

Stefan Duerr: **from the German investor** **to the Russian entrepreneur**

The President of the EkoNiva Group of Companies became a Russian citizen and got a Russian passport.

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EkoNiva will help you!

On the eve of the season, EkoNiva-Tekhnika met with partners at a round table to discuss the burning issues of agriculture.

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The mega-facility has started to operate

EkoNiva put into operation its largest 2,800-head livestock facility. This is the largest of the nine modern dairy facilities of EkoNiva-APK Holding.

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Milk in short supply. And expensive to boot!

When the issue of our newspaper is out of print, EkoNiva will, most likely, have exceeded the significant figure of 400 tonnes of milk per day. This really impressive figure is the result of nine years' work that put us in the first place in Russia and Europe in terms of production volume. In 2006, many believed that we should not have gotten involved with dairy husbandry. But time has proven that we are on the right track.

The drought of 2010, miserable prices of raw milk in 2012 and the state's weak support of the dairy industry resulted in a dramatic reduction of dairy livestock in Russia. Today milk is wanted by all, and all are prepared to pay a high price for it, which is leading to shortages. This is good for the producers, but bad for the consumers.

Milk is short not only in Russia, but across the globe, and this fact has whipped up its price on the global market. China, too, did its bit here, as it began to consume much more

milk. Meanwhile, established major dairy producers like New Zealand have exhausted their capability to increase milk production at a low cost. Previously the missing Russian milk could be replaced with cheap imports, but no such imports are available today.

At present, four classes of farms produce milk in Russia. On privately owned farm households, milk production is decreasing from year to year. Babushkas are unable to keep their cows any longer while their children and grandchildren have neither the time nor the desire to do this. Many standard enterprises, previously known as collective farms, fell under the control of investors. Some of them may retain dairy production, but most scrap it as a non-core business. Similarly, EkoNiva is mindful and careful when it acquires farms engaged, among other things, in pig-breeding or poultry, not because they are unprofitable business, but because they are a different line. For most investors, dairy production is

not the main business line. This is a complex industry with large investments and a long payback period. While on the peasants' farms, the cattle stock is growing, on the national scale this is only a minor increment. So what is left are large holding companies like EkoNiva, Zelyonaya Dolina, Voshchazhnikovo, Trio and others that are set to increase the production. However, they won't do it very quickly. And they are not so numerous...

Last year real milk production in the country dropped by 1 million tonnes. The drop will continue, I'm afraid. Today only 65% of dairy products being consumed are produced in Russia. The rest are imports. In the future, this figure may fall rather than rise.

If, as promised, the state now resumes the subsidies on dairy husbandry, things may improve somewhat for dairy producers. Overall, the consumers are in for hard times and the processing industry's think-tank really has to decide what must be done.

*Stefan DUERR,
President of the EkoNiva Group of Companies*



Stefan Duerr: from German investor to Russian entrepreneur

At the end of January, Stefan Duerr, President of the EkoNiva Group of Companies, received a Russian passport. A month before, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree granting him Russian citizenship in acknowledgement of his great service to Russia.

Stefan Duerr paid his first visit to the then Soviet Union 25 years ago. He was the first student from West Germany to come to Soviet collective farms for practical training. The hospitable Russians and the huge opportunities for agricultural development inspired the young German and since then his destiny and professional activity have been closely tied to Russia.

It all began with the student exchange between German and Russian higher educational institutions in agronomy. Then came the Russian-German Agrarian and Political Dialogue project which emerged as a platform for cooperation between politicians, businessmen, scientists and students of both countries. Back then, in the 1990s, Russian agrarian legislation was first being prepared, and the experience of post-reunification Germany with its

reorganization of collective farms was very relevant, laying the groundwork for such laws as *On Agricultural Cooperation, On Turnover of Farming Lands, On Farming Enterprises and On the Development of Agriculture*.

EkoNiva was established in 1994 and quickly became a pioneer in organic farming in Russia. Then the company started supplying foreign agricultural equipment and initiated its own agricultural production. Since then everything imaginable has happened: rises and falls, victories and sad moments. But there have been no disappointments over the path chosen.

The company established by Stefan continues to grow and evolve, strengthening its positions on the market. This year EkoNiva will celebrate its 20th anniversary and we consider it a good opportunity to mention its achievements.

Today EkoNiva is the largest dairy producer not only in Russia but in Europe as a whole, with daily output of nearly 390 tonnes of milk. EkoNiva is the largest dealer in agricultural equipment in Russia and in Europe. Of course, it is impossible to present in numbers the fact that life returned to the villages where EkoNiva operates. The company has built kindergartens and churches, developed infrastructure and supported culture and sport. Young people are coming back to rural areas because they can find worthwhile jobs and good living conditions. Behind all this is Stefan Duerr, who has travelled a long road from German investor to Russian entrepreneur. The company's more than 3,000 employees have proven that the agricultural sector is not a black hole, that one can work effectively and achieve high results here.

Stefan Duerr never concealed the fact that he fell deeply in love with Russia. For a long time he wished to become a full-fledged Russian citizen. Not only his work, but his family, his friends and his allies are here. His wish was supported by Governor of Voronezh Oblast Aleksey Gordeyev, who petitioned the Russian President to grant citizenship to Stefan.

"From the bottom of my heart I congratulate Stefan," says Aleksey Gordeyev. "His activity here has greatly benefited the agrarian sector and will further contribute to its development and prosperity."

Stefan Duerr himself considers the conferral of citizenship as more than just an award for his work.

"It's a great honour and a tremendous responsibility for me. I'll continue contributing to Russian agricultural production and fostering development of Russian rural areas. I hope that I'll justify the trust placed in me."

By Svetlana WEBER



Green Week 2014:

What shall we eat? We've got the answer!

This year the Green Week beat its own record, hosting 1,650 participants from 71 countries. According to Mr. Rukvid, president of the German Peasants Union, this exhibition is unique not only for its demonstration of food products from different parts of the world. Actually it has long become a platform on which the agrarian policies of the future world are discussed and shaped.

The Green Week Russia has also set a record, sending representatives from 20 regions and 375 companies, the largest number in the last 20 years of participation. As a result, 28 investment agreements worth more than 200 million euros were signed with different representatives from the EU.

As Nikolay Fyodorov, the Minister of Agriculture, said at the press conference, these are agreements for melioration and construction of dealerships for maize processing and even venison supply. Speaking of the industry's internal problems, the minister pointed out the need for a substantial modernisation of the farm equipment inventory. Therefore, the 15% subsidy to partly offset the cost of purchasing farm equipment will remain this year.

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Invaluable experience

The “German-Russian Agro-Political Dialogue” project has been awarded the P.A. Stolypin prize in the category “Development of international ties in the agrarian sector.”

The ceremony took place for the sixteenth time. This is one of the few occasions in the history of

the national prize when the award was accorded not to a concrete person, but to an international project. Handing over

the prize, Russian deputy minister of agriculture Andrey Volkov thanked the participants for their contribution and for the invaluable agrarian experience obtained from the active interaction of the two countries.

“This year will mark the twentieth anniversary of cooperation between Russia and Germany in the framework of ‘The German-Russian Agro-Political Dialogue’,” says Florian Amersdorffer, project co-chairman. “Over this time, our project has become a connective link between political figures, scientific institutions and sector alliances of the two countries. We're willing to move ahead, work still more and enrich our countries' expertise in the agrarian sector.”

