

First guests on the farm

New dairy in Tatarstan
opens its doors

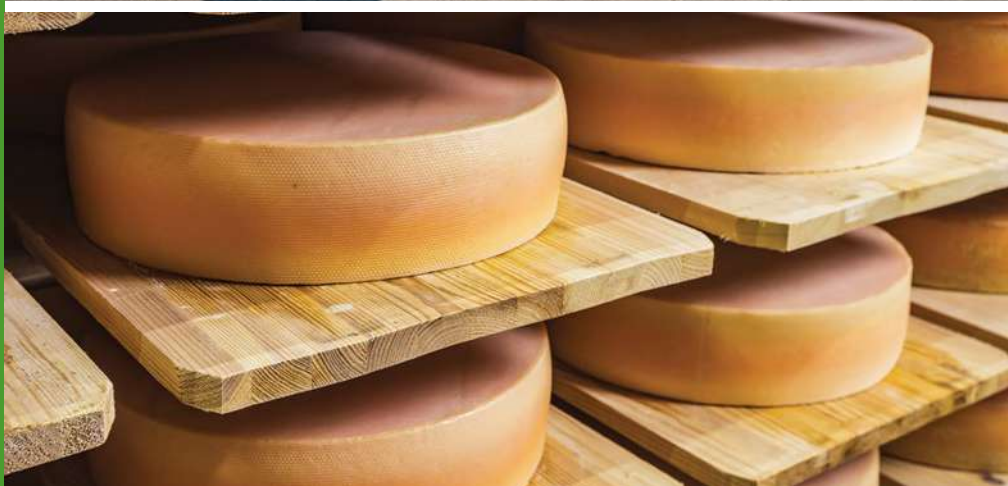
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Paving the way

Anna plant to export
cheese to Asia

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Stefan Dürr: 'We've gone all the way through with our milk: from field – to the buyer's table'

We started thinking about our own processing when our raw milk production grew substantially: aren't we getting too vulnerable? What are we going to do if everybody stops buying our milk? It was essential to build up the whole chain to the ultimate customer because the volume we started producing in 2022 was too big to be able to market it straightaway. The volatile price for raw milk and our passion for making delicious wholesome dairy from our own milk equally contributed to our decision. Though reasonable and timely, the idea of branching out into processing turned out to be hard to implement. It is a completely different business with its own rules, challenges and high competition that we knew nothing of. Whereas in cow farming we had become a PhD, in milk processing we were merely a first-grader. Nevertheless, we started learning.

In 2013, we launched a small pilot plant in Novosibirsk with an intake of 10 tonnes per day to figure out how to produce and market dairy.

It did not go without a hitch – a lot of mistakes were

made. At the same time, we were gaining in knowledge and experience. Soon we started constructing a bigger plant in Voronezh region.

Realising that we were in no position to wrestle with transnational corporations for air time, we refused to splash out on costly advertising campaigns and started paving our own way.

We launched the first farm open for visitors in Voronezh oblast to show the public how tasty nutritious milk is produced. We made promoting farming, milk and rural life our true mission. As dairy adulteration was a common problem at that time, it was critical for us to demonstrate the guests that our milk was wholesome and healthy. We also showed how a modern farm was managed. Today, EkoNiva runs 5 tour project farms that have received 60 thousand guests this year alone.

I can't say we got off to a good start; nevertheless, we were growing our new business step by step: acquired two more milk processing plants, built a cheese plant, kept on learning, mastering sales techniques and developing our

team. Ultimately, in 2018, we launched our own EKONIVA brand onto the market.

Not to overcomplicate it, we decided to build our brand on our key principle: from field to shelf. It implies that we have the whole production cycle under control: growing our own forages, taking thorough care of our cows' health and comfort and applying progressive technology at our plants to make high-quality nutritious staple milk products available to all consumers at a reasonable price. To be honest, I first felt nervous putting my photo and personal quality guarantee on our product packaging, but now I am confident it was a good decision that keeps us on our toes and motivates to improve the product, packaging and the range.

I vividly remember the day of launching the brand: we set up a mini farm with real cows, calves and tractors on the parking lot in front of Globus hypermarket in Odintsovo. It was an utter surprise for local residents who must have forgotten what a live cow looked like. It was not a conventional approach to promoting dairy. Our goal

was to tell people what EkoNiva was about and how food ended up on their tables.

Since then, we have learnt a lot, renovated our plants, ramped up the output, started cheese production, reached the leading positions in the HoReCa segment and now we are tapping into exporting. We used to dream of working with federal retailers back then, today we are available almost everywhere. Moreover, we expect to be ranked among the top 10 processors in Russia next year.

Of course, there is still a lot of work to be done: expanding into foreign markets, promoting organic production and strengthening our presence in the hospitality sector.

However, we are up to any challenge. We are happy to see people buy our milk and understand that they do it not for a fancy package, but because they share our values and know the value of true quality and wholesome taste that we put a lot of effort into. It is what drives us to evolve and make the most delicious dairy from our most delicious milk produced by our cows.

Stefan DÜRR,
President of EkoNiva Group

New dairy to come

EkoNiva and Rosselkhozbank have announced the construction of Penevichi dairy farm in Kaluga oblast, in the village of the same name in Khvastovichi district. The building works are already underway, with the relevant permits obtained back in 2023.



The infrastructure of the farm will comprise four barns, eight calf pens, a young stock housing site, a feed centre, a hygiene station and a rotary milking parlour. The farm is designed for 3,550 cows

and 4,630 head of young stock and has a production capacity of 98 tonnes of raw milk per day. The company is planning to invest a total of 4.4 billion rubles in the project with the support of

AO 'Rosselkhozbank', its financial partner in the project.

So far, the construction of two barns, including the milking parlour, has been completed, and a third cow yard, two calf pens, a silage storage area, a feed centre and one of the lagoons are currently being built.

'There is still a lot of work to do on the remaining calf pens, barns, hygiene station and other facilities. The construction jobs are to be finished in the second half of 2025. The implementation of the project will boost the development of the neighbouring localities and the entire Khvastovichi district –

the dairy will create about 150 jobs', says Roman Litvinov, Regional Director of EkoNiva Group for Kaluga Oblast.

'It is critical for our country to increase its self-sufficiency in staples, including milk. Kaluga oblast has been carrying out a long-term sustainable policy of expanding the production capacities in the farming sector. The project will contribute significantly to the region's food market', points out Margarita Filatova, Director of Kaluga Regional Branch, Rosselkhozbank.

In Khvastovichi district, EkoNiva is represented by Troitskiy Farming Operation. The enterprise manages about 11,200 hectares of farmland, half of which is used for growing silage maize as well as annual and perennial grasses to provide the herd with succulent and rough fodder.

By Talgat MUSAGALIYEV

Enhancing efficiency with BONUM

More than 1,500 companies all over the country have already opted for the brand. Its key principle is to offer cargo vehicles distinguished by both functionality and efficiency.

'Currently, there are three models of BONUM transfer hoppers available for sale – the Tipper 20, Hopper 30 and Hopper 40', comments Gennadiy Nepomnyashchii, Commercial Director of EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding. 'These are reliable cutting-edge machines which make it possible to carry out harvesting in a shorter time and with substantial economic benefits, improving the performance of combines and other vehicles and preserving soil structure and fertility. Thanks to on-the-go unloading, a transfer hopper operating with two 7-8 Class combines eliminates the need for a third machine, and with three 5-6 Class combines, it replaces a fourth one.'

The BONUM Tipper 20 and BONUM Hopper 30 with a lifting capacity of 20 and 24 tonnes respectively can be coupled



EkoNiva-Tekhnika keeps selecting the most effective tools for farmers, building up a portfolio of only tried and tested machines. In the transfer hopper segment, the company has added new products to its range – BONUM machines developed by Russian manufacturers.

with tractors delivering 150 hp and more. The BONUM Hopper 40 holds 30 tonnes of load and requires a 250-hp tractor. These models are united by a number of advantages: durability due to the high-quality metal and

coating, convenient and safe operation and maintenance. In addition, the units feature a single or dual-circuit braking system with drum brakes, which is essential for handling tasks in adverse field conditions.

Smooth and high-performance operation of the transfer hoppers is ensured thanks to the flow-adjustable auger and spiral preventing grain damage. They also have scales with an error of only 0.01% for accurate weight measurement during loading and unloading.

For full control of operation in an online mode, BONUM transfer hoppers can be connected to the PROFFIT system which makes for real-time monitoring of the weight of loaded and unloaded crops all over the combine-receiving hopper-truck-grain storage chain. Besides, it provides exact coordinates relating to the works in progress and detailed statistics on interaction with a combine, truck or tractor.

It is worth noting that BONUM machines have a decided edge over their counterparts: the production of all major components is located in Russia, which means spare parts are always available and delivered on time.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

Ever leading

For the 8th year in a row, EkoNiva has been in the lead among raw milk producers, according to the results of the ranking prepared by the analysts of the National Association of Milk Producers (Soyuzmoloko), industry-specific agency Milknews and Streda Consulting.

The annual analysis lists thirty Russian companies top ranking in terms of gross milk yields per 2023. In January-December 2023, EkoNiva produced 1.26 million tonnes of raw milk, thus exceeding its performance in 2022 by 65.5 thousand tonnes and breaking its own record (2022: 1.19 million tonnes).

EkoNiva Group runs 43 modern dairies in 13 Russian regions including three farms whose construction is currently underway. The total mean herd size amounts to almost 250,000 head, thereof 115,400 head are milking cows. On average, the milk yields across the company's

operations in January-June 2024 were 31.7 kg per day per dairy cow. The Group produces only top-grade milk and is gradually stepping up the production, expecting to boost its figures again by the end of 2024. In Q3 2024, Naraty dairy was launched in the Republic of Tatarstan. This farm is designed for 3,550 cows and 5,100 head of young stock, its capacity is projected to be 120 tonnes of milk per day. Also, the Group's specialists continue working on ramping up the milking herd productivity. Notably, EkoNiva makes its own fodder for calves and cows and formulates nutritious rations with the help of Eko.Feed, in-house developed software.

