituting for my professor. I passed the exam successfully, and my recent opponent and I became friends.'

Ivan Vorobyov



Ivan Vorobyov,
Deputy Director General of
EkoNiva-Food:

'It was during my third year at Voronezh State Agricultural University. The exam in strength of materials was scheduled for 8 o'clock in the morning. I thought it would be more appropriate to arrive by 11 o'clock to avoid the crowds. Imagine how surprised I was to see that the exam had already finished! As a punishment for being late, my professor Aleksandr Nikolayevich told me to come at 6:30 the following day. I am a night owl and have a hard time working in the morning. When I arrived at the appointed time, the professor said: "Sorry, I have an urgent business, come back tomorrow at 6:30." And for the whole week, I kept coming to the university at the appointed time to take this exam. And on the last day, out of the blue, the professor told me I was exempt from the exam referring to the fact that I had passed all the practicals during the semester and earned the highest grade. This story taught me to always be on time.'

By Irina KRASNOSHCHYOKIKH



Mentor by calling

Leonid Moshurov, Tractor Operator of EkoNivaAgro-Right Bank Operation, cannot imagine his life without farming. Dedicated to his roots and acting with inherent integrity, he has been able to establish himself as a responsible and competent specialist over the years of productive work.

Having learnt that he was recognised as one of top performers at EkoNiva Group's Voronezh branch based on the results of 2023, Leonid brimmed with joy and excitement. Furthermore, the news that he has been awarded a certificate for a Lada Niva off-roader from the government of Voronezh oblast left him speechless...

Leonid, what did you want to be when you were a child?

I wanted to be a driver, but it didn't work out... Later, I abandoned that dream altogether. I finished school and straight away went to work at the collective farm where I tended the animals. But for as long as I can remember, since childhood, I have always been drawn to hardware, machinery. I worked as a mechanic on a factory for several years. I came to EkoNiva in June 2012 and I've been working as a tractor operator here

In 2023, Leonid Moshurov harvested 2,900 ha, which corresponds to 28% of the overall area under cereals at EkoNiva-Right Bank Operation. The gross grain crop amounted to approx. 20,700 t with an average yield of 6.5 t/ha.

ever since. I've loved my job since the very first work day.

Do you remember your first tractor?

It was an MTZ-82 Belarus, which I operated just for a short while. Then I moved onto a Belarus-1221. Since 2014 to this day I've been working on a John Deere 8285R tractor all season long. I plough, cultivate, pull a grain cart, etc. In winter, I pay particular attention to machinery maintenance, repair cultivators so that everything is in good working order by the beginning of the farming season.

What event over the past crop year gave you the brightest impressions?

On the eve of Day of Agricultural and Processing Industry Workers, the director

your labour! Now go to the award ceremony in Voronezh." I was shocked. I was granted such honour for the first time in my life. I'd never given much thought to how big of a wheat area I had harvested or how many tonnes of grain I had threshed... I just take pleasure from every single day. True happiness for me is working on a tractor in the field. I must admit bosses of other enterprises have tried to poach me. It makes no sense changing workplaces, EkoNiva is my employer of choice, the management is great here. I'm going to stick with this company and keep it up.

You mentor a lot of students who come to EkoNiva for summer internship. How do you motivate young specialists?

When a young man gets behind the wheel for the first time, I am always by his side ready to help. I never raise my voice, explain everything carefully and patiently since I've been through it myself. And if something doesn't work out, say the tractor won't start, I always tell them to calm down, not to fuss and try again.

What brings you joy in life, apart from work?

I enjoy spending weekends with my two little granddaughters. We read Russian folk tales together. Besides, I love horses. A horseback ride along the vast expanse gives an incredible sense of freedom!

By Irina KRASNOSHCHEDIKH





Brace for the race

EkoNiva has held a skiing competition for its team in Buturlinovka district, Voronezh oblast. About 30 employees of the holding's enterprises and their family members took part in the event.

Every year, it is the ski races that open the sports season at EkoNiva. For the second time already, they were arranged in a modern roller skiing centre accredited for nationwide competitions.