By Yulia SALKOVA





For outstanding merits to the Kaluga oblast, its governor Anatoly Artamonov has awarded their medal, class 3, to Stefan Duerr, President of the EkoNiva Group of Companies.



Photo by Anton ZABRODSKY

A thank you from Kaluga!

The German Stefan Duerr made his first steps on the Kaluga soil as far back as the early 90s, in the field of ecological production. Over the past few years, EkoNiva has implemented several large-scale investment projects that were highly appreciated by the regional administration thanks to the introduction of innovative technologies.

In Detchino village, Maloyaroslavetsky district, a dealership was built, the largest in Europe, selling and servicing agricultural equipment for the region's

farming enterprises.

One of the agrarian holding enterprises, Kaluzhskaya Niva, has long been the leader of the dairy industry. The use of new technologies in animal care, feeding, and milking enables it to produce high quality milk which meets European standards. Just as successful is the project for production of organic beef on the Savinskaya Niva farm, Mosalsky district.

Stefan Duerr notes that he enjoys working in the region, where he has the support

of the oblast governor and the minister of agriculture.

"I would like to sincerely congratulate Stefan on the well deserved award," says Leonid Gromov, Kaluga oblast minister of agriculture. "He is one of the first investors who started introducing innovative technologies in agriculture and so provided a fine example for others to follow. In many aspects, thanks to this the farming industry has reached substantially new heights in its development."

By Yekaterina GALUSHKINA



At the Green Week 2014 International Exhibition in Berlin, an investment agreement was signed for promoting cooperation between the Orenburg oblast and EkoNiva.

Historically, the Orenburg region is a centre of beef cattle breeding. At Severnaya Niva the company is implementing a beef production project (raising suckling calves).

"Previously, beef was a by-product of

Northern lights

In the Orenburg oblast, the EkoNiva Company plans to further develop the projects it has begun in crop production and animal husbandry.

a growing dairy herd," says Stefan Duerr, President of

EkoNiva. "Now beef is becoming an independent product. We see a steadily growing domestic demand for this type of meat, an appealing price and a possibility for replacing imports by Russian products."

They have already imported the Hereford breed of meat cattle. The farm will raise the calves to the feeding age (6-8 months). The bull-calves will be relocated to other EkoNiva animal farms or put up for sale. Here Aberdeen-Angus and Kazakh white-head breeds

will also be raised.

"By 2018, the breeding population is due to increase to 5,000 head, while the land stock will be expanded to 30,000 hectares," says Sergey Ovcharenko, Executive Director of Severnaya Niva. "In plant-growing the course is set for production of hard wheat, as the most sellable crop of the region. The plans provide for supplies of durum wheat to Italy, one of the major producers of Barilla pasta. In this connection, there are plans to build a 70,000 tonne elevator at Dymka station based on the American grain storage technology and equipped for railway shipments."

By Yekaterina GALUSHKINA



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Nikolay Fyodorov believes that this is not enough. So he is determined to seek an increase of state support for purchase of farm machines so that the farmers would get a 30% refund on their expenditures for agricultural equipment.

As for political issues, they were discussed at the major conference of ministers of agriculture and at numerous podium discussions. The key subject, as in previous years, was how to combat hunger. Today 1 billion people, i.e. every seventh man on Earth, struggle to get their daily bread. In

this connection, the politicians look to Eastern Europe, specifically to Russia and Ukraine since they possess a high potential for increasing the production of grain, meat and milk but do not exploit it efficiently enough. The Russian Deputy Minister of Agriculture Aleksandr Petrikov believes that it is necessary to increase the investment attractiveness of the agrarian industry, adapting the farmers to modern conditions and giving them access to agrarian markets. On the basis of his 20-year experience in Russian agriculture, Stefan Duerr, President of the EkoNiva Group of Companies, believes that

medium and small enterprises need better access to financial resources. For higher efficiency, the large agrarian holdings must have a well organised management. Their common problem is the training of skilled personnel.

EkoNiva started to address the personnel issue right here, at the contacts stock exchange of the Green Week. The company has long sought to attract foreign students and specialists for work and on-site training on its farms. Each year, new people appear in Berlin who wish to work in Russian agriculture.

By Svetlana WEBER

Dairy lobby

Yevgenia Uvarkina, chairperson of the board of directors, TRIO GC, has become member of the Public Chamber (PC) under the Russian Federation President in her capacity as agricultural commodity producer and as a representative of the National Union of Dairy Producers (SOYUZMOLOKO).

“It’s a great honour for me to become a member of the Public Chamber under the President’s quota of appointments,” Yevgenia Uvarkina said. “It is important that the President relies on the trade associations, since they are primarily the ones that have the professional knowledge and skills. I’m sure that the Public Chamber, as constituted, can qualitatively improve the legislative bills and make them more effective. If we manage to ensure the success of

farming enterprises, this will inevitably create suitable living conditions in the village and intensify the country’s economic performance as a whole. But most importantly, this will guarantee the food supply and political security of Russia. As a member of the PC, I shall do my best to protect the interests of farming in general, although I will, of course, focus mainly on the dairy industry.”

By Yekaterina GALUSHKINA



"Bio" exists, but the law doesn't!



Today, the European bio-based product market is growing faster than any other market segment. Its annual growth rate is no less than 25%. Europe continues to build up the production of organic products, while Russia still has no law governing their production and consumption.

Twenty years ago EkoNiva made its first steps in Russia, specifically in the field of organic farming.

"In our country we were the pioneers in the field of eco products," says Yuri Vasyukov, EkoNiva-APK Holding Deputy Director General. "We grew, processed and exported buckwheat and millet. We also developed a voluntary system of organic product certification. But for a number of reasons we had to switch over to other activities. Among these reasons was the absence of a clearly defined law on organic farming in Russia."

In 2012 EkoNiva took up ecological food production once again. A project was launched in the Kaluga oblast for production of bio-beef. Anatoly Nakaryakov, head of ecological production of EkoNiva-APK Holding, pointed out that the demand for beef, including the bio type, does exist. Today more than 70% of beef in Russian shops is imported.

What changed during the last two decades on the market of organic products in the world and in Russia?

This was discussed at the conference in the framework of the "German-Russian Agro-Political Dialogue," which addressed the question of organic farming in Russia, and the prospects for cooperation between the two countries in this area. The event took place at the leading international organic products exhibition, Biofach 2014 (Nurnberg, Germany).

Global ecological production and the consumption map look encouraging: 160 countries with 1.6 million farmers on 37 million hectares of arable land. The largest markets for organic products are Germany, the US, France, UK, Canada, Japan and Switzerland.

Andrey Khodus, head of the Agrosophia non-commercial partnership says that unfortunately there is still no law





in Russia on production of organic products and, hence, no legal regulation governing the entire process of ecological production “from the field to shop counter.” The only document relating to this is SanPiN 2.3.2.2354-08 (“Hygienic requirements for safety and nutritive value of food products”). There are some private standards equivalent to those of the EU. However, this certification is voluntary. For the Russian consumer, more than 90% of all markings like “eco”, “bio” and “organically clean” are just an advertising ploy.