By Eleonora DUBININA



Advancing agriculture



Along with supplying state-of-the-art agricultural vehicles produced by the world's leading manufacturers, the holding provides high-quality after-sale service. Today, the company is actively expanding its regions of presence to be closer to its partners and customers.

'Over the past 30 years, we have gained an immense experience in supplying

and maintaining farming machines', comments Gennadiy Nepomnyashchiy, Commercial Director of EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding. 'Keeping in mind our top-class service and a wide range of spare parts, our clients based in various regions ask us to scale up our operations, so we open new dealerships one by one to help the farmers work even more efficiently. One

EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding has won a prize in the Largest Area Coverage category in Agrodealer of the Year 2023, an independent industry-specific contest for dealerships of farming machinery. Today, the company manages the largest nation-wide dealership network comprising service centres and offices in 40 Russian regions.

of the essential factors of our success is forming a full-fledged product portfolio including items produced both by Russian brands and manufacturers from friendly countries. Recently, we have launched our in-house manufacture of several tillage equipment models and spare parts.'

According to Gennadiy Nepomnyashchiy, such tremendous results in developing the dealership network were also achieved thanks to the professional team which has been shaping for years and is still growing. The corporate

training department assists in maintaining the high standards of sales and servicing.

The short-term plans call for gaining foothold in the new geographies, selecting and developing an optimal product portfolio and building respective infrastructure, considering the regional peculiarities.

It was the first time when Agrodealer of the Year 2023 was held. The awarding ceremony took place as part of the Russia's 11th Open Tillage Championship in Saratov oblast.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

First guests on the farm



EkoNiva has commissioned Naratly farm located in Bugulma district, the Republic of Tatarstan. The project investments amounted to about 4.5 billion rubles, with Rosselkhozbank acting as the financial partner.

The construction of the dairy has been underway since 2019. The infrastructure comprises four barns, calf pens, young stock housing sites, a feed centre, a hygiene station and a rotary milking parlour. The project is intended for 3,550 cows and 5,100 head of dairy young stock. The production capacity of the farm is 120 tonnes of milk per day. In total, 175 employees are required to keep the farm going.

Naratly's herd consists of high-yielding Holstein cows. The enterprise has already received the status of a breeding reproducer and is engaged in pedigree cattle breeding to meet the needs of agricultural producers.

Heifers from the dairy will be sent to other farms of EkoNiva or sold to other

enterprises, including through electronic auctions.

Naratly is also part of EkoNiva's tour project. This is the Group's first dairy farm in the Volga region which is

a special overview route around the farm enabling to take a look at the main stages of milk production. The farm will soon open its doors for the guests.



Rustam Minnikhanov, Head of Tatarstan, visited Naratly dairy

open to visitors. EkoNiva's guides have developed

'Naratly farm will make a valuable contribution to

developing the dairy industry in Russia and filling the market with fresh natural goods. This is fully in line with the goal of stepping up agricultural production, which was set by the President of Russia. In addition, the high-tech equipment will help to improve the employees' skills and unlock the human resources potential of the national farming sector', comments Denis Konstantinov, Deputy Chairman of the Management Board of Rosselkhozbank.

'We are happy to work in Tatarstan – the leader in raw milk production – and want to contribute to the republic's performance. Besides, the launch of Naratly is extremely important for the social and economic development of Bugulma district itself. Along with the projects of the key players in the Russian agricultural market, it will become part of a full-fledged farming cluster being formed here. As a result, its participants can enhance their cooperation, and the locals will be provided with comfortable living and working conditions', says Stefan Dürr, EkoNiva Group President.

By Talgat MUSAGALIYEV





Paving the way for cheese export

EkoNiva cheese plant in Shchuchye village, Voronezh oblast, has been certified for supplies to Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. The enterprise produces a variety of semi-hard cheeses under the EKONIVA brand and premium hard Dürr Classic and Dürr Zeller cheeses.

The processing site has been audited by the Russian Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Supervision (Rosselkhoz nadzor) and has undergone all the relevant registration procedures required by the importing countries. The export

authorisation certifies that the facility complies with high quality standards and guarantees the product safety. In 2023, the cheese plant was already certified for export to the Customs Union thus giving the green light for deliveries of the EKONIVA cheeses to Kazakhstan,

Armenia, Uzbekistan and Abkhazia. Building on the positive experience of exporting its produce to the neighbouring countries, the Group is currently actively developing cooperation with its partners in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

This year, the processing facilities have also received

Halal certification for a wide range of items, including cheeses, confirming product compliance with the requirements and norms of the Islamic religion. Thus, the Group has been able to enter the markets of traditionally Islamic countries in the Central Asia.

EkoNiva's plant in Shchuchye village focuses on the production of semi-hard and hard cheeses as well as curds and sour cream. The daily intake is up to 60 tonnes of raw milk, with a total output of 6 tonnes of cheese per day. Selected by 29 quality parameters, the cheese milk is delivered from the Group's own farms located not far from the cheese plant.

'Made from own top-grade cheese milk and devoid of any artificial preservatives or colourings, EKONIVA cheeses are some of the finest in the market. We are glad to offer our wholesome natural cheeses to consumers in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Meanwhile, the Group is analysing ways for reaching new export destinations', comments Aleksey Maslennikov, Deputy Director General for Sales and Marketing at EkoNiva-Food.

By Eleonora DUBININA

Boosting export

EkoNiva has commenced exporting skimmed milk powder to Georgia. The Group is ramping up its product exports and tapping into new markets.

In July, EkoNiva consigned four batches of skimmed milk powder (SMP) with a total volume of 80 tonnes to Georgia. The product delivery takes about 3 to 4 days by motor vehicles. The Group plans to establish regular supply to the country with an estimated export potential of 150 tonnes per month.

EkoNiva is actively developing the export of milk powder. Earlier this year, the Group launched regular deliveries of SMP to Armenia with the intention of exporting there up to 100 tonnes

per month. EkoNiva is also considering expanding into the markets of Kazakhstan, Algeria, Egypt, Oman, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh. Over the next few years, the export volume is expected to reach 3,500 tonnes of SMP per year.

Skimmed milk powder is a sought-after commodity used for manufacturing a wide range of foodstuffs, including full-fat milk, processed meat produce and confectionery. SMP is also one of the main ingredients of infant formulas.

'In 2023, we set off exploring the opportunities



for exporting our skimmed milk powder. To this end, we offered trial batches to our partners. The premium-quality raw milk from EkoNiva's own farms used for the production of SMP and our ability to deliver consistent supply at a competitive price has enabled

us to shift to shipments on a regular basis. Being a leader in the Russian dairy industry, we aspire to claim our share in the global market as well', says Mikhail Matveyenko, Deputy Director General of EkoNiva-APK Holding.

By Eleonora DUBININA

EkoNiva's golden pool

Yelena Bokova, a milking machine operator at EkoNiva's Voronezh subdivision, has been awarded the Honoured Agricultural Worker of the Russian Federation title, the corresponding decree signed by President Vladimir Putin.

Yelena's extensive employment record of 37 years includes more than 29 years of work in the farming sector in her native Liski district. Since 2010, Yelena Bokova has been part of EkoNiva's Drakino commercial dairy farm, teaming up with colleagues from the herd management and veterinary departments. When asked about the reason why she decided to cast her lot with agriculture, the milking machine operator does not hesitate to answer:

'I like animals a lot – they are affectionate and friendly, and it is nice and interesting to deal with them. When I was

a little girl, my mum worked on a farm here in Drakino. I used to join her to look around and watch the animals, eventually choosing to be a cow milker too. Now, I can't even imagine myself in any other profession.'

For her dedicated work, Yelena has previously received certificates of appreciation from the district administration, commendations from the governor and the regional Ministry of Agriculture.

'I don't expect any awards, I just do my job. EkoNiva gives me everything I need: a good salary, comfortable working conditions, a friendly and close-knit team. This is a reward in itself, and with such



benefits, one would strive for even greater excellence, which is especially important for our sphere – manufacture of food for people', emphasises Yelena Bokova.

It should be added that in 2022, Yelena was ranked the

best worker in the livestock farming industry of Voronezh oblast, following the Best Line Milking Machine Operator economic competition, and received a car as a prize.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

New cooperation prospects



EkoNiva Group and Avgust-Agro holding have signed a long-term cooperation agreement at AgroVolga international agricultural trade fair held in Kazan.

The companies went into partnership in the field of pedigree cattle breeding. In addition to supplying heifers to the dairy

farms of Avgust-Agro, EkoNiva will share animal research findings with its specialists and offer them advice on livestock management to

enhance the herd quality and breeding value.

EkoNiva has been providing Avgust-Agro with pedigree cattle since 2022. Over 1,800 Holstein heifers have already joined the milking herd of the agricultural holding, which currently totals 8,000 animals. By the end of 2023, the gross milk yield at the existing facilities amounted to 40,000 tonnes of milk. This year, plans are afoot to launch the second stage of Yaltau commercial dairy for 600 milking cows in Tatarstan, and the commissioning of Ulyankovo commercial dairy for 3,700 head of milking herd is scheduled for 2025. Once the company's dairy production reaches full capacity, its gross milk yield is estimated to be 90,000 tonnes per year.

'We have been facing an acute problem of finding a strategic supplier of high-yielding animals. EkoNiva has taken the issue

completely off the table by providing us with heifers in the required quantity. The performance of the first-lactation cows speaks volumes, averaging 11 tonnes of milk per year', says Aydar Galyautdinov, Director General of Avgust-Agro Management Company.

'Cooperation and exchange of ideas are important success factors in business. We are positive that our collaboration with Avgust-Agro in pedigree cattle breeding will give a boost to mutually beneficial work in other areas', says Mikhail Matveyenko, Deputy Director General of EkoNiva-APK Holding.