Before the start, the participants representing EkoNivaAgro and EkoNiva-Chernozemye were divided into five categories.

Men and teenage boys had to run three kilometres, while women, teenage girls and children needed to cover half the distance.

In the race, Yegor Zharikov took first place among the boys clocking 4 minutes and 57 seconds. Oleg Makiyev came second and Dmitriy Morenko third. The girls' gold medal went to Kira Kolosova, and Raisa

Fursova won the silver one. Aleksandr Popov showed the best result among the teenagers, outrunning Aleksandr Nikolayev and Mikhail Vichugov.

The men's and women's races turned out to be the most spectacular and tough ones. It took the three leaders 11 minutes to cover the distance. Sergey Stoyakin, Service Technician at EkoNiva-Chernozemye, was the first to cross the finish line. Sergey Zharikov came just immediately after him. Daniil Savchuk, Senior Service Technician at EkoNivaAgro-South, took third place.

'I love the fact that our company strongly promotes a healthy lifestyle and

opens opportunities in sports competitions for every employee', shares Daniil Savchuk.

The women's competition was no less interesting.

Seven minutes after the start, Lyubov Izyumenko, Livestock Breeder at EkoNivaAgro-Left Bank, reached the finish line to win the race. Marina Zubkova, Livestock Breeder at EkoNivaAgro-South, collected the silver medal. Vera Rebrun, Health and Safety Officer at EkoNivaAgro-Right Bank, rounded out the top three.

After the competitions, the winners and participants received souvenirs, gift tokens, commendations and medals.

By Viktor BARGOTIN

Honouring the best

The best employees of Peterburgskaya Niva have been honoured for high performance in 2023 and the years of dedicated work.

Peterburgskaya Niva is one of the leading agricultural businesses in Volosovo district, St. Petersburg oblast, being in the top-3 raw milk producers. In February, the regional authorities awarded 10 employees of the company for outstanding performance in the previous farming season. Milking machine operator Yelena Kirilova received a certificate of merit from the governor of St. Petersburg oblast. Sergey Velichko, Electrician, and Mikhail Boltushkin,

Director of Peterburgskaya Niva, were granted honorary diplomas from the regional Legislative Assembly. Kamaz drivers Nikolay Baranov and Yuriy Zhirokhov, machine operators Ivan Gusev and Aleksey Gubenkov and dairy equipment mechanic Vladimir Osipovykh were awarded certificates and commendations on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture. Besides, the industry veterans – Yelena Platova, Weigher, and Tamara Zakharina, Security Guard –



were presented with valuable gifts from the company and district administration.

Peterburgskaya Niva has a rich history and deep-rooted traditions – this year, it celebrates the 70th anniversary. The enterprise was acquired by the Group in 2019

becoming its northernmost subdivision. The business unit is successfully engaged in milk and forage production. Implementing its HR policy, the Group places a great emphasis on the team development, training and incentivising.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

Table tennis across regions

EkoNiva’s ninth corporate table tennis tournament has been held at Bobrov fitness and health centre, Voronezh oblast. This year, in addition to the employees from local subdivisions, amateur athletes from Ryazan and Kaluga took part in the event.

The competitions brought together 58 specialists from EkoNivaAgro, Anna and Shchuchye dairy plants, EkoNiva-Chernozemye, OKA MOLOKO and Kaluzhskaya Niva. They were up for awards in two categories – team and women’s individual.

In the team class, Ryazan athletes from OKA MOLOKO became the Gold Cup champions. The silver medals were awarded to the International team, which united the employees of Kaluzhskaya Niva and Voronezh subdivisions of EkoNiva. Third place went to EkoNivaAgro.

In the Silver Cup, the representatives of EkoNivaAgro-Left Bank Operation scored the victory, outrunning the employees of dairy plants. The team

of EkoNivaAgro-Right Bank rounded out the top three. Olga Dmitriyeva, Breeding Herd Manager at EkoNivaAgro-Right Bank, was once again the best in the women’s category. Nadezhda Osipova, Laboratory Technician at Anna Dairy Plant, won the silver award, and Anastasiya Misnik, HR Officer at EkoNivaAgro, took third place.