In Russia, some 100,000 to 120,000 hectares of farmland are used for ecological production. This is not much, considering that the country possesses 10% of the world’s arable land. Russian lands are not over-saturated with mineral fertilisers. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, they do not exceed 8 kg per hectare. In the intensive farming of the West, the figures are around 320 kg. Western countries have taken note of this.

It would be wise to pay attention to their rich expertise in ecological production. In Germany, for instance, the bio-products market is now estimated to account for 7.5 billion euros and continues to grow by 6 to 7% per year.

Sergey Belousov, deputy chairman of the Russian Farmers Union’s committee for agrarian and food policy and nature management, tell us: “The experience of the leading producers of organic products can well be used as a basis for creating regulatory and prescriptive legislation on these issues in our country. This applies not only to production of bio-products but also to their promotion on the market and delivery to the population.”

Ingo Browne, director of Germany’s federal ministry of food supplies and

agriculture pointed to the importance of state support for ecological farming.

“It is necessary to financially stimulate and support the farmers in the transition from traditional to ecological farming,” says Browne. “In Germany, during the first two years, the farmers got 350 euros per hectare in addition to donations. In the following years the sum has been 320 euros.”

Just as important is consultation work with the population. In Germany, a healthy lifestyle and eco-products are promoted widely and this brings results.



Therefore, even though the organic products cost 1.5 to 2 times more than standard types, they are purchased by various strata of the population. This is explained by the simple desire to live a healthy life. The demand for bio-products has grown so high that even the largest distribution chains had to adapt themselves to customers’ preferences.

The two countries’ talks also touched on the GMO issue

“In addition to the rigorous requirements applied by the EU, we

can also ban the import of products at the national level,” Ingo Browne emphasises. “That’s precisely what we did with imports of products containing GMO. The EU rigidly limits the list of such imports while in Germany they are banned altogether. Public opinion won out despite the strong lobby on the part of business.”

In Russia, this July the Russian Federation Government will pass a resolution that will significantly simplify the registration and entry of transgenic organisms into industrial and commercial sectors. Thus far it has not been cancelled despite criticism from President Vladimir Putin, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Duma committee on agrarian issues.

Even though to this date Russian regulatory law does not contain any provisions concerning ecological farming, in actual fact it does exist. In 2012, sales of organic food grew to 150 million euros. Thus far the buyers are residents of major cities. For example, in Ukraine 200,000 hectares of arable land have been certified, but the domestic market of certified food products is estimated at zero (according to IFOAM). The role of the consumer in this issue is extremely important. We

must not be indifferent to what we eat and can’t help worrying over whether it’s a natural product or transgenic stuff.

Russia’s interest in organic products is graphically reflected in the statistics of the leading dedicated exhibition, BioFach 2014, which had 2,235 exhibitors from 76 countries. Germany presented 606 companies, Italy 326, Spain 113, and France 111. Russia came up with just four! One of them is a certifying organisation, while others work with wild crops.”

By Yulia SALKOVA



John Deere trio

Farmers from a variety of Russian oblasts have together visited three plants of the John Deere Corporation in Germany. This opportunity was provided to them by EkoNiva, the organiser of the trip.

First of all, the farmers went to a facility in Zweibrücken. Here, the W (W540 and W650), C and T series grain walker combine harvesters and the entire model range of forage harvesters are assembled. Nikolay Koshcheyev, chief engineer of AgroService LLC (Kirov oblast) arrived here intent on buying a forage harvester.

“In choosing the combine, we encountered many problems,” says Nikolay Koshcheyev. “John Deere engineers not only answered them, but also gave us advice on how to use the equipment most effectively and gave recommendations for operation. It’s good that EkoNiva arranges such trips. Having seen the production process, I assured myself that those machines are really of superior quality.”

With John Deere, it cannot be otherwise. The company has modern laser equipment, a six-step painting system, robotised machines, fully automatic assembly lines and everything else required for making products that are excellent tools meeting all the world’s standards.

The farmers were particularly impressed by the test range, where new models of machines are tested at 100% load. For example, the reaper screw is tested in a special device in which one month’s operation is equal to three years’ work on the field. This makes it possible to quickly spot the weak points and cure them.

The farmers also visited the John Deere tractor plant in Mannheim. Here the machines are manufactured to

customers’ specific orders. The Russian guests were told that on average one tractor is assembled in 3.5 hours. The farmers saw the assembly of the new 6150M (150 hp) tractor.

“The JD6150M tractor appeared on the Russian market at the end of last year,” says Kirill Tagantsev, head of the equipment sales department, Kostroma branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. “This is a fine alternative to the well known model JD 6930. The tractor can be used for a variety of jobs. It is useful both for large enterprises and small farms. One such tractor already operates in the Kostroma oblast.”

The last place the guests went was the cabin assembly plant in Bruchsal. As John Deere representatives said, an impeccable logistics service has been established between the three plants. The cabins come to the neighbouring plant no later than two hours before mounting on a tractor or combine. Also in Bruchsal is the world’s second largest European distribution centre, with robotised storage depots. The Russian guests noted that John Deere offers really premium quality products.

By Anna BORDUNOVA





Work in a new fashion

Last year, the John Deere Company notably expanded its product line of seeding and tilling equipment. Some machines have already appeared on the Russian market for the new season.

Getting back to the source

The John Deere Company has resumed production of ploughs, something John Deere himself began at his forgery in 1837, when he manufactured a plough from polished steel for the farmers. This year two completely new models of a semi-mounted swivel plough, the 3810 and 3910, came onto the Russian market. The model 3810 plough is manufactured featuring 5 to 9 casings. John Deere experts recommend using the plough with JD tractors of the 7030 and 8R series (engine capacity 130 to 310 hp). The special feature of the plough is its unique design with a Z-shaped chassis. This enables the support wheel to enter the plough, reducing the pressure on the soil. The chassis is manufactured from strong



material allowing the plough to operate in adverse field conditions. The model 3910 can have 9 to 13 casings. It performs well in couple with JD 8R and 9R tractors, engine capacity 310 to 460 hp. The plough 3910 has two front bearing wheels and one rear support wheel. They guide the plough over the furrow, which makes it possible to maintain the set tilling depth. Due to its strong design, the plough can operate in all weather conditions.

Power change

The JD 512 disc deep tiller has been replaced by a new, improved model, the 2720. In a single pass, the system crushes, covers and mixes crop



residues, loosens and breaks dense soil layers and levels out the soil surface.

The deep tiller 2720 features a new long-lasting set of batteries with heavier spring-aided C-shaped supports, floating cleaners, the largest in industry axis of disc battery, and large discs (610 mm). The largest axis of the disc battery in industry ensures fine reliability while operating in various conditions. All the bolts are designed using innovative technologies of eased tightening. The deep tiller 2720 is fitted with a unique covering roller with an active hydraulic drive that can be used both in a floating and raised configuration.

Coping easily with high loads

The new John Deere 2623 disc harrows feature a number of improvements. The reliable axis of the disc battery is 51 mm thick, i.e. 19 mm thicker compared to the previous models. Each disc, 61 to 66 cm in diameter, became 60% heavier, while the distance between the discs is 23 cm. A large choice of operating widths, from 6.3 to 15 m, enables the machines to operate both



on large and small farms. The disc harrows 2623 are ideal for high load operations. By using a single point system of depth control, it is possible to precisely adjust the tilling depth. The C-shaped springs ensure operation at an equal depth all over the field, improving the harrow flexibility and protecting the discs against damage. Hydraulic longitudinal levelling makes it possible to easily control the harrow from the tractor cabin.