The Group supplies pedigree cattle to large agricultural holdings and enterprises in the Central, Northwestern, Volga, Ural and Siberian Federal Districts of Russia, with the sales in 2023 amounting to about 15,000 head.

By Talgat MUSAGALIYEV

Cherishing family traditions

Yuriy Mizilin, Truck Driver at EkoNiva's Voronezh subdivision, has been presented with one of the highest state awards – Honoured Agricultural Worker of the Russian Federation. President Vladimir Putin signed a decree conferring the title.

Yuriy has been steeped in farming throughout his life. Full of admiration for his father, he dreamt of driving a big machine and working for the benefit of a collective farm ever since childhood.

'I decided to follow in the footsteps of my father, a long-time driver, and chose this career too. I have been behind the wheel for 37 years now, 11 of which have slipped away at EkoNivaAgro-Left Bank. I like it here very much, and contributing to EkoNiva's enormous success brings me more joy than getting any awards', says Yuriy Mizilin.

At the enterprise, Yuriy ensures timely delivery of various types of fodder for cows and transports agricultural products. Over the years of diligent work, he was often given commendations from the Governor of Voronezh

oblast and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation. By the way, Yuriy's son Aleksey Mizilin, who has been working as a machine operator at EkoNivaAgro-Left Bank since 2008, has also received numerous awards for his professional achievements.

'It so happened that my son Aleksey joined EkoNiva much earlier than I did. He got a job at an operation in Nizhny Maryino village, Liski district, right after his military service. It is actually thanks to my son that I started to work at the company. He makes me so proud as he is an all-round professional – a machine operator driving both combines and tractors. I'm truly happy to go through my job routine with him – during the harvesting season, Aleksey is in charge of grain threshing while I am responsible for transporting the crop', shares Yuriy.



The remarkable thing is that Yuriy Mizilin became EkoNivaAgro's sixth employee to receive the Honoured Agricultural Worker of the Russian Federation title. Previously, it was awarded to Olga Pasyukova,

a seed-growing agronomist, Tatyana Kaplina and Yelena Bokova, milkers, Vladimir Lozovoy, a machine operator, and Dmitriy Korendyasev, Director of EkoNivaAgro-East Operation.

By Irina KRASNOSHCHYOKIKH

Work of a master hand

Yuriy Tedikov, an employee of EkoNiva's Volga subdivision, has become the best breeding herd manager of the region.

The professional skills contest was held at the premises of Severnaya Niva Orenburg Operation. The competition brought together

specialists of local breeding reproducers engaged in dairy and beef cattle breeding.

'What I most like about my job is that it opens up

plenty of opportunities to do various tasks, learn new things, develop and improve my skills. I also enjoy working in a team and achieving

common goals. Participation in such contests is a great chance to exchange ideas in the professional community and get experience from the industry's top experts. Besides, it is a good way to show and evaluate my proficiency, see the level of competence of others and receive an extra boost for growth', says the specialist.

Yuriy Tedikov has been working at EkoNiva since 2020. Back in 2022, he was recognised as the best herd manager of Orenburg oblast and awarded certificates from the regional Ministry of Agriculture and the district administration.

By Talgat MUSAGALIYEV



Among peers



As part of the international student forum 'Among peers: future partnership through the eyes of the youth', 90 students from universities of the CIS countries and Russia have participated in EkoNiva's tour project in Voronezh oblast. Here, they got acquainted with modern dairy production and met with Stefan Dürr, EkoNiva Group President.

Held in Voronezh for the second time, the forum brought together more than 350 participants from 30 regions of Russia and other countries, such as Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Upon their arrival at Dobrino farm, the visitors were treated to wholesome and healthy dairy produce from EkoNiva, an official partner of the event. The students sampled hard and semi-hard cheeses, milk, sour cream, yoghurts and quark desserts. After the tasting, the guests took a tour around the cutting-edge dairy facility. They

were invited to see the little residents of the farm at the calf hutch site and observe the heifers in exercise lots. The young people also gained an insight into the animal care, welfare and the growth stages of dairy cows. The tour programme concluded with the cow milking in the rotary parlour which the students watched from the viewing gallery.

'I have never seen production on such a scale before, and I'm really impressed. Everything about this tour is remarkable: the people here are very hospitable, the company uses

high technologies, and the cows are kept in excellent conditions, with specialists taking good care of them. That is why the milk here is so delicious', says Akmalsher Rakhimov, a student of Tashkent University of World Economy and Diplomacy.

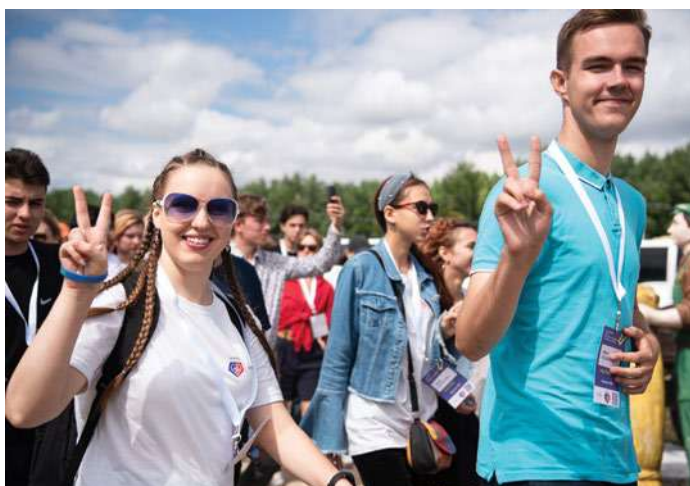
Later, Stefan Dürr met with the students. The lecture on a modern vertically integrated agricultural holding as illustrated by the example of EkoNiva smoothly flowed into an informal conversation. He talked about his first visit to Russia and the difficulties he faces in his work, answered all the guests' questions and

gave some useful advice on how to become true professionals.

'To achieve ambitious goals in your profession, you should learn to be a leader, understand the basic economic features of your business, constantly grow and acquire new knowledge and, above all, work for a team's success', emphasises Stefan Dürr.

This year, the international student forum 'Among peers: future partnership through the eyes of the youth' has accomplished its mission and achieved the objectives. The preparation of the third forum, which will take place next year, is already underway. The organisers commended EkoNiva for its contribution and expressed enthusiasm about working with the company in the future.

By Viktor BARGOTIN





Opportunities galore

EkoNiva has taken part in the Siberian Field Day, a major agricultural forum. The company's 1,500-m² exposition was one of the largest and most attended at the event.

Eager to learn about new products, many of EkoNiva's Siberian partners visited the booth to provide feedback on their operations and achievements.

'It's hard to imagine an exhibition that would surpass the Siberian Field Day', says Gennadiy Nepomnyashchiy, Commercial Director at EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding. 'In-person communication is a valuable experience allowing us to explore new products and engage in rich discussions with our clients, something that is harder to have over the phone.'

At the exhibition, the key products included Bednar, SANY, LiuGong equipment and the new 260-hp Ensign 2605 tractor. Hay and forage harvesters, along with feeding equipment, are in high demand among Siberian farmers. That is why the company is introducing a powerful solution – the new SANY STH742 telehandler with a lifting capacity of 4.2 tonnes and a lift height of 7 metres. And the latest FasCar baler

paired with the Haybuster bale processor is perfect for handling any given task.

Farmers analysed various machines, including the Gregoire Besson one-pass



finisher, GRIMME machinery, NAGRO and Pomot fertiliser applicators. The main highlights were the new BONUM hoppers and the Lumberjack stump puller produced in Voronezh oblast. Every visitor found and acquired the right machinery for their fieldwork. EkoNiva

is committed to providing high-quality on-time servicing of the clients' equipment, which is a first step in the future long-term partnership. 'EkoNiva operates

offer alternatives by no means inferior in quality but much more affordable. For instance, the company's in-house brand AGROZNAK is an excellent substitute for foreign-made spare parts.'

'We are developing the production of technologically sophisticated components, such as crankshafts and bearings, which are under constant high loads and subject to wear', says Sergey Arsiy, Head of Altai branch of EkoNivaSibir. 'Voronezh oblast has become the main production hub and base for our partnership with more than 100 Russian manufacturers. All the spare parts are rigorously tested to ensure and guarantee their quality.'

Every visitor of EkoNiva's booth had a unique opportunity to explore high-performance machinery equipped with advanced navigation systems as well as high-yielding seeds of various field crops, including the in-house varieties developed by EkoNiva-Semena.

'EkoNiva's 30th anniversary has made this year special for all of us', noted Gennadiy Nepomnyashchiy. 'Each passing year gives us valuable experience and strengthens our resilience to continue to work hard for the benefit of the Russian agriculture.'

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

In Siberian fields



Sibirskaya Niva enterprise has held its annual Field Day, bringing together over 130 representatives of large agricultural holdings and farming enterprises from Siberia and Kazakhstan. The big event took place in Payvino village, Maslyanino district, Novosibirsk oblast.

The participants had an excellent opportunity to evaluate the potential of numerous varieties of cereals, oilseeds and grasses from EkoNiva-Semena's commercial portfolio unlocked in the natural environment of demonstration plots. The spotlight fell on the range of legume crops which are particularly significant for the Siberian region, where the area under peas and lentils is growing rapidly every year. Cutting-edge cultivation technologies are the key to producing high yields of green and red lentils.

One of the up-and-coming novelties presented both in the field and in production was EN Argument, an in-house bred soya bean variety. Maturing in only 94-100 days and containing up to 42.5% protein, it was intended for Siberia's challenging weather conditions. The performance of this early-ripening variety impressed local farmers and those from Kazakhstan, while EkoNiva-Semena's specialists shared agronomic practices applied on farms to ensure such high productivity. In addition, Syngenta partners spoke about advanced trends

in seed protection and how they influence the output of varieties.

