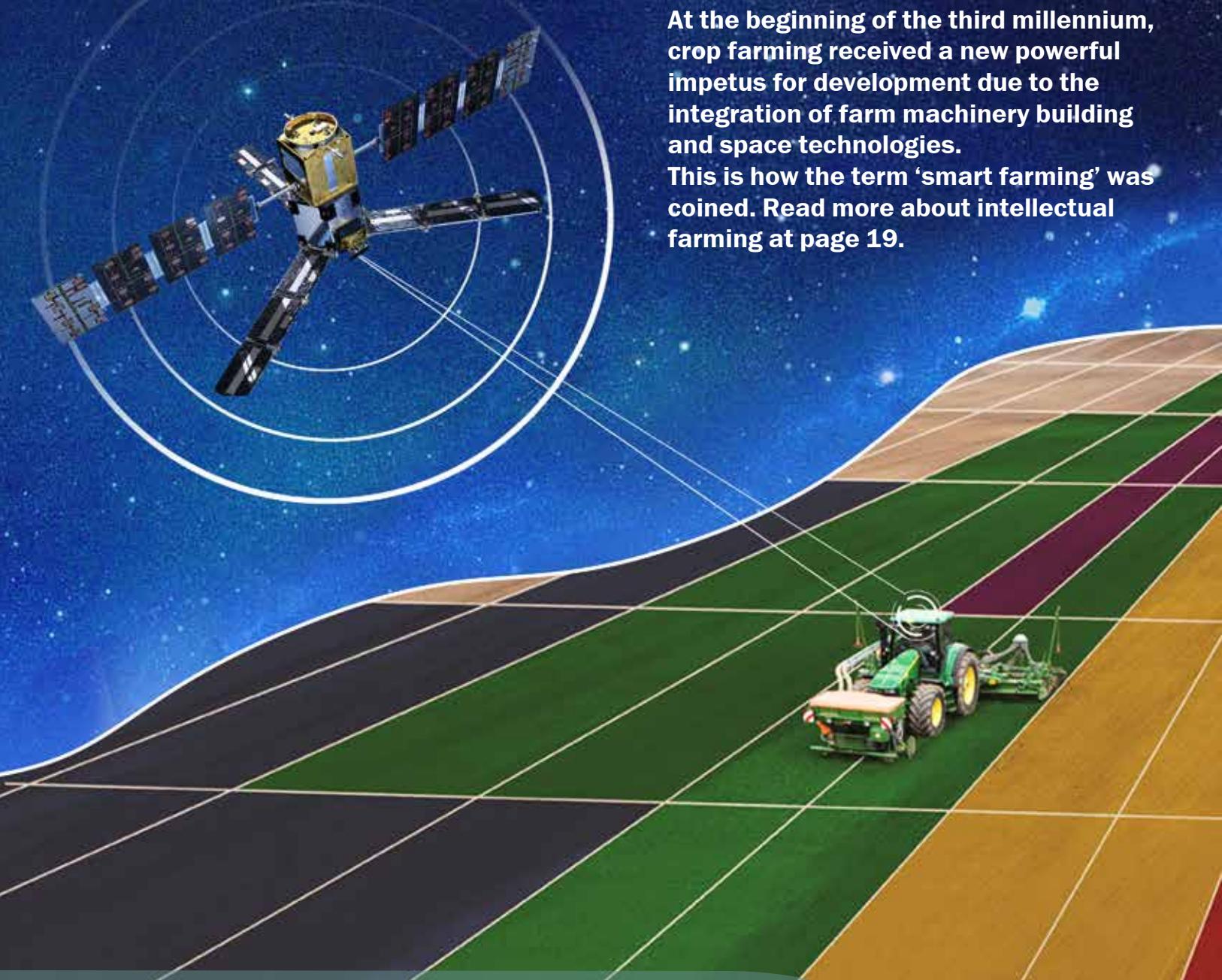


Smart farming

At the beginning of the third millennium, crop farming received a new powerful impetus for development due to the integration of farm machinery building and space technologies.

This is how the term 'smart farming' was coined. Read more about intellectual farming at page 19.



Stefan Hipp: Integrity is our top priority

The head of the German organic baby food manufacturing company speaks about family traditions, success and company philosophy .

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A centennial of amazing machines

100 years ago, John Deere tractors went out to the fields.

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How to get rid of a toothache?

The topic of dairy product adulteration is like a toothache: everybody is worn out by it but nobody dares to pull out the sore tooth yet.

We decided to carry out our own investigation and asked a reliable independent food quality laboratory to test 20 dairy products made by different manufacturers for the presence of vegetable fat. To our surprise, the laboratory refused point-blank to test milk produced by two manufacturers. The answer they gave us was simply shocking: 'We do not want any problems. A couple of years ago we already dealt with these companies and we do not want to have anything to do with them any more'. People are afraid for their lives, their families and children.

This situation reminds of the 90s; only then the gangs fought in the oil market and now — in the dairy one.

Over the past years, the dairy sector has received unprecedented support from the government: over 62 billion within three years. These measures have borne fruit: almost 200 dairies have been built and modernised, Russia has started to reduce milk deficit. Our company has increased milk production volumes to over 1,200 tonnes per day. However, unfair competition brings all these efforts to nothing. Honest manufacturers will never be able to compete with those who make milk from something that has nothing to do with milk.