Seeding above all else

The new cultivating seeder 1745 replaces the model 1740. The seeder for seeding maize and sunflower can have 12 and 16 rows, with a between row space of 70 cm. The model 1745 is good for operation using both no-till and minimum till technologies.

It aggregates with medium power tractors. The seeder features individual



grain bins or a central distribution system. The seed-out sections MaxEmerge Pro – Series XP, jointly with the central distribution system, ensure seeding precision. The movable chassis design ideally follows the terrain profile. According to Yevgeny Manzhurin, head of the department of equipment orders, EkoNiva-Tekhnika, this is a multi-role machine. It is ideally suited for use by farms in the Central, Region, Black Earth Zone and Siberian territories.

John Deere engineers noted that all the new developments and improvements are aimed at enabling farmers to work in a new fashion, with higher economic results.

By Anna BORDUNOVA



EkoNiva will help you!

How can Russian agriculture be made profitable? Where do you invest? How can further progress be made? The EkoNiva experts discussed this and other issues over a round table with farmers at the company's largest dealership in Detchino village, Kaluga oblast.

EkoNiva seminars and training sessions have long become an integral part of fruitful cooperation. This time, over 80 participants gathered for the round table. They were farmers of the Central Federal District, representatives of the supplier companies and mass media workers.

The farmers believe that EkoNiva has chosen the right time and meeting place. February is the period when you think about the coming sowing season. This is a unique opportunity to get new information and exchange expertise. For many farmers, this was the first visit to the dealership, where they watched and appreciated the project's engineering capability and its impressive scale.

Gennady Nepomnyashchy, EkoNiva-Tekhnika LLC Executive Director, presented the product line of the new season. He firmly believes that farming can't go on without modernisation, meaning in technologies and mechanisation.

"There's no way back!" Gennady Nepomnyashchy insists. "Everyone realises now the need to work technologically and more efficiently. We must produce more agricultural products and reduce the production cost. Today this can be done only if the equipment, technologies and seeds are chosen correctly and are duly adapted to one another."

EkoNiva goes on dynamically, offering its customers new products, tools, high quality servicing, innovative decisions and convenient financial instruments. EkoNiva designated the current year as the year of servicing. It is building new servicing centres and expanding the range of after-sale services.

John Deere still remains the leader among EkoNiva suppliers. In 2013, EkoNiva-Tekhnika supplied 190 tractors, 12 forage and 37 grain combine harvesters to the Central region.

John Deere is becoming a full-liner on the market. No other supplier can offer such a product line, from self-propelled machines to sowing and tilling equipment.



The Pakhma farming enterprise, Yaroslavl oblast, successfully cooperates with EkoNiva, purchasing its equipment and seeds.



“On our farm we grow Trizo wheat and Rocket peas,” says **Yevgeny Karngold**, chief agronomist of the farm. “The average productivity of the grains is 3.2 to 3.3 tonnes per hectare. This year

we decided to try the Margaret barley and purchased 35 tonnes of Red Fantasy seed potatoes. Due to increased fodder stocks, we plan to grow rapeseed for grain. At the moment, we are studying the growing technology. To date, we have obtained a great deal of information on seeds and technologies and learned the techniques employed by other farmers using this technology.”

Konstantin Tishinkov, Director General, Sovremennyye Agrotekhnologii LLC, Moscow oblast:



“We are engaged in dairy cattle breeding where work is unthinkable without innovative technologies. We pay a lot of attention to the quality of succulent fodder. Each year we procure

around 32,000 tonnes of fodder. For the new season we have acquired on lease from EkoNiva the JDLink forage combine harvester. The new system will help us to monitor the condition of our equipment, to treat the fields more carefully and to save fuel. It's convenient that many problems can be fixed over the phone. Now the service is so accessible and easy to get! What we have seen and heard today prompts us to buy more. But the high rate of the euro curbs our desire.”

Gennady Nepomnyashchy looks ahead with optimism. He believes that so long as Russia provides support at the federal and oblast levels, there are no reasons for panic. One has to abide by the basics, i.e. the demand for milk, meat and grain. This is what really matters. As for the difficulties, they are temporary and will eventually be overcome. Modernisation is the imperative of the moment. And that's where EkoNiva will never fail to help.

By Yekaterina GALUSHKINA

This year, along with the novelties of the season, the focus will be on new services from John Deere.

One of its newly developed unique products is the JDLink system that enables the system's control and optimisation. All

the data on tractor performance in the field are transmitted to the computer. Thus it is possible to track the physical position of the machine, its fuel consumption in the field and in transit, and so to document the data for subsequent accounting and study. In case of minor malfunctions, the EkoNiva engineer will advise on how to rectify the fault and adjust the machine.

This year all the 8 and 9 series tractors, grain and forage combine harvesters, as well as self-propelled sprinklers of 2014 will have the JDLink telematic system supplied with a free 3-year subscription. EkoNiva regards this system as having great potential.

Thus far, Russian agriculture is short of data for adequate analysis in order to make prompt and correct decisions. Gennady Nepomnyashchy believes that the new system will save the situation. The farmers and their machine operators will find this system extremely convenient. The important thing is that

the spending on servicing will decrease given that 20 to 25% of repairs is fixing up minor malfunctions.

Consultant Willy Drews presented the main agricultural technologies, dwelling in detail on success and failures of their



introduction. On the eve of the season, many farmers are seeking to purchase seeds. Natalia Bychkova, EkoNiva-Semena (seeds division) Deputy Executive Director talked about the prospects for advanced varieties of grains, leguminous plants and fodder crops.



Servicing centre, Kirov

Affordable Service

Servicing centre, Ryazan

Today the affordability of service is just as important as its quality. With every passing year EkoNiva gets closer to the farmers, expanding its servicing network. This year the company is opening new, powerful servicing centres in Ryazan and Kirov. The investments in each project has amounted to 193 million roubles.

In June, a servicing centre in Polenskoye village, Ryazan oblast, will go into operation. The facility territory covers 8.5 hectares. The area of the servicing facility itself is also quite impressive, 3,700 sq m, more than half of which will be allotted to seven repair stations. Four of them will repair large size farming equipment, and three will deal with trailed tools. The servicing centre is conveniently located 2 km from Ryazan, on the M5 Urals highway.

On the 14th km of the Kirov-Novovyatsk bypass road, a high-technology servicing centre for Kirov farmers is now under

construction. Its location on the highway has been chosen to ensure the maximum efficiency of the logistics service here. The buildings' total floor area is 3,000 sq m.

Farm equipment will be serviced in sheltered accommodations, which makes it possible to carefully plan the equipment preparation for the coming season during winter. Along with the technological capabilities, the centre will become a powerful training base. Here training sessions will be arranged for the farms' specialists, students and its own personnel. The company management is

holding talks with agrarian educational institutions of Kirov over joint training of young specialists for the farm sector.

"The opening of the servicing centre is scheduled for this autumn," says Sergey Zykov, executive director of the Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika LLC. "We're sure that it will considerably improve logistics, pre-sale preparation of equipment and after-sale supply of spares for customers. The modern servicing base is yet another step towards modernisation of Kirov agricultural facilities."