'Almost all of the company's varieties are available for testing in our fields, and this year, it is the turn for spring barley', says Aleksandr Fedoreyev, Manager of URYUM LLC in Zdvinsk district, Novosibirsk oblast. 'We have been cooperating with EkoNiva-Semena for about 7 years, during which time our farm has seen a significant boost in the yielding capacity of the crops. The spring wheat seeds are distinguished by excellent sowing qualities, delivering 5-6 tonnes per hectare.



Throughout the growing period, I keep a record of the amount of precipitation – it is critical for correct crop yield programming.'

As part of the Field Day, EkoNivaSibir showcased two state-of-the-art machines for tackling various agricultural tasks. The powerful Ensign YX2604-M tractor is the most high-tech model in the Chinese manufacturer's range. It is fitted with a 6-cylinder diesel engine delivering 260 hp and an axial piston pump with an LS line having a capacity of 180 l/min. Another eye-catching feature is the 360° camera displaying a

real-time projection of the tractor and ensuring safe operation.

The MST MP7.42, a versatile telescopic handler, was also demonstrated during the trade fair.

'It is the most indispensable helper both in crop and livestock farming', points out Matvey Glok, Head of Krasnoyorskoye branch office of EkoNivaSibir. 'The machine is equipped with a 125-hp Perkins engine and boasts a maximum boom height of 7.37 metres and a lifting capacity of 4.2 tonnes. It will come in handy in fodder production and during the sowing or harvesting campaigns.'

Following the field event at Sibirskaya Niva, EkoNiva-Semena and EkoNivaSibir came to numerous agreements on further cooperation with farmers from Siberia and Kazakhstan.

'We have been partnering with the Group since 2009, purchasing seeds and machinery', says Dmitriy Miroshnik, Manager of a farm in Krasnoyorskoye district, Novosibirsk oblast, 'and we are well satisfied with everything, in particular the service specialists' work. Through such events as this Field Day, we can keep up with the industry's most cutting-edge solutions and current trends.'

By Irina KRASNOSHCHYOKIKH



Sharing experience and gaining knowledge

EkoNiva has run its annual crop production workshop on the premises of its enterprise in Voronezh oblast. The largest ever event brought together over 150 managers and specialists from all of the Group's geographies.

Regional directors, managers of operations, agronomists, service engineers, economists, IT specialists, representatives of commercial and human resources departments and other employees took part in the training.

'There is a good reason for using Voronezh fields as the workshop platform. More than 20 years ago, it was here that EkoNiva began to intensively develop crop production, gaining a wealth of experience in this area over time. The climatic and geographical conditions and state-of-the-art technical equipment of the farms make for carrying out numerous production trials and regular demonstration tests. The positive results obtained can be applied to the operation of our enterprises in other regions', says Aleksandr Anpilov, Crop Production Director at EkoNiva.

At the workshop, the company's agronomists also elaborated on

the no-till seeding technology. It is introduced on 25,900 hectares in Voronezh oblast, the largest area across the holding, and is being actively implemented in the Siberian region – on 20,350 hectares. A total of 59,350 hectares has been sown in 2024 using this practice.

'No-till farming allows us to retain soil moisture,

mitigate the impact of water and wind erosion, restore soil structure and reduce crop production expenses, thus enhancing overall cost efficiency', says Aleksey Nizkodubov, Chief Agronomist at EkoNivaAgro-Left Bank.

In addition to the fields, the workshop participants visited a modern grain storage facility for 30,000 tonnes at the operation, where they discussed the use of silo bags.

'This option offers us benefits such as minimisation of grain handling costs and

reduction of transportation expenses, which helps to speed up the harvesting process when there is a shortage of vehicles and the grain storage facility has a limited receiving capacity. Besides, there is no need to go through the expense of drying forage – it can be put into silo bags while wet', continues Aleksey Nizkodubov.

One of the topics for discussion at the event was alfalfa cultivation technologies. Due to its high nutrient content, which has a positive effect on animal productivity and health, this crop is a valuable component of the cow ration at EkoNiva.

'The annual workshop has become an integral part of EkoNiva's corporate culture. The exchange of opinions and experience between specialists from different departments related to crop production contributes to working out the right direction of its growth and delivering great performance', concludes Aleksandr Anpilov.

By Viktor BARGOTIN





Field Day 2024: inspiration and innovations



EkoNiva-Tekhnika is not only a leading supplier of farm machinery and equipment, but also a driver of innovations in the agricultural sector. At annual industry trade shows, the company never fails to fascinate its partners with a display of the most trending machines and technologies promoting experience exchange between manufacturers and farmers.

This season, the regional branches of EkoNiva-Tekhnika took part in events in the European part of the country, Volga region and Siberia. Here are just a few of the regions where the company exhibited the solutions from its portfolio: Vladimir, Ryazan, Kostroma, Novosibirsk, Tver, Tula, Saratov, Volodga, Omsk, Volgograd oblasts and the Republic of Mordovia. All the displays featured novelties by domestic and foreign manufacturers.

LOVOL won't let you down

The tractor segment was widely represented by the machines of LOVOL make – the third-generation 1304, TN2604, TD904, TR2204, TR2604, updated P4110 and P7240 models.

'The Lovol P7240 is equipped with a 240-hp Weichai WP7 engine. High efficiency of the tractor is ensured by the reliable motor with high torque and a continuously variable hydromechanical transmission', says Ilya Porfiriyev, Sales

Department Manager at Ryazan branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'The well-designed rear linkage allows tractor to be used for a wide range of agricultural and transportation tasks.'

The LOVOL products are distinguished by an optimal price-quality ratio, which makes them highly popular with Russian farmers. EkoNiva-Tekhnika has supplied more than 300 tractors of this brand to partners' farms all over the country.

'We have eight units of the brand from Celestial Empire. All the tractors are of various capacity, suited for diverse

tasks', shares Sergey Trutnev, Head of Suvorovskoye and Starodvorskoye farms (Suzdal district, Vladimir oblast). 'We continue to purchase the LOVOL machinery. This year, we visited the manufacturing facility in China together with EkoNiva and saw the serious approach to manufacturing first-hand. Chinese manufacturers strive to improve and meet the demands of the Russian market. They quickly update and introduce a line of tractors of the demanded capacities with the functionality required by the Russian agribusinesses.'

Fascar: a milestone in forage production

Another new solution unveiled to Siberian farmers is the high-performance Fascar 9YG-1.25 baler, an excellent choice for roughage harvesting. During the Siberian Field Day, the model passed the test drive with flying colors, and the first units already operate on farms.

The model with the working width of 224 cm moves at a speed up to 35 km/h forming up to two bales with a diameter of 1.3 m per minute. The baler features semi-forced material feeding, increasing the volume of the grass mass collected and minimising clogging. This makes it possible to produce uniform bales while eliminating the need to move along the swath on both sides.

One of the key advantages of Fascar is its high baling density: the machine is capable of compressing biomass into bales weighing up to 420 kg. With that, the Fascar 9YG-1.25 is affordable to a wide range of farmers, since its price is half that of the renowned counterparts.



For the construction and utilities sectors

The SANY STH742 telehandler is featured as a high-efficiency model with a lifting capacity of 4.2 tonnes and lifting height of 7 metres. The vehicle provides significant productivity increase in such sectors as construction, tunnels, railroad tracks and power lines maintenance. The engine with a power of 73 kW @ 2,200 rpm guarantees reliable and long-lasting operation.

The SANY STH742 model is equipped with a 4-litre DEUTZ BF4M2012 engine, providing the torque of 420 Nm @ 1,500 rpm and is compliant with the Tier III, which ensures high productivity at a low level of emissions.

At this summer's field events, EkoNiva-Tekhnika introduced the Chinese XGMA XG 7654TX backhoe loader with 105 hp and a lifting capacity of 3.5 tonnes. These vehicles are as good as their European counterparts in terms of performance characteristics, but they are available at a more attractive price.

Reliable, affordable, our own

A bright novelty offered at the trade shows was the Lumberjack Stump puller, produced in Voronezh oblast.

The solution is used for stump, tree and bush clearing from land areas, fields, construction sites, farmlands', says Ilya Porfiriyev. 'Most importantly, it can be coupled with various types of telehandlers and tractors. The stump puller is made of high-quality metal resistant to shocks and temperature fluctuations.

AGROZNAK, the in-house brand of spare parts and technical liquids for self-propelled and trailed equipment, deserves special attention. Today, the company's product range exceeds 2,500 items, including oils, greases and antifreezes, filters, transmissions and their parts, axles and shafts, plates and guides, springs and spring tines, belts, sealants,

fasteners, chains, bearings and other spare parts.

'The AgroznaK spare parts are made as a substitute for foreign parts and components, the access to which is currently limited', comments Sergey Krasavin, Head of Ryazan branch of

main role in effective agriculture management.'

Education of the young

In Vladimir oblast, besides the presentation of the latest machinery, a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture of the region Oleg Pugayev took place.



EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'The goal the company has set is to introduce to the market the products which meet the high-quality standards of their foreign counterparts, which is particularly important in present-day economic conditions, when reliability and affordability play the

During the meeting, the decision to jointly modernise the training bases of regional agricultural colleges was reached.

Thus, a specialised EkoNiva agriclass is due to open in Suzdal agricultural college soon.

'Currently, machinery by Russian and Chinese

manufacturers comes to the fore in the market, and we realise that it is this equipment that is going to cultivate our fields in the near future', says Oleg Pugayev. 'So our students will benefit from internship involving the kind of machines which is sought after by our farmers. In the end, it is farm machinery and equipment suppliers that determine the output and success of the farming sector. EkoNiva is a reliable company which promotes education of up-and-coming specialists, it is constantly evolving itself and expanding its partners' expertise.'

Friendship and partnership

EkoNiva's activity in the domestic market and its close ties with foreign partners lay a solid foundation for sustainable development of Russia's farming sector and are conducive to the adoption of innovative technologies in agriculture. Guests of trade shows confirm this.