‘Winning the corporate tournament was not our main goal, but it certainly added to the emotions and energy boost we experienced here. The games turned out to be fascinating, and hopefully, they will cover all of EkoNiva’s geographies in the future’, shares Sergey Kochetkov, Deputy Regional Director for Ryazan oblast, OKA MOLOKO.

By Viktor BARGOTIN



Teaming up for victories

There is nothing like getting together with colleagues in a relaxed atmosphere to re-energise before the start of the season. A combination of effective communication and active recreation makes a perfect environment for setting new goals and choosing optimal ways to achieve them.

EkoNivaSibir has arranged an informal meeting, uniting managers and owners of agricultural enterprises in Siberia and Altai. Along with industry-specific events, like demo shows, workshops, etc., the dealer started a great tradition of attending sports competitions together with farmers last year. This time, about 50 company partners were invited to cheer for the

KHL teams: first, they enjoyed the game between Avangard and Sibir in Omsk and then watched the showdown between Sibir and Neftekhimik in Novosibirsk.

‘Everyone immediately took to this format of meetings – it gives us the chance to both get charged with emotions and discuss burning issues, outline cooperation strategies and exchange experience with industry specialists



in a friendly atmosphere’, says Vasiliy Stepanov, Sales Department Manager at EkoNivaSibir. ‘We have always strived to bring farmers together so that they could

team up to reach ambitious goals. Judging by the success of the undertaking, attending sporting events is going to become another best practice.’

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

Skimming the cream off



EkoNiva has extended its SKU range with the 33% UHT cream for culinary professionals. The new product has already hit the shelves of METRO retail outlets.

As with the entire Professional Line range, EKONIVA high-fat cream

is designed specifically for the HoReCa segment and caters for the needs of professional

cooks and chefs. It is easy to whip, retains its shape well, has homogeneous dense texture and a pleasant mild taste. The product is perfect for making confectionery, various creams, desserts and sauces. A four-month shelf life increased due to ultra-high-temperature pasteurisation and a 1-litre packaging make EKONIVA cream an excellent choice for commercial kitchens.

Launched in 2019, EKONIVA Professional Line range currently comprises butter, curds, 10 and 33% cream and UHT milk with 0.5 to 3.5% fat. All the items are made from premium quality raw milk produced on EkoNiva farms. In November 2023, the Group announced improvement of the Professional Line UHT milk. Now, the protein content is 3.4 g per 100 g versus the former 3.2 g. The increased

protein not only enhances the organoleptic properties of milk but also ensures more stable and fluffy foam when frothing. Such milk is very popular with baristas for making coffee-based drinks.

'We are constantly striving for EKONIVA SKU range extension and the creation of new items to meet the customer needs. The launch of the UHT cream with 33% fat is a perfect illustration of our efforts in action. Long shelf life, excellent sensory and whipping properties make this product ideal for use by professional chefs and confectioners. We have started with small batches of high-fat cream planning to gain an insight into the market demand first and then present our product to the HoReCa segment on a larger scale', states Yekaterina Dürr, HoReCa Brand Director at EkoNiva-Food.

By Talgat MUSAGALIYEV

Going Halal

EkoNiva milk processing enterprises have undergone audits to meet the Halal certification requirements. The audit was done at MosMedynagroprom in Kaluga oblast, Anna milk plant, Shchuchye cheese plant and a partner processing facility in Voronezh oblast.

The audit was conducted by the experts from the International Centre for Halal Standardisation and Certification under the Spiritual Management of Muslims of Russia. They assessed the entire technological chain, inspected production, storage and administrative premises, analysed manufacturing and technological documentation and raw materials used for animal feeding and product manufacturing. Each of EkoNiva processing plants designated their respective internal supervisors, who had already been briefed on the specifics of production to ensure compliance with all the Halal certification requirements.

The certificates received by EkoNiva are valid for EKONIVA Momente aus Schollbrunn, Shchuchye and

Kolybelka semi-hard cheeses, 6-month-aged Dürr Zeller and 3-, 6-, 9- and 12-month-aged Dürr Classic hard cheeses as well as semi-hard cheeses produced by the Group under private labels. The range of

certified SKUs also comprises baked, pasteurised and ultra-pasteurised drinking milk, UHT milk for children nutrition, cream, curds, quark desserts, drinking and spoonable yoghurts, butter

and a number of fermented dairy items. All the above products are allowed for Muslim consumers.