By Yulia SALKOVA
and Yekaterina GALUSHKINA

Fliegl trains!

At the annual training session held in Muehldorf, Germany, dealers from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, including EkoNiva specialists had a chance to learn about the special features of Fliegl equipment and latest developments.



The familiarisation began with a factory tour and a company presentation. The dealers looked over assembly lines, paying special attention to newly developed products. Martin Bauer, Deputy Director General for Exports at Fliegl Agrartechnik GmbH, spoke about the design and functions of the ASW multi-role trailers with extra mounted tools, containers for transportation and introduction of organic fertilisers, tipping trailers, as well as grain and silage transfer systems. For ASW trailers, the company is developing a new beet roots and potatoes handling mount which will

improve their multi-role capability. Today around 20 Fliegl dealers operate in Russia. However, not all of them are doing as well as EkoNiva. In the first year of cooperation with the manufacturer, EkoNiva has supplied over 60 units of Fliegl equipment to Russia. Fliegl management do not conceal their sympathies for EkoNiva, calling it their strategic partner.

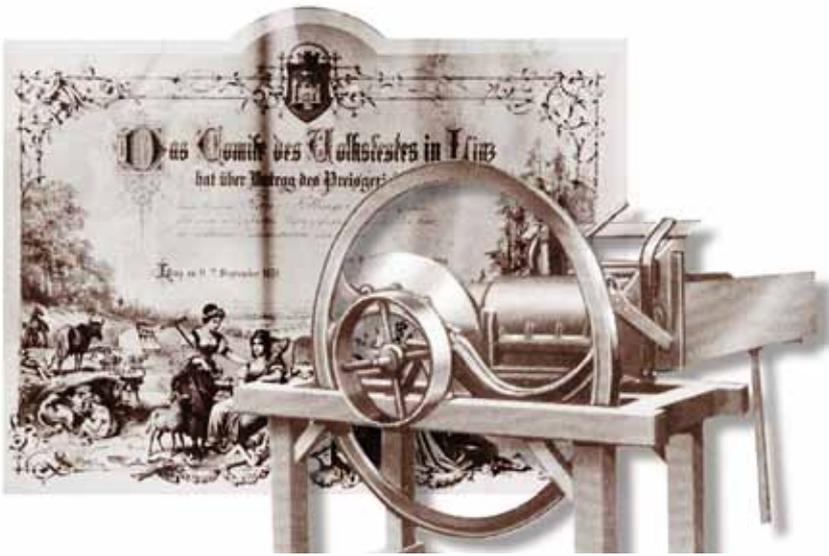
"The current demand for Fliegl equipment in Russia is high," says Sergey Matveyev, senior sales manager of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. "The company offers a wide product range, from

small to large multi-functional trailers. One can always select an individually suitable version for each customer."

In Castle, the group visited another production facility that manufactures a variety of mounts for all types of loaders. On completion of training, the participants were tested for knowledge of the Fliegl equipment.

"We're sure that the professionalism and activity of our dealers will further promote our successful cooperation and sales of Fliegl equipment in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus," Martin Bauer noted at the end.

By Yekaterina GALUSHKINA



Pöttinger: nothing left to chance

For the fourth year in succession, EkoNiva successfully cooperated with Pöttinger. Over this time, EkoNiva has supplied more than 100 units of Pöttinger equipment to Russian farmers. This year, for the first time, the Pöttinger Company arranged for its partners a trip to its main facility in Grieskirchen, Austria, where fodder procuring tools and tilling equipment components are manufactured.

The Russian guests were personally welcomed by Heinz Poettinger, one of the company owners:

“Poettinger occupies leading positions on the European market. With its potential, Russia is a very promising country for us. I hope that our equipment will become popular with Russian farmers once they see our level of production.”

The guests were told about the history of the company. The Poettinger family enterprise was established in 1871, when it started to manufacture fodder crushing machines. In 1963 the company was the first to develop the trailer-pickup. Today Poettinger has 1,475 personnel across the globe and a trade turnover exceeding 300 million euros. It also has two more plants, one in the Czech Republic that manufactures tilling tools and one in Germany that assembles sowing equipment. The company has big plans for the coming year, when they intend to channel over 26 million euros into facilities expansion and the construction of a new technology centre.

An extensive factory tour was arranged for the farmers. They were shown all the factory departments, from metal receiving to equipment assembly. The pride of the facility is its painting line fitted with state-of-the-art equipment for powder coating. Igor Burkov, head of the Sumorokovskiy

collective farm (Kostroma oblast), personally made sure of the equipment painting quality.

“Last year we procured 6,000 tonnes of herbage and 1,000 tonnes of hay using the Poettinger rakes,” says Igor Burkov. “Their teeth did not break and not even their paint was damaged. After work they look like new! In their production, everything is minutely thought out, especially quality control. Obviously their manufacturers are doing a fine job. For the new season, I plan to buy the Poettinger trailer mower.”

The guests inspected the test centre where the equipment is checked for quality. The company engineers develop at least two prototypes for each new model. One is used for tests at the technology centre, another is tested in field conditions. The Poettinger proving ground is one of the most advanced in the world. It is here that many international producers test their equipment's operating endurance. In the exhibition hall, the guests familiarised themselves with the latest models of equipment due to appear on the Russian market this year. Among them are NOVACAT S12 (11.2 m) mowers, TERRASEM seeding systems and the AEROSEM 1002 pneumatic seeder.

Talking to the owner of Poettinger, Valery Katyshev, head of the

Voskresenye-Agro LLC, proposed assembling Poettinger equipment in Kostroma. His colleagues from the Yaroslavl oblast supported this idea. “Nearly the entire product line of Poettinger fodder procuring equipment is operating on our farms,” says Valery Katyshev. “This is classy equipment. There are several production sites in our region where assembly of the Poettinger equipment could be organised. This would considerably increase the farmers' interest in this equipment. It would also help the Poettinger Company to consolidate its position on the Russian market.”

Representatives of the Company welcomed this idea, and as early as July of this year they will pay a return visit to the Kostroma oblast.

By Anna BORDUNOVA



In 1991 Klaus and Heinz Poettinger started to run the company



The chief facility of Poettinger in Austria



New NOVACAT S12 mower



2014. A group of EkoNiva customers at the facility in Austria



First-hand information

In this section, farmers from different regions of Russia told our correspondent how the seeds and crops they acquired from EkoNiva performed last year.

Vinnik Private Enterprise, Graivoronsky district of Belgorod oblast (the farm grows grains, leguminous plants, and oil bearing crops)

Yuri Vinnik, head of the enterprise:

“In 2012, we bought 20 tonnes of the Don Governor and 20 tonnes of Biryuza winter wheat from EkoNiva. We sowed from 5 to 10 September in conditions that are favourable for our area. We allotted 80 hectares to each variety. The



sowing rate was 250 kg per hectare. We fed the plants twice with saltpetre, introducing 120 kg each time, and we added micro-fertilisers twice. We have fully treated against all diseases. Once we employed insecticide. The Governor of Don is a highly productive variety. It tillers well. The plant is not high, from 60 to 90 cm, due to which the Governor of Don resists lodging. It also sustains heat and cold well. Its grain is large. The gluten content is 23%. We really like



this variety. And the harvest we got was also fine, 6.5 t per hectare. The Biryuza variety yielded less, 5.0 tonnes per hectare. The variety looks excellent on the sown area, though it showed weak bushing. Its grain is large. The gluten content is 26%.”