'EkoNiva is my go-to partner in agriculture. We've been friends since 2007', says Vadim Kurbanov, Director General of Agroprodukt, Chairman of Committee on Agroindustrial Policy, Rural Area Development, Natural Resources and Environment of Kostroma State Duma. 'Back in the day, we bought high-yielding seeds of field crops, and now we have a whole fleet of machinery supplied by EkoNiva: tractors, sowing combinations, mixer wagons – all fully meeting our expectations. I'd like to express my sincere gratitude to the Group for the business trips abroad which provide an opportunity to get to know not only leading machinery producers, but also farming practices and everyday life in other countries. I am very pleased with the multiyear cooperation with the company and the seamless end-to-end customer experience it delivers.'

by Viktor BARGOTIN,
Tatyana IGNATENKO,
Irina KRASNOSHCHYOKIKH,
Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV



In tune with clients



EkoNiva-Tekhnika and EkoNivaSibir have arranged a client trip, gathering fifty managers and specialists of potato-growing enterprises for business and informal events in Oryol, Tula and Moscow.

First, the Siberian farmers visited Bortnikovo dairy in Stupinskaya Niva, Moscow oblast, to find out more about the approaches that Stefan Dürr and his team have adopted to retain the lead in crop and dairy farming. The guests were given a detailed tour of the facilities and treated to fresh EKONIVA products.

The key event during the trip was the Potato Russia 2024 International Field Day organised by GRIMME. The farmers were offered to take a look at brand-new potato varieties bred in Russia and abroad, efficient

crop protection agents and fertilisers, innovative solutions for automation of production, storage and processing. There were also demo shows of the most cutting-edge machines for the industry.

'The second-generation GRIMME EVO 280 trailed two-row potato harvester with side digging deserves special attention', says Pavel Tremasov, Grimme Brand Manager at EkoNivaSibir. 'The model features an 8-tonne hopper and improved separation ability, ensuring a high level of cleaning, excellent performance and careful handling of each tuber.

In addition to potatoes, the vehicle is well suited for table beets and carrots.'

Another state-of-the-art machine on display was the new-generation GRIMME RH receiving hopper upgraded with a number of important features.

'It is an optimal solution for medium-sized and large farms, with the bottom conveyor designed for high pick-up and fast discharge (up to 6 m/min) and rollers flexibly adjustable for various tasks within a particular enterprise', adds Pavel Tremasov. 'The RH hoppers make for gentle

cleaning, great grading and proper product placement in storage.'

One more eye-catching novelty was the updated four-row GRIMME PRIOS 440 planter with a hopper having a capacity of up to four tonnes. Thanks to the gooseneck drawbar with an intermediate frame and a separate lifting device, the machine can be coupled with any tillage unit.

'The model enables simultaneous soil cultivation, application of macro- and micro-fertilisers and crop protection agents to furrows and tubers, as well as potato planting with high placement accuracy. The innovative hybrid device makes it possible to shape a perfect ridge whatever the soil. The Grimme Digital Interface system ensures machine connection to the myGrimme portal and offers such options as creating 3D field models and online workflow monitoring.'

Filled with live communication, new acquaintances, fresh management solutions and plenty of useful insights about effective farming tools, the trip proved quite a success. Moreover, it highlighted once again EkoNiva's commitment to always keeping in touch and in tune with its clients.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV



Strength through technology

For a wide range of tasks in agriculture, EkoNivaSibir offers a powerful solution – the brand-new versatile Ensign 2604 wheeled tractor. The model is the most innovative in the tractor segment of Ensign, a company of Chinese origin.

This machine equipped with an axial-piston pump and an LS line with a capacity of 180 l/min has been highly anticipated by our team', shares Aleksandr Burmak, Senior Sales Representative at EkoNivaSibir. 'The central hydraulic system and a 260-hp, 6-cylinder diesel engine ensure compatibility with a variety of attachments. Paired with a seed drill, tillage implement or mower, the tractor is fully capable

of handling any fieldwork and ready to assist with fodder harvesting.'

The 360° panoramic view via camera is an excellent feature offering great visibility and safe operation even in challenging areas and with wide implements. Efficient fuel consumption is secured by the CommonRail precision injection system.

'One key advantage of the tractor is the company's in-house developed creeper transmission with 32 forward



and 32 reverse gears', says Aleksandr Burmak. 'The rear linkage with a lifting capacity of 6.63 tonnes enables the machine to tackle a wide range of agricultural and transportation tasks. The reliable long-lasting performance of the engine and its components is ensured by the multichannel

output quick hitch and an oil-water separator in standard configuration.'

To acquire the high-performance unit that guarantees impressive results, visit EkoNivaSibir's subdivisions.

By Irina KRASNOSHCHYOKIKH

FasCar's time

High-quality roughage plays a significant part in the cattle's diet, which is why livestock farmers have the motto 'Hay is the key'. EkoNiva-Tekhnika knows that the extremely efficient FasCar baler will help its partners approach hay harvesting with full focus.

The generally accepted alternative to conventional stacking is hay baling. Mechanised picking and shaping of hay bales provide suitable storage conditions and a notable decrease in the nutrient loss of roughage.

'The hay forage harvesters of the Chinese brand FasCar are easy to use, affordable and efficient. These properly engineered units are able to bale and move seriously faster than their counterparts', shares Aleksandr Suvorov, Machinery Sales Department Manager for Altai area, EkoNivaSibir.

The FasCar's structural features help with high-speed baling (up to 2 bales a minute) at a speed of 35 km/h. This unit easily

picks up dry, wet and mown green mass. The new conceptual design of this attachment has enabled us to achieve a larger gain in

hay output and reduce the likelihood of clogging unit components.

The high-density of hay baling is one of the



advantages of FasCar balers. Thanks to modern engineering solutions, this attachment can form a 420-kg bale.

'The FasCar 9YG-1.25 model is equipped with a 125-cm wide baling chamber with the diameter of 130 cm. Two models with a 140-cm wide baling chamber with the diameter of 130 cm in HARD configuration are available for challenging conditions. Innovative solutions, affordability and high efficiency together make the FasCar's baler the optimum choice for livestock farming', continues Aleksandr Suvorov.

FasCar's hay and forage equipment has intrigued Siberian farmers. Owners, whose units successfully work in the fields, note the ease of operation, convenience, high speed of the machinery and, last but not the least, its competitive price.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO



Always at hand

Availability of high-quality spare parts and consumables along with first-class maintenance of farm machinery are a combination of factors that determines successful agricultural production. EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding has always put a premium on these aspects of its activity.

Original brands and best counterparts for greater efficiency

In 2024, the company enhanced its spare parts range management in three key areas: provision of original spare parts, selection of high-grade generic parts and in-house part manufacture under the AGROZNAK brand. This comprehensive approach ensures smooth machinery operation for farmers.

For timely supply and proper client support, which are of utmost importance, EkoNiva-Tekhnika studies the needs of all enterprises, including those having vehicles of foreign brands that have suspended their operations in the Russian market, and finds ways to replenish stocks with original items.

Besides, the team works on expanding the product range to offer partners quality alternative spare parts. The company also focuses its efforts on boosting overall efficiency and optimising pricing.

‘We prefer a project-based approach in the staff management, which implies regular meetings to discuss processes and make flexible decisions. Careful analysis of farmers’ needs and visits to enterprises have also become an integral part of our work’, says Andrey Yeroshevich, Deputy Manager of Servicing, Spare Parts Sales and Support Division at EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding. ‘We have also defined more than 20 thousand related original and non-OEM SKUs, improved the delivery terms in respect

of prices and shipping times, obtained the dealership status with six new spare part brands, arranged surplus exchange with suppliers and revised the handling of goods in the holding’s warehouses.’

The company’s clients have absolute trust in the solutions it offers them, since it is a supplier of agricultural machinery and spare parts boasting 30 years of experience even in troubled times.

‘With EkoNiva-Tekhnika, we can get all the necessary spare parts quite promptly,



as we now opt for both original products and their counterparts’, comments Aleksey Kondaurov, Tillage and Seeding Equipment Service Technician at EkoNiva-APK Holding. ‘We appreciate the team’s quick response and systematic approach, and the quality of goods also meets our stringent requirements.’

This year, the number of clients purchasing alternative spare parts has grown by 24% compared to 2023.

‘The company’s management has done its best to open up better opportunities for providing farmers with spare parts’, says Nikolay Terekhov, Head of the After-Sales Service Department at Kaluga branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. ‘Numerous meetings with partners helped them realise that we are always at their service and can deal with any problem. Thanks to the team approach, the spare parts business was taken to a whole new level.’

AGROZNAK: new hallmark of quality

In addition to working with tried and trusted manufacturers, EkoNiva-Tekhnika has been developing its own project – the AGROZNAK brand, under which it started serial production of more than 2,500 spare parts of superior quality in Russia. New items are to be designed, including those having no equals in the market.

‘We are currently bringing our products to perfection so that they exceed our clients’ expectations’, says Dmitriy Fetisov, Manager of the Import Substitution Division at EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding. ‘The manufacturing plans are being fine-tuned for us to obtain optimal patterns of production and supply of AGROZNAK spare parts by the end of next year.’

‘In 2025, we will keep offering our clients solutions tailored to their needs, working efficiently and enhancing the quality of our products’, sums up Andrey Yeroshevich.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

Dreams come true

Industriousness, warmth and boundless creative energy are what distinguishes Kirill Tagantsev, Sales Department Manager of Kostroma and Vladimir branches, EkoNiva-Tekhnika. His multiyear exceptional proficiency in machinery sales charges young aspiring specialists for success. In this interview, Kirill tells us about his quest for his life's purpose.

Kirill, what did you dream about in your childhood?

'When I was young, I wanted to become a magician with a magic wand to make the world a better place. But for some reason, my parents' ambition for me was to become a policeman with a traffic wand instead. (Laughs.) I tried in vain to convince my father that I'm not cut out for wearing a badge.'