'Halal certification confirms that our produce complies with the requirements and norms of the Islamic religion and at the same time indicates its high quality and ingredient transparency. Being Halal certified, we primarily meet the demand of Muslims in Russia selecting wholesome dairy. At the same time, EKONIVA dairy gains a selling point in the markets of traditionally Islamic countries, including Central Asia and the Middle East', comments Aleksey Maslennikov, Deputy Director General for Sales and Marketing at EkoNiva-Food.

By Talgat MUSAGALIYEV



Cheese Grand Prix winner

EkoNiva cheeses have been awarded at the ‘Best Cheese of Cheese Expo 2024’ contest hosted by the International F&B trade show FOOD EXPO.

The winners were selected by an expert jury using blind sampling. The premium 6-month-aged Dürr Zeller hard cheese picked up the Grand Prix award. The 12-month-aged Dürr Classic hard cheese and Shchuchye and Kolybelka semi-hard cheeses were also recognised by the jury.

The sales of premium Dürr Zeller hard cheese got underway less than a year ago, in May 2023. The ‘Best Cheese of Cheese Expo 2024’ is the first accolade earned by this product.

Up to date, the 6-month-aged hard cheese in the Dürr Classic range has received the most honours. In January 2022, it was given 3 stars out of 3 at the Superior Taste Award in Brussels with

a score of 93.4 out of 100. Also, in February 2024, it won a gold medal of Prodexpo international trade fair. The 12-month-aged Dürr Classic did not skip the attention of the jury either – the FOOD EXPO experts awarded it for the first time. Having a delicate blend of savoury and tangy flavours and a pungent aroma, this product is popular with true hard cheese lovers.

The production of Kolybelka and Shchuchye semi-hard cheeses was started right after EkoNiva’s processing plant launch in Voronezh oblast. These products have already earned the trust of consumers, and the medals they received at the trade show confirm their excellent quality.

By Eleonora DUBININA



From farm to shelf



EkoNiva proceeds with expanding its own retail chain. In February-March 2024, three new sales outlets were opened in different regions of Russia.

The Group keeps building up its offline brand presence in Moscow

oblast. At the beginning of March, the first branded shop was launched in Chekhov.

A total of thirteen EKONIVA shops now operate in Moscow city and Moscow oblast.

A new sales outlet, located not far from EkoNiva’s farms and processing plants, has opened its doors in Drakino village, Liski district, Voronezh oblast. Fresh dairy produce is delivered there six times a week. The Group already has a total of 22 branded shops in the region.

Moreover, late in March, a new bright and spacious brand shop welcomed the residents of Ryazhsk, Ryazan oblast. To date, the Group’s own retail network is represented by six outlets in this region.

As of the end of Quarter 1 2024, EkoNiva Group managed 80 branded shops in 14 regions of Russia. All retail outlets offer a full range of natural and wholesome produce made from raw milk from the company’s own farms. The lineup includes milk, cream, dairy fermented items, curds, yoghurts and quark desserts, butter, semi-hard and premium hard cheeses.

By Eleonora DUBININA

EkoNiva in focus



28–31 May Zolotaya Niva Trade Fair

Venue: 325, Sadovaya St., Voronezhskaya village, Ust-Labinsk, Krasnodar area
Organiser: Private entrepreneur S.D. Kvitkin, Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation, Ministry of Agriculture of Krasnodar area // Participants: EkoNiva-Chernozemye, EkoNiva-Semena

28–29 May Siberian Building Week 2024 Trade Show

Venue: Congress Hall, 25, 70 Let Oktyabrya St. bldg. 2, Omsk
Organiser: OOO IEC INTERSIB, OOO OMSK-EXPO // Participant: EkoNivaSibir

7 June Fashion Farmer 2024

Venue: Dobrino service centre, Voronezh oblast
Organiser: EkoNiva-Chernozemye



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