Novlensky farming cooperative, Vologodsky district of Vologda oblast (chief activities are cattle breeding and plant growing)

Anna Zamakhina, chief agronomist:

“We’ve cooperated with EkoNiva for several years. Previously we purchased the Danuta barley from it. Last year, for the first time, we purchased 4 tonnes of Margaret barley. This is convenient, given that the seeds had already been treated with Lamador. We sowed till 8 May. The sowing rate was 235 kg per hectare. We sowed this on 16 hectares after soya. Then we fertilised with ammonium saltpetre and treated with fungicides. We were unlucky with the weather; there was a scorching drought. The first rain occurred only on



20 June. That is why we got 3.6 tonnes per hectare. This is a little less than in case of Danuta, 4 tonnes per hectare. The sowed Margaret looked fine. The crop tillered well. The ear did not sink. The grains were large. This year we shall increase the Margaret fields to 160 hectares.

Last season we also sowed, for the first time, 100 hectares of Rocket peas. The sowing rate was 235 kg per hectare. We treated the edges with insecticide during tillering. The sown variety looked great. The plant height was on average 55 to 80 cm. The variety resists lodging.

We liked Rocket very much. The beans don’t crack. The harvest was excellent, 3.4 tonnes per hectare. This year we purchased 10 tonnes of the Rocket seeds. We plan to increase the sowing area of Rocket to 130 hectares.”



TNT Krasny Oktyabr, Starodubsky district of Bryansk oblast (the farm is engaged in crop production)

Vasily Gorbachyov, chief agronomist:

“Last year we purchased 20 tonnes of Red Fantasy potato seeds from EkoNiva. We liked the seed quality. We sowed 6 hectares. The sowing density was 20 to 25 cm between the ridges. We used combined plant protection products, such as various types of herbicides, phytophthora compounds and others. The potatoes were sowed in drought. Precipitation occurred only during blossoming. The variety tillers well, the stalks grow strong and the tubers are of medium size. The yield was 40 tonnes per hectare. The only problem was the small number of tubers, up to 6 on average. However, colleagues who grow the Red Fantasy variety had a higher tuber yield. For the new season, we shall test the Bellarosa and Collette varieties.”



By Anna BORDUNOVA



New ideas for grain technologies

This year the grain processing sector of EkoNiva will grow considerably. EkoNivaAgro division, Voronezh oblast, will start building a large-scale elevator with 30,000 tonnes capacity, while in Zashchitnoye, Kursk oblast, a grain processing facility of 5,000 tonnes capacity will be built to store and condition leguminous plants. Our engineers and technologists have left for Canada to pick up advanced expertise and see the new design solutions that will be used in those projects.

The specialists of EkoNiva-APK Holding visited several agricultural enterprises with a high level of grain management in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. Getting acquainted with AgGrowth, the key partner of EkoNiva in grain storage, proved to be very interesting. Our

group watched high technology plants producing Batco belt conveyors, Keho ventilators, and pneumatic grain (Rem) and silage (Twister) dischargers. Some facility lines are fitted with robots that perform all the operations, from preparing blanks to finishing components. The Russian colleagues noted the excellent work management.

“giants.” Our specialists attended several construction sites where at present large silos are being installed.

North Americans also have very curious experience in conditioning leguminous crops. The EkoNiva engineers watched a seed processing facility used for conditioning and cleaning lentils at a rate of 15 tonnes per hour. In 2013 the total shipments amounted to 160,000 tonnes. Here the grain is stored in hopper-bins with a tapered bottom. Such technology fully excludes grain shift, reduces loss, cuts spending and preserves the quality of seeds.

“This year our Zashchitnoye farming enterprise is starting to gradually move into seed production,” Vitaly Polyakov tells us. “One of our future activities is the sale of leguminous plants (soya, peas, and lentils). It was interesting for us to see what modern technologies our Canadian colleagues use in order to organise such production at the company in an appropriate way.”

By Yekaterina GALUSHKINA



“Everybody has a job to do even at the highest automation of all processes,” says Vitaly Polyakov, head of the grain storage and conditioning department, EkoNiva-APK Holding Company.

Special attention was given to the specifics of construction, installation and operation of Twister large diameter silos, with 3,000 tonne capacity each, because previously EkoNiva did not manufacture such

Seeds on-line

For the new season, EkoNiva-Semena is opening its own Internet seeds store. This will give farmers an excellent opportunity to purchase seeds fast without leaving the office.

“Today, many commodities are purchased via the Internet,” says Yuri Vasyukov, EkoNiva-APK Holding Deputy Director General. “We try to keep abreast of the times by introducing progressive commercial methods. Selling seeds via the Internet store is a pilot project, due to be followed by a store that will sell Savinskaya Niva’s ecological beef.”

It is easy to order seeds on the web store. One only needs to drop by the company’s home page at www.ekoniva-apk.ru, where a link to the store will be provided. The link will bring you to the common

page containing a complete list of crops and cultures. Here you will choose the required variety and familiarise yourself with its characteristics. You will also see photographs of the sown crops and read recommendations on how to raise them. After this, you can prepare an order, indicating the required amount of seeds,

their packaging and treatment method. After that, you will only have to execute the order, registering yourself on the site. This will simplify execution of the order next time. The application will automatically be e-mailed to the manager who will process it and send the bill.

By Anna BORDUNOVA





The meeting place can't be changed

This year, for the first time, EkoNiva participated as an exhibitor in the AgroFarm 2014 animal husbandry exhibition. The company stand became a place to share expertise and discuss the topical issues of the industry.

Guests were welcomed at the stand by EkoNiva-Farm specialists. The company offers farmers a wide range of stock-breeding equipment from GEA Farm Technologies, Comfort Hoof Carrier state-of-the-art hoof trimming machines and disposable materials from other foreign companies.

After the commissioning of the robotised livestock facility in one of EkoNiva-APK farms in the Kaluga oblast, the robotics issue became especially prominent. This trend was also observed at the exhibition. Stock-

breeders were keenly interested in how the robots struck root on the farm and whether they raised the milk yield.

"Practically each day farmers from different oblasts come to us for farm tours," says Aleksandr Zuyev, head of the EkoNiva-Farm sales department. "The farmers see in real life how the equipment operates. It is important for us that farmers capitalise on our expertise as best they can."

Aleksandr Popov, Director General of Zarya JSC, Tula oblast, has long cooperated with EkoNiva in various

areas. His farming enterprise is successfully engaged in dairy cattle production and milk processing, using modern equipment and technologies for these purposes. It keeps 2,600 head of horned cattle, 1,000 of which are milch cows yielding 16 tonnes of milk per day. At the exhibition, the head of the enterprise discussed with EkoNiva-Farm the design of a robotised farm for 400 animals. Aleksandr Popov believes that his robots are the future of animal husbandry and that they assure a totally different level of milk production.

"It is convenient to cooperate with EkoNiva-Farm," says Aleksandr Popov. "Here you get one-stop service covering all your needs: from turn-key projects of animal farms to individual consultations. The indisputable advantage is that before offering any equipment or technology our company checks out everything on the farms of EkoNiva-APK where we can come any time for advice."