How did you find your calling?

'It was a crisis year 2009, mass dismissals all over the country... Having graduated from Kostroma Agricultural Academy, I suddenly realised that I with my degree wasn't needed anywhere other than as a security guard. I looked for employment for half a year, until the opportunity to try my hand at EkoNiva turned up. Without hesitation, I went for an internship to the Moscow branch of the

company in Zakharovo. My duties covered helping the machinery repair service and getting involved in the work of the sales department. Thus, in 2010 I became a part of a large family company, for which I still work to this day. By the way, EkoNiva is my first and only job.'

How did the idea of a berry farm come about?

'My wife and I have entertained this idea for a few years since the birth of our first child. The attention of youngsters is ruthlessly stolen by gadgets, social networks and influencers. To protect our children from this, we decided to ensure their all-round development from the get-go. Our daughter Alisa practises art, our son Maksim plays the guitar, together they go to taekwondo. However, the kids' hobbies were not limited to creative arts and sports. When we had our own dacha, the children became interested in growing berries. They took



gentle care of the strawberries and sea buckthorn, watering the plants by themselves. That's how our Kids' Berry Farm was born. Our family was offered to apply for Agrostartup contest. The grant enabled us to start a blueberry growing business. Today, 7,000 bushes of blueberries grow on 2 hectares of farmland in Pershutino, Krasnoye-na-Volge district, and we harvested 3.5 tonnes of berries this year!'

How do you manage to juggle farm chores and working full-time as a sales manager?

'I am personally not engaged in the farming. This is our family venture, the head of our berry farm is my wife Aleksandra. I am the ideological inspirer behind the project. I must admit that thanks to our farm it has become much easier to communicate with EkoNiva's customers. Whereas previously they perceived me solely as a salesman, now that I have entered farming, they have thawed towards me somewhat and started treating me more kindheartedly – as a kindred spirit, a fellow-man who tirelessly and selflessly toils the land. Once during a conversation with a client, a director of a large farm, I mentioned a modern navigation system which helps us to solve multiple tasks on our berry farm.

At the end of the business meeting, the client right away bought 10 navigation sets from EkoNiva!'

What did winning in the Family of the Year nationwide contest in the Rural Family category feel like?

'Joy and pride from the recognition that we are doing everything right. But the real surprise of this year was when our farm won in the competitive selection for Agritourism grants provided by the Ministry of Agriculture of Russia!'

What goals do you plan to achieve with the grant?

'The main goal is to develop local tourism. We strive to attract more guests from all over Russia to our beautiful Kostroma oblast!'

Your amazing family is currently expecting a fourth child. What parenting advice would you give?

'It is important to always support your child and help them in whatever they are up to! Our kids are not afraid to try their hand in different areas – engineering, agronomy, odd jobs, marketing, negotiator. Diverse practical experience is a sure-fire way to achieve success in adult life.'

Interviewed by
Irina KRASNOSHCHYOKIKH



Gravitational field of EkoNiva

Ivan Vorobyov is a vivid illustration of growth and multidirectional development within a company. One can be promoted to a top manager starting as a service technician, if one has certain traits and has been staying loyal to the company over 20 years. Ivan Vorobyov, Deputy Director of EkoNiva-Food, recounts his career path within EkoNiva.

From Technician to Sales Specialist

Upon my graduation from the Mechanics Department of the Voronezh State Agricultural University (VSAU), my supervisor recommended me to apply for a job with EkoNiva-Chernozemye headed by Nikolay Buravlyov, an alumnus of our University.

On 7 July 2003, I and my university mate Eduard (Edik for short) Ivanov came to EkoNiva for an interview. Back then, the company rented a recreation room in a student dormitory as an office and employed 15 people in total. We got the job and were sent to Tikhyy Don farm (current EkoNivaAgro enterprise) for training.

But my career of a technician did not last long. It was the harvesting time and I turned out to be allergic to the chaff – protective grain casings. So, two weeks later, I ended up in an emergency room with thorax oedema. Luckily, at that time, EkoNiva decided to set up a Sales Department, and I and Edik became the first two people on the team equipped with one computer to share and a fax machine. We were drafting quotes for imported agricultural machinery and sending them out to farms.

The position of a sales specialist was something new and not very clear neither to people around nor to us. And for sure, a sales specialist was perceived as some bush leaguer while a technician was a respectable job for a real man. But our spirits didn't droop, and we worked hard

to prove different.

We would make 100 calls a day and then would get into the old Atlantic-blue Zhiguli car given by Nikolay Buravlyov, load it up with a TV with a built-in video player and cassettes with demo videos and drive to farms. We would set off late at night



to reach a farm somewhere in Nizhniy Novgorod, Ryazan or Tambov region by the morning. Having had a few power naps pulled over by a traffic police station, we, fresh and enthusiastic, would briskly enter farm's premises, and carry the TV with a built-in video player to the director's office, which, for some unknown reason, would always be on the second floor, to make our presentation. Describing our excellent machines, we were often looked upon as idiots. A lot of farmers could barely make ends meet back then, and we were offering the equipment that cost an arm and a leg. To gain some perspective: in the 2000s, a John Deere tractor



cost \$200,000, while an apartment in Voronezh – \$40,000. Honestly, we had

Gordeyev took the position of Minister of Agriculture. The government launched national support projects and loan programmes for farm machinery purchase. And our sales started taking off. At last, we got a laptop and stopped carrying around the TV with a built-in video player. Our old blue Zhiguli car had covered 300,000 km by that time without a single failure.

Mentors

We were young, ambitious and eager to change the world, as soon as possible, preferably. I'm very grateful to Nikolay Buravlyov for teaching us with patience how to attain our goals step by step. Gennadiy Nepomnyashchiy, Sales Department Manager of EkoNiva-Tekhnika, was my

no idea how to pitch our sale.

A breakthrough happened after 2005. Aleksey



EkoNiva-Chernozemye's team

mentor in sales. He taught me not to back down, to be driven and love sales as a form of art. I would always ask him to accompany me in big deals. But one day, three years later, I called him to ask for assistance in the negotiations with Dominant (a large agricultural producer) and he answered, 'Ivan, you don't need me any longer. You can handle it on your own'. He felt that it was time to cut the umbilical cord and let me embark on my own journey. I was so thankful for all the training and trust over the years. Now I had skill and confidence in addition to my passion.

Big ideas noted down in a little book

In those years, regional employees thought that Stefan Dürr was absolutely inaccessible, but I got to meet him one day. And he listened to me and noted down my ideas in his little book. And that is what EkoNiva is like: irrespective of your position, if you have good ideas, Stefan Dürr will take the time to listen to you, pull his little book out of his pocket and note them down. This attention to every employee, his or her thoughts and ambitions is what makes Stefan stand out as a manager. There is a lot to learn from Stefan: his foresight, ability to attract very different people driven by one passion and play

the long game in business. If I have doubts in a tough situation, I ask myself what Stefan would do – it helps to find the right decision. And of course, I am guided by his motto: if you do something, do it better than anyone else.

New development

Over time, I was promoted to Sales Manager, then Commercial Director and then Executive Director of EkoNiva-Chernozemye. We were a tight-knit and efficient team. In 2012, we launched a new field day format – Fashion Farmer that featured a farm machinery parade in front of the audience. Currently, this event is well known in our regions and beyond.

After the 2014-2015 downturn, we had to change a lot in our way of working: we reformed our service centre chain, prioritised it and incentivised the employees additionally. We opened two new service centres and laid a foundation of a major centre in Dobrino village. Looking back now, I realise that we did not only sell machinery and technologies to farmers – we offered a new development path and we contributed a lot to their success and that of the agricultural sector of Russia.

Dairy period

In 2019, Stefan moved me to the processing holding as Sales Manager. Though



it is always hard to start something new, it was an exciting experience. Nobody knew EkoNiva as a processor and getting to the federal retail chains was next to impossible. Besides, we had to handle a number of things simultaneously: renovation of existing dairy plants, construction of a cheese plant from scratch, relations with retailers, HoReCa segment, exports and launch of farm tour project. A lot has been done and even more has to be done yet. I am positive that one day, our company will become the leader in processing, in addition to being the top raw milk

producer, seed grower and machinery dealer. That's the nature of EkoNiva.

On individual ambitions and common cause

I am still in touch with many of my customers. Some of those people really influenced my mindset. I remember Vladimir Gryaznov, Manager of Dolzhanskoye farm in Belgorod region, who is gone by now, unfortunately. He was a strong manager. Once he said, 'A Russian person can overcome any hardship if he is driven not by his individual success only, but by a common cause. And that really resonates with our company: we expect our employees to have their ambitions and be willing to succeed but also be committed to achieving common goals. EkoNiva does generate certain gravitational field that attracts those who aspire to make the company better. They strive to make difference and they succeed as a rule. And what sets EkoNiva apart is that such people get an opportunity to apply their ideas here if they benefit the company. If you are proactive and have something to offer for the common cause, then our company is the right place for you to discover and fulfil your true potential.



At the commissioning of the curds line at Anna dairy plant

Noted down
by Svetlana WEBER



Comprehensive customer support



EkoNiva has launched a service to support the sales of pedigree cattle. The package deal enables farmers to gain access to a wide range of services and derive maximum value from the purchase of pedigree animals.

For almost 20 years, EkoNiva's farming operations have been engaged in the pedigree dairy cattle breeding. The enterprises in Voronezh, Kaluga, Moscow, Ryazan, Tyumen, Orenburg and Novosibirsk oblasts as well as in the Republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan hold the status of stock breeding farms and breeding reproducers of Holstein and Simmental cattle. The herd of high genetic potential and pedigree confirmed by genetic tests features cows of very good and good plus status.

Today, EkoNiva is the largest supplier of pedigree

cattle in Russia. Over the past three years, the company has sold over 30,000 pedigree heifers to other major agricultural holdings and farms all over the territory of Russia – from the North West to the Far East.

This summer, EkoNiva has started to accompany the sales of pedigree cattle with veterinary and herd management services. To meet the needs of each partner, the Group's specialists develop nutrition programmes tailored to the local conditions and raw materials costs, as well as offer veterinary consulting and guidance on the selection

of livestock management practices and equipment. In addition, the company offers herd monitoring with the assessment of its productivity and genetic counselling service ensuring that the farmers get the most from their dairy herd's genetics.

EkoNiva's experts calculate the internal ENI index showing the net merit of each pedigree cow. It includes profit from milk output adjusted for fat and protein, the traits of reproduction, health and many others. With this index, farmers can choose the semen of the most suitable sire, do the voluntary culling properly and select the right pedigree heifer for replacement in line with the breeding strategy of the enterprise. Therefore, when purchasing pregnant heifers from EkoNiva, farmers get the real lifetime efficiency data on each cow.

'Right from the heifer selection stage, we provide our clients with full consulting support. This approach helps farmers to set the right business strategy, optimise farm management and, above all, cut costs and increase the production efficiency',

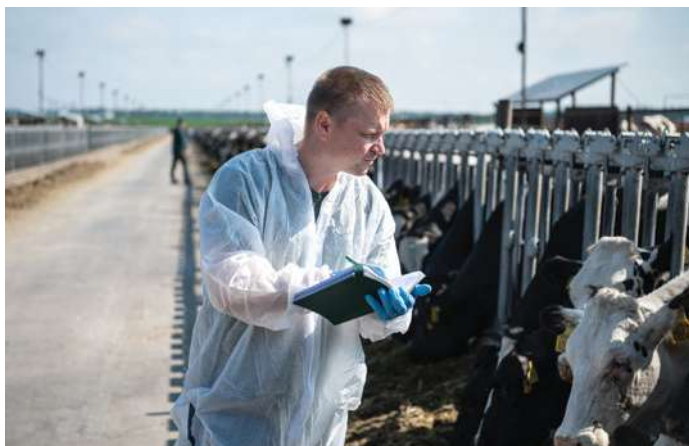
says Viktor Voronin, Cattle Sales Division Director at EkoNiva-APK Holding.

In breeding work, EkoNiva relies on its years of experience in dairy farming. Fodder quality, storage conditions and a well-balanced ration play a crucial role in ensuring high fat and protein contents in the raw milk. Across EkoNiva's purebred dairy herd, the average milk fat reaches 3.9%, protein – 3.4%. High cow comfort – soft and dry bedding, fresh water, spacious and well-lit barns, outdoor exercise lots – encourages more rest and higher feed intake. For reproduction, the company's specialists use the imported semen of sires with the bovine protein milk gene.

Today, EkoNiva's operations are home to more than 115,000 milking cows. A pedigree cow gives about 40 kg of top-grade milk per day. In 2023, EkoNiva's enterprises produced a total of 1.26 million tonnes of raw milk.

'We have launched the service providing our partners with support as we are eager to share our expertise with them, help them solve the most challenging issues, create high-tech and efficient production facilities and contribute to the development of the domestic dairy farming on the whole', concludes Viktor Voronin.

By Viktor BARGOTIN



Agriculture of the Future

EkoNiva has become the first company in the farming sector and processing industry to create a basic department in association with the Higher School of Economics University (HSE). This is where tomorrow's hires for state-of-the-art agriculture will be taught.



The students will have a chance to obtain a new profession in bioinformatics in livestock and crop farming, upskill themselves or do a retraining course. The curriculum will allow learners to design individual educational paths and do internships in one of the leading Russian agricultural holdings. Company specialists and students of the department will take part in a comprehensive interdisciplinary research, updating professional standards in agriculture

and developing innovative management solutions.

The main objective of the new department is training prospective highly qualified practitioners, i.e. bioinformation scientists and data analysts in crop and livestock farming, biotechnologists, today's top managers for the major agricultural companies in the country. They will tackle the challenges of technological agriculture 4.0.

Within 2024/2025 academic year, courses and extended education programmes in certain

disciplines for the individuals from the management talent pool will be launched. Further, the start of master's degree studies in bioinformatics, digitalisation and artificial intelligence is scheduled for 2025/2026. In the future, the parties are planning to develop a bachelor's degree curriculum.

'Agriculture, like many other industries, needs experts who can work at the interface of bio- and information technologies. Launch of the basic department is another step towards creating a new educational ecosystem, which

will allow us to train future professionals', highlights Nikita Anisimov, Rector.

'We need innovations to compete in the domestic and international markets. I mean primarily artificial intelligence, which is the basis for the agriculture of the future. EkoNiva is engaged in farming while the HSE University is the centre for economics, and computer technologies. Together, we can produce outstanding results', says Stefan Dürr, EkoNiva Group President.

By Talgat MUSAGALIYEV

Setting standard for success

The summer session of MoSt, the nationwide agricultural student team Milk Standard, has finished at Vysokoye dairy in Voronezh oblast. Over two months, more than forty young people studying at higher and secondary vocational educational institutions from the seven regions of Russia worked on EkoNivaAgro's farms.

The internship at seven dairies proved to be an invaluable experience for the youth. The interns had an opportunity to work as veterinarian assistants, herd managers and machine operators supervised by EkoNiva's experts. The prospective specialists practised diagnosing and treating diseases in adult animals and young stock. Further, the future veterinarians and herd managers were introduced to milking and feeding processes and learned the ropes of cattle reproduction and orthopaedics. The technicians received hands-on experience behind the wheels

of modern Russian and foreign farm machinery and assisted in maintenance and repairs of the units.

'The summer spent in MoSt team was full of joy', emphasises Yelizaveta Borzenkova, a 3rd year student at Herd Management Department, Kuban State Agricultural University. 'I was brimming with excitement, meeting some marvellous people from other cities and, most importantly, doing the job I love and I am learning to do now. Participating in cattle feeding and milking left a lasting impression on me. I would like to thank all EkoNiva's specialists I worked with; they are professionals

who are ready to share their knowledge and have a lot to teach us. MoSt holds a special place in my heart, and

I hope I will have a chance to join the team again!'

The nationwide agricultural student team Milk Standard was established in 2016. Since then, EkoNiva's enterprises have welcomed more than 650 young specialists, many of whom are now employed by the Group.

By Irina KRASNOSHCHYOKIKH





solutions in crop development, plant vegetation, crop protection, etc.

The course ended with an exam made up of a discussion with EkoNiva's trainers on a given topic and a test in a field, where every participant carried out a full analysis of the condition of crops on a land plot, outlining all their pros and cons. Finally, all the students received certificates of completion, while thirteen best young specialists were offered jobs in EkoNiva and an opportunity to become a member of a big and successful team of the holding.

'This is my first internship in this company. Here, I have gained a lot of new information and consolidated the existing knowledge', says Fyodor Nasirov, 3rd-year student at Russian State Agricultural University. 'EkoNiva is the right platform for this internship. I am glad to have met these people, and I really like the corporate culture. The main thing is that I passed the exam after the course and I was proposed a job at EkoNiva! Soon, I am going to get down to work.'

By Viktor BARGOTIN

The third practical crash course for agronomy students doing their internship has been held on Bobrov 2 dairy farm in Voronezh oblast. Twenty-one attendees from nine agricultural universities were lectured by EkoNiva's leading specialists, took part in on-site trainings and tested their knowledge at the final exam.

Such educational programmes in agronomy, engineering, veterinary medicine and herd management are implemented in EkoNiva annually. The 3rd-year bachelor's and 1st-year master's degree students interned from April to September at 16 enterprises of the holding.

The theoretical part comprised lectures of the leading experts of the company on crop farming, seed production and soil science. One of them was delivered by Stefan Dürr, EkoNiva Group President, who touched upon alfalfa cultivation, soil fertility and Eko.Crop in-house

designed software. The agronomists-to-be have already mastered this tool which helps to fully control the growth process and obtain the necessary information.

The practicals took place in the fields. The young people together with EkoNiva's employees studied the problems and

Bound for success

EkoNiva Group's enterprises in Voronezh, Ryazan, Novosibirsk, Orenburg and Kaluga oblasts have started another advanced training course for young employees as part of the ZooVet educational programme. Within the next four months, more than 60 future herd managers and veterinarians will take a crash course in their speciality and later will be assigned to the company's operations.

The ZooVet project, launched in 2016, includes a set of theoretical and practical trainings in cutting-edge livestock farming technologies used at EkoNiva's enterprises. The initiative is aimed at building a talent pool, providing young professionals with systematic knowledge, familiarising them with the operation of all farm units and, if necessary, helping them decide on their specialisation.

The programme participants attend lectures on nutrition, forage preparation, milking and veterinary medicine. They also study reproduction,

young stock rearing and economics, meanwhile learning to work in a team. The skills acquired in class are then honed on the Group's farms. This year, the programme has been updated, the major change being the addition of a one-month internship. The training is organised by experienced instructors, including EkoNiva's leading specialists.

The project involves not only young employees of the holding, but also graduates of agricultural educational institutions. During the training period, all participants become the company's

full-time staff members. Since the launch of ZooVet, more than 475 aspiring specialists

have already completed the programme.

By Natalya SHARAPOVA



Coaching future champions



A table tennis training camp has taken place for the first time on the premises of the Lokomotiv sports centre in Liski district. During ten days, 30 young athletes from Voronezh, Belgorod and Bryansk oblasts trained under the guidance of Galina Belova, Russia's Honored Table Tennis Coach.

One of the organisers of interregional children's practice and training session was EkoNiva. In Voronezh region, the company supports young hockey and soccer players, swimmers, and now also table tennis, which is very popular with the local youth.