At the exhibition, company experts conducted tours of partners' stands. Many were interested in the GEA Farm Technologies exhibition. As usual, it presented the latest know-how. This included MixCarry, a system for automatically feeding a large number of animals kept loose in the cowshed. Another innovative development is the GEA CowView device which it makes it possible to locate an animal and perform real-time analysis of its behaviour. One further especially interesting item was the ApolloMilkSystem, an arrangement for automatic steeping and intermediate washing

As Anatoly Nosulenko, EkoNiva-Farm sales department manager noted, all these innovations are designed to fully automate all the processes on the facility: i.e. milking, feeding, animal care, management, and even calving, thereby optimising operations on the farm.

At the EkoNiva stand, the farmers obtained exhaustive information on animal husbandry technologies. EkoNiva-Tekhnika sales department managers briefed them on the latest achievements in the field of fodder procurement. For the new season, the company offers Poettinger equipment for the entire technical chain of fodder procurement. The experts of EkoNiva-Semena (seeds division) offered advice on the best cow fodder, offering high quality seeds of alfalfa and fodder grass mixtures.

By Anna BORDUNOVA



How cheap is it to produce beef?

Beef production is a sophisticated and labour-intensive part of animal husbandry where new knowledge and modern technologies are indispensable. The specialists of EkoNiva-APK Holding left for Canada and the US to see first-hand world expertise in growing beef cattle.



Solar-powered drinking system (Batho Farms, Canada)

In Canada the delegation met with representatives of the Manitoba province Ministry of Agriculture who told them about the specifics of raising cattle in local conditions. Today, Manitoba is the third largest livestock province of Canada.

The Russian guests visited a number of advanced agricultural enterprises involved in beef production. A highlight of their trip was the Poplar Stock Farm, an 800-head facility that employs a variety of winter grazing technologies, including grazing on uncut maize and swathes. Another method is grazing on wads. This is a method in which wads of hay and haylage are fetched to the field, where they are separated by electrified fences and left to the animals with fodder for a certain time, after which the animals are driven to a new location. The swathes are good when the snow is not very deep and the maize and wads can be used as fodder throughout the winter. Interestingly, during such winter pasturing the cattle must be given access to drinking systems running on solar and wind power.

“The combination of different pasturing technologies with portable wind-proof screens and drinking-troughs makes it possible to feed the cattle anywhere at any time throughout the winter,” says Ramon Schenk, Deputy Director General for stockbreeding, EkoNiva-

APK Holding. “This is a very promising experiment!”

Also, the specialists of EkoNiva attended a family farm engaged in the production of ecologically clean meat and grain. The farmers are pleased that 11 years ago they opted for the “eco” way. Today, the price of beef they produce is much higher than that of conventional beef. In addition, the shift to ecologically clean food proved good for everybody’s health.

In America, our stockbreeders attended several enterprises growing and fattening pedigree cattle. One of them was Stevenson Genetics, whose owner, Darrel Stevenson, also works in Russia. He has a pedigree cattle breeding farm in the Voronezh oblast, where he successfully is introducing his know-how.”

Here the EkoNiva specialists got interested in when is the best time for beef cattle to calve. The foreign colleagues believe that in Russia this should be done in May through June due to the weather conditions. In Montana, such calving takes place in January through February because the pedigree bull-calves must reach a certain age by the auctions in November.

A favourable impression was produced by the Weschenfelder Feedlot 12,000-

head facility. Here the bull-calves are grown to 650 kg, after which they are shipped for fattening to another farm.

“The program proved to be a large-scale affair,” says Ramon Schenk, sharing his impressions. “We were introduced to efficient and low-cost technologies of meat cattle production. Many new ideas emerged which we plan to implement at EkoNiva in the near future. Meat cows must work for us, not the other way round!”

By Yekaterina GALUSHKINA





It's natural, useful and ours

Last year, EkoNiva started to produce its own product range branded "The Academy of Dairy Sciences". Now milk, curds, sour cream and yoghurt products are produced at the milk processing factory in the Novosibirsk oblast.

This year the factory has noticeably increased its product output. The production of curds has grown two-fold and that of yoghurts almost six-fold. The output of milk has risen too. The sales network has expanded. Now the products are supplied to kindergartens, schools, enterprises of the



Maslyaninsky and Cherepanovsky districts, and to local shops.

People have long missed products 'without chemicals,' says Andrei Pronin, lead engineer of the project. "To prepare products, we use natural premium quality milk from our own cows. The milk processing technology fully excludes the use of preservatives or any additives."

Twice a week, "Academy milk" is delivered to the Maslyaninsky school No. 1. Tatiana Bespyatova, the school canteen manager, said that the milk is used for cooking milk porridges, soups and other food.

The dairy products of "The Siberian Academy" are very popular at the Topolyok kindergarten, which takes the entire range of dairy products.

"The products of 'The Siberian Academy of Dairy Sciences' are always fresh, natural, tasty and affordable," says Olga Rudenko, deputy manager for logistic support. "The

children drink this milk with pleasure. And they like the curds very much. What matters to us is that all the dairy products are natural and useful for the children's growing organism. It's good that the product range is expanding. We look forward to the production of yoghurts."

This wish will soon materialise. This year their production will grow. An extra site will be built for storing the products.



The curds production department is being modernised. The product line will grow by 15%, yielding butter, fermented products and sour cream.

Construction is underway on another dairy facility of "The Academy of Dairy Sciences," with an output of 30 tonnes per day, in Shchuchye village, Voronezh oblast. This will start soon to turn out the entire range of dairy products.

By Anna BORDUNOVA

Megafacility starts operations

In February, EkoNivaAgro commissioned its largest 2,800 head livestock facility in Verkhny Ikorets village, Bobrovsky district of Voronezh oblast. This will be the largest of the nine modern dairy facilities run by EkoNiva-APK Holding.

Current operations comprise the herring bone milking parlour (2x8 sites), GEA Farm Technologies cooling equipment (15 tonne capacity), the first part of the 850-head cowshed, and a young animals area with collective and individual sections for calves. The animal stock includes the local red spotted cows raised at EkoNivaAgro. Complete commissioning is scheduled for Q3 2016. By this time, a further two cowsheds (for 1,050 and 900 head of

livestock) will be built. The largest facility will be a 72 unit carousel milking parlour. Here cooling equipment will be installed, with a capacity of 85 tonnes, plus facilities for storing mixed fodder and silage. In addition, offices and classrooms for seminars will be outfitted.

The total project cost is 984 million roubles. This includes proprietary funds and

funds obtained from the Central Black-Earth Division of Sberbank of Russia. Once the project reaches full capacity, it will turn out 24,000 tonnes per year. The enterprise will employ 60 workmen.

By Yulia SALKOVA



Complete what was begun. And begin something new

In late January, EkoNivaAgro (Liskinsky district, Voronezh oblast), tabulated the results of the previous farming year. On Farmers' Day, one hundred and three workers were decorated on behalf of the Russian Ministry of Agriculture, the oblast and district administrations, Voronezh University of Agriculture, and, of course, the EkoNiva Company.



"This year we shall take our time about launching new projects," says Stefan Duerr, EkoNiva President. "This will be a year of consolidation. We shall complete the unfinished construction projects and focus on the economic efficiency of our work."