Over the 10 days, the young athletes practiced the techniques: service, receiving, loop drives, undercuts, top-spins. Galina Belova trained every child individually, pointing out their

strengths and weaknesses and prompting the coaches where the children need to elevate their game in the future. Also, the coaching staff included Mariya Zolototrubova, Deputy Director of Voronezh Youth Table Tennis Sports School, and Sergey Krivyakin, Coach of Bobrov Youth Table Tennis Sports School.

'Local kids are highly promising. They have everything necessary – excellent physique, mastery of the technique, aspiration

and the twinkle in their eyes – to shape them into professional sportsmen and worthy Olympic successors', says Galina Belova.

The children shared the skills with one another, too. During the training sessions, they were paired off: the guests were the opponents of the local athletes. The stand-offs turned out entertaining, with the friendship winning.

'EkoNiva deserves special credit for creating excellent conditions for doing sports,

providing the children with accommodation and meals as well as a farm tour', continues Galina Belova.

At Dobrino dairy, the athletes got acquainted with the inhabitants of the farm and found out more about the merry-go-rounds which the cows ride, how semi-hard and hard Dürre cheeses are made at the cheese plant in Shchuchye and even what they taste like. Besides, the tour programme featured a visit to the Divnogorye museum and natural reserve where the children saw the natural wonders firsthand.

'What sets EkoNiva apart is a high level of social responsibility. One of the key aspects to this end is sports. The company provides support and assistance to organisations, municipalities and sports clubs in the regions of its presence', says Roman Volodin, First Deputy Regional Director of Voronezh branch at EkoNiva.

The ten days of gruelling training culminated in a tournament where the strongest sportsmen were revealed. The first experience of summer training camp proved to be a success, so next year EkoNiva plans to carry out the second one attracting more participants from different regions of the country and professional coaches who will gladly share their experience and expertise with the up-and-coming champions.

By Viktor BARGOTIN





Travel with flavour

The Russian Breakfast cultural and gastronomic project has become one of the winners at the Travel More international contest held to discover the best tourism promotion practices and ideas.

The signature style of the Russian Breakfast project was noted in the Taste of Russia category, and the initiative was recognised as the best in the field of gastronomy and event tourism. The visual design of the project is based on the

image of a patchwork quilt, thus reflecting the diversity of Russia's nations, their traditions, food culture and the natural areas they live in.

'The project aims to bring to light the richness of our country's flavours and inspire everyone to create new recipes

using Russian products.

In this way, we contribute to the development of domestic tourism through gastronomy. We approached the imagery and visual solutions with a strong sense of responsibility, carefully selecting folk motifs that would resonate in various regions

of Russia from Murmansk to Pyatigorsk', says Yekaterina Dürr, Russian Breakfast Project Manager and HoReCa Brand Director at EkoNiva-Food.

The Travel More international contest of creativity and advertising in the tourism industry has been held for the first time. It was organised by Natsionalniye Prioritety Autonomous Non-Commercial Organisation, the Roscongress Foundation and the Red Apple, Moscow international advertising festival, with the support of the Government of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia and RACA. The main goals are to establish the best practices of tourism promotion, as well as to encourage travellers from all over the world to visit Russia.

Russian Breakfast launched by EkoNiva in May 2023 with the idea of popularising national cuisine is dedicated to the most delicious and healthy breakfasts based on natural dairy products. More information on the project can be found on the official website at <https://russkiyavtrak.ru>.

By Anastasiya CHERNYKH

The route is planned

EkoNiva Group's tour project has won the Route is Planned tourism award. Farm tours were recognised as the best holiday option for those willing to immerse themselves in village life.

The Route is Planned is an annual prize presented by Komsomolskaya Pravda Media Group in the field of domestic tourism development. This year, almost 800 applications from 70 Russian regions were submitted for the contest, covering a total of 19 categories – automobile, event, gastronomy, wellness, ecological, agricultural, hiking and other types of tourism.

At the first stage, the best projects were determined by the country's citizens through voting. Three winners from the short-list were chosen by a professional jury comprising representatives of authorities

and the Russian tourism industry: heads of major travel companies, leading restaurateurs and hoteliers.

'We believe that transparency is a guarantee of trust. Thus, our guests are introduced to all the production processes at our plants and on the farms. They see the work of professionals, thanks to whom natural premium-quality dairy is manufactured. Modern agriculture is a high-tech industry, and we are ready to demonstrate this to everyone who visits our farms', says Yekaterina Bartseva, Manager of EkoNiva Group's Tour Project.



EkoNiva launched its own tour project in 2013. One of its main goals is to popularise natural milk consumption and farming in general. Farm visitors learn a lot of interesting things about dairy products and agricultural professions.

Over 260,000 people have visited the company's enterprises since the launch of the project: students of schools and specialised universities, tourist groups and business partners.

By Anastasiya CHERNYKH

Exclusive cheeses

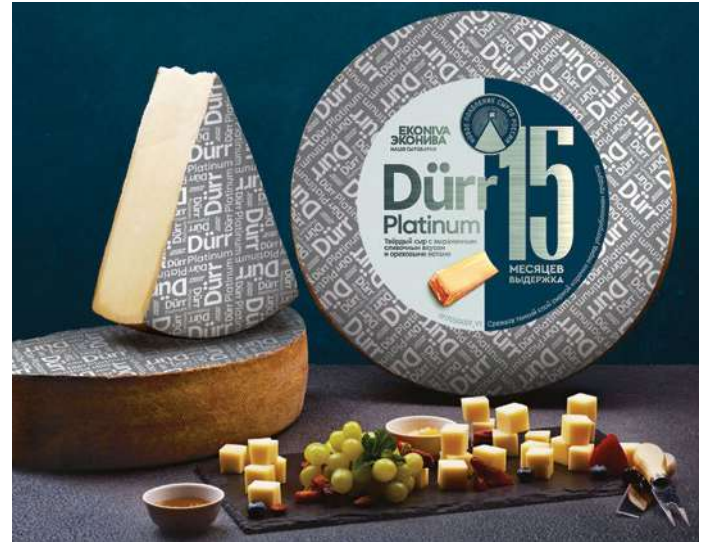
EkoNiva has expanded its product portfolio with the Dürr Gold and Dürr Platinum premium hard cheeses.

Both novelties are available exclusively in Azbuka Vkusa retail chain and EkoNiva's brand shops. The 9-month-aged Dürr Gold is another hard cheese in the EKONIVA classic range. Its creamy taste with delicate mushroom notes – tender champignons – is exquisitely complemented by woody notes and a lingering spicy aftertaste. The product has a rich creamy flavour with a slight fruity undertone, the hints of mushroom broth and canned pineapple. The Dürr Gold tastes delicious served with berries and nuts, floral honey or fruit marmalade as well as in the sauces for starters or salads.

The 15-month-aged Dürr Platinum cheese is a crown

jewel in the classic range. It has a distinct creamy taste with nutty and slightly sweet fruity undertones. The aftertaste reveals the distinct notes of caramelised onion and rich broth. The product has an intense aromatic flavour with melted butter and delicate sweetness. The Dürr Platinum will perfectly accentuate the tastes of tartare, carpaccio or meat appetisers.

All EkoNiva's hard cheeses are manufactured at Shchuchye cheese plant, Voronezh oblast. Guided by the 'from field to shop shelf' principle, the company's specialists rigorously formulate the cows' rations from the in-house grown fodders to produce cheese milk with the proper ratio of



fat, protein and casein, thus ensuring consistently high raw milk quality and flavour to deliver the exquisite taste of the finished products.

'The cheese line-up extension meets the needs of a modern Russian customer looking for high-quality natural produce. Now, the Group is actively engaged in promoting

cheese consumption culture in Russia and considers this product category to be the most promising out of its portfolio. EkoNiva has every intention to gain ground in the foreign markets', says Aleksey Maslennikov, Deputy Director General for Sales and Marketing at EkoNiva-Food.

By Eleonora DUBININA

Best again

EkoNiva Moloko Voronezh, the processing subdivision of EkoNiva Group in Voronezh oblast, has become the winner of the annual Best Industrial Company of Voronezh oblast award in the Food Production category, which was announced at the 14th Voronezh Industrial Forum.

The contest was set up by the Ministry of Industry and Transport of Voronezh oblast with the support of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. A total of 38 major regional industrial entities competed for the coveted accolade.

An independent commission selected the winners of the contest based on the economic and production indicators: product sales volume, working efficiency, average monthly salary, tax payment volume and others. In many respects, EkoNiva Moloko Voronezh was ahead of its counterparts and received the well-deserved top award of the contest.

Presenting a diploma and a statuette of the competition to



the company representatives, Sergey Khlyzov, Minister of Industry and Transport of Voronezh oblast, recognised the high level of performance

of the entire EkoNiva Group.

Today, EkoNiva Moloko Voronezh operates two processing facilities in Voronezh oblast: a dairy plant

in Anna urban settlement and a cheese plant in Shchuchye village. More than 600 tonnes of natural dairy under the EKONIVA brand is made there and then supplied to federal retail chain outlets and EkoNiva brand shops. Both processing facilities are certified for export.

'We have participated in the contest for the title of the best production facility in Voronezh oblast for the second time. Last year, the company was among the laureates – it was an impetus to work towards excellence to become the best this year. Next, we plan to upgrade the Anna plant infrastructure, which facilitates the launch of the second phase of curds production. At Shchuchye cheese plant, our focus is on increasing the output and extending the product portfolio', comments Roman Volodin, First Deputy Regional Director of EkoNiva Group for Voronezh oblast.

By Viktor BARGOTIN

EkoNiva in focus



6-8 November Siberian Agricultural Week 2024 Trade Show

Venue: Novosibirsk Expocentre, 104, Stantsionnaya St, Novosibirsk
Organiser: Siberian Exhibition Company
Participant: EkoNivaSibir

19-22 November YugAgro 2024 Trade Fair

Venue: Expograd Yug exhibition and congress centre,
1, Kongressnaya St, Krasnodar
Organiser: ITE Group
Participant: EkoNiva-Chernozemye



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