The year was rich in social events. One of them was construction of the Virgin Mary Cathedral in Shchuchye village, which will soon open its doors to the congregation.

"A kindly attitude to people and taking care of the villagers are just as important for EkoNivaAgro as the growth of agricultural production," says Victor Shevtsov. "All of the company's facilities are workplaces for the locals. Many would be happy just with that, but not EkoNiva. The Company continues to build, to promote and support culture, and to foster love for the native land."

Victor Shevtsov also noted that notwithstanding Stefan Duerr's remarks, in 2014 it was decided to build two cowsheds, each for 250 head of cattle, in Petropavlovka village. This will create 35 new jobs. Aleksandr Rybenko, EkoNivaAgro Executive Director, added that construction of an elevator with a 50,000 tonne storage capacity is due to start shortly in Vysokoye village.

By Yulia SALKOVA

For the holiday, the memorable visit during the previous year of Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev was recalled with satisfaction. After visiting the enterprise, the head of the Government noted the high technological level of the enterprise and the excellent work conditions there.

Among other significant events of 2013 were the simultaneous opening of two dairy facilities, 2,200-head each, and the construction of a large 2,800-head facility in Verkhny Ikorets village, Bobrovsky district. Milk production grew to over 250 tonnes per day. Part of this amount

will be used for producing their own branded goods under the "Academy of Dairy Sciences" name. Crop production also showed excellent results. The grain harvest (together with maize) exceeded 124,000 tonnes.

Anatoly Spivakov, head of Voronezh Oblast Department of Agrarian Policy, also pointed out the following: "From year to year this farming enterprise has demonstrated excellent results, launching new projects and serving as a model for others."

Plans for completing what was begun.

The Olympic torch is passed to EkoNiva!

On the way to Sochi, the fire visited all the districts of the Black Earth Zone capital with a distance of over 46 km run in Voronezh. The symbol of the Olympiad was carried through the historical parts of the city, on Orel and Arab racers from the right- to the left bank.



Two hundred and forty torch-carriers participated in the Olympic fire relay. Among them was Tatiana Burkhovetskaya, EkoNiva-APK Holding Financial Director. For the Voronezh residents this was a real holiday, celebrating not only sporting ideals, but also unity and patriotism. Without exaggeration, both young and old hailed the Olympic fire.

"The Olympic fire in Voronezh is a big event, not just a sporting holiday," says Tatiana Burkhovetskaya. "This represents promotion of vitally important values like the family, children and a healthy lifestyle. It is pleasing to see all the residents of Voronezh come in families to welcome the herald of the Sochi Olympics. We haven't seen such a unifying event for a long time!"

By Yulia SALKOVA



Olympic drive



The Olympic wave of Sochi struck the whole world community. EkoNiva people, true sports lovers, could not remain untouched. Inspired by the Olympic wave, the Sibirskaya Niva farming enterprise arranged a biathlon competition.

The enterprise has prepared for this sporting start very seriously. It bought dedicated equipment and outfitted the sports grounds. Sergey Batartshev, who is both chief agronomist of the enterprise and the referee, noted that this year the company personnel's interest in the competition has grown significantly. Not only young people, but also those eager to remember "the good old times" put on the skis.

Sergey Lyakhov, head of the enterprise, actively supports the personnel's sporting initiative.

"The competition is not only a fine

chance to demonstrate one's sporting skills and capabilities, but also an event that helps to pull the team together and allows people to socialise informally and distract themselves for a while from their daily worries."

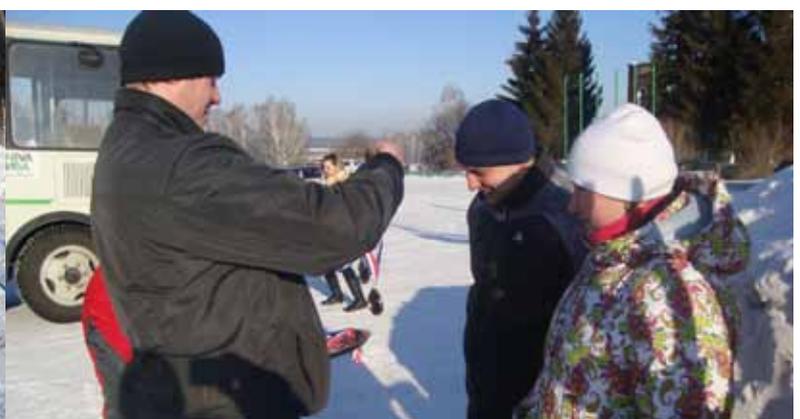
Seven teams, four men in each, strove for victory. The newly-fledged biathletes had to run a three-stage relay race. The sportsmen demonstrated excellent marksmanship at two firing lines in standing and lying positions. Many pointed out that representatives of the fair sex proved to be better shots.

It was a fierce competition at all laps.

The spirit of rivalry was uproariously supported by the fans' cheers. It was unclear to the very last moment who would get the laurels. The fastest runners and best marksmen were in the team of the administrative department. The second place of honours went to the engineers, while the stockbreeders got the bronze. The winning teams were awarded prizes and certificates of appreciation.

These competitions take place at the Sibirskaya Niva Company each year. The next biathlon competition is due to be held at the district level.

By Anna BORDUNOVA



Focus on us!



"Anti-stress" system!
EkoNiva specialists at the Agrofarm exhibition

EkoNiva-News continues to publish the best snapshots under the FOCUS ON US! project. We urge participation on everyone who believes that interesting moments showing country life and people working the land are worth preserving for posterity.



He who turns faster will get the word right!
Smart games at the opening of the servicing centre at EkoNiva-Chernozemye



You do that?
Real John Deere fans!



Hitting home!
Playing basketball on the JCB loader is such fun!



Swamped with work!
Workers in the Tula branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika are conscientiously doing their job

Please, send you photos marked
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**12-14 March. Agroseason 2014
Agricultural Exhibition**

Venue: Voronezh, Voronezh State Agrarian University Exhibition Centre "Agribusiness of Chernozemye"
Organisers: Voronezh oblast department of agrarian policy, Voronezh State Agrarian University "Agribusiness of Chernozemye" Exhibition Centre

18-21 March. Meat Industry 2014 and Dairy Industry 2014 international specialised exhibitions

Venue: Moscow, All-Russian Exhibition Centre
Organisers: Russian Ministry of Agriculture, Russian Meat Union

25 March — 5 April. Training of Kirov oblast agriculture specialists on John Deere and Vaderstad equipment

Venue: Plemzavod Oktyabrsky LLC, Kirov oblast
Organisers: Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika

March. Demonstration of John Deere equipment

Venue: Detchino village, Kaluga oblast
Organisers: EkoNiva-Tekhnika LLC

2-3 April. Agroyatka 2014 Agro-Industrial Exhibition

Venue: city of Kirov
Organisers: Vyatka-Expo Exhibition Centre

7-10 April. Trip to a plant of the JCB Company, a leading manufacturer of telescopic loaders

Venue: JCB facility, Roster, England
Organisers: EkoNiva-Tekhnika LLC



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12+

7-10 April.

EkoNiva invites you to participate in the trip to a manufacturing facility of the JCB company, a leading producer of telescopic loaders



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