Now the market is in fever, largely due to dairy product adulterators. Milk processors reduce milk prices, the retail sector is tired of constant price dumping and offering all sorts of discounts, and the buyers have lost trust in dairy products. Over the past year, per capita consumption of milk has considerably decreased. Everyone is trapped: the milk

producers, the honest processors, retail chains and regular consumers.

We are looking forward to the law upgrading penalties for the production of adulterated food. Currently, the fine for producing adulterated dairy products is much lower than the possible profit from their sale. Retail chains also must bear responsibility for offering adulterated products on their shelves. This will improve the market environment significantly.

I believe that the implementation of the electronic veterinary certification programme - Mercury – will also help to track milk all the way from the farm to the shop shelf. We hope that the government will take unrelenting measures against adulteration, which will support the dairy market, reinstate fair competition and restore the reputation of Russian milk.

Stefan DUERR,
President of EkoNiva Group



Stefan Duerr, president of EkoNiva Group took part in the working meeting with the governor of Ryazan oblast, Nikolay Lyubimov. The meeting was dedicated to the discussion of an investment project aimed at the construction of dairy farms in the region.

EkoNiva is building farms in Ryazan

EkoNiva started operating in Ryazan oblast a little more than two months ago. From the very beginning, the company embarked on large-scale projects. The construction of a dairy for 2,800 head in Pitelino district is already underway, and the work on a mega-dairy for 6,000 head in Shatsk district will be commenced in summer. Currently, the company is engaged in project design and cost estimation. EkoNiva is planning to commission the 2,800-head dairy and the first phase of the mega-dairy before the end of the year.

Another important topic discussed at the meeting was the possibility of receiving governmental subsidies for the purchase of livestock and farm machinery.

'The subsidies will help us to speed up the construction works', comments Stefan Duerr.

The president of EkoNiva group thanked the governor and all administrative services for the promptness in making all decisions related to the construction works and the support in farmland expansion: 23,000 ha of unused land will be allocated to EkoNiva to be used as agricultural land.

'Thank you for inviting us into the region and providing comprehensive support', says Stefan Duerr.

Nikolay Lyubimov, in his turn, underlined that agriculture is one of the most important areas of activity in the region.

'Implementation of farming projects

brings life into rural areas since it means the development of economy and, consequently, the infrastructure', states Nikolay Lyubimov.

All participants of the meeting agreed that it is essential not only to create new working places in the rural areas but also improve the living conditions so that young people could willingly stay in their native villages instead of rushing to Moscow to make money. In order to attract young people to work on the farms, the company will build residential houses for the employees.

EkoNiva is also a longed-for partner in other districts of Ryazan oblast. In 2019-2020, the company is planning to build farms in Sasovo and Chuchkovo districts.

By Svetlana WEBER

Technological upgrade

Cooperation with agricultural institutions of higher education is an integral part of EkoNiva-Tekhnika's work. It enables the scientific community and future specialists to obtain first-hand information on modern machinery building and learn about the latest developments of the world's leading manufacturers.

Ryazan State Agricultural University named after P. A. Kostychev is a long-term partner of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. Following a good old tradition, the students of the university undergo internship at the company's enterprises.

On 14 February, the representatives of EkoNiva-Tekhnika and John Deere gave a 6 Series tractor power unit to

the university as a present to allow the students to study its characteristics and strong points. The restored 4-cylinder 4.5-litre 4045H engine, turbocharged and air-to-air aftercooled, took its rightful place at the university's training facilities.

'This unit is produced in France in Saran', shares Sergey Krupskiy, Manager of Ryazan branch of EkoNiva-

Tekhnika. 'It is used for a wide range of machines: from 6 Series tractors (including 6110B, 6130B, 6125M) to construction machinery. Handing the power unit to the university is another important step within the framework of the cooperation. We are pleased to see that the dealers support us and help us to develop and strengthen such projects. We wish young people success in studying modern machinery building trends and mastering their profession!'

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV





Anatoliy Artamonov, Governor of Kaluga oblast, undertook a working visit to Ferzikovo district. The governor visited several agricultural, industrial and social objects, including Kaluzhskaya Niva.

Impressive development

The company is building several large-scale dairies and reconstructing Koltsovo dairy which will be used for housing approximately nine thousand head of young stock.

'The reconstruction of Koltsovo dairy commenced in October, 2017', says Aleksey Savenkov, Executive Director of Kaluzhskaya Niva-East. 'We are planning to complete the work by the end of 2018. Boldasovka dairy (for 1,800 head) and Aristovo dairy (for 2,800 head) already operate at full capacity in Ferzikovo district. In October, 2017, we started building Sugonovo dairy (for 2,800 head). The construction will be completed in April, 2018. In February, 2018, we also commenced the construction of a dairy for 2,800

head in Bogdanino village.'

Young stock at Koltsovo dairy is raised in accordance with American practices, which are new to Russian farmers. 'Previously, the calves stayed at the dairy for two months after birth', shares Andrey Kamenskiy, Chief Herd Manager of Kaluzhskaya Niva-East. 'Now all newborn calves will be transported to Koltsovo dairy where they will stay until they are 15 months old. The calves will receive 3.5 l of milk replacer and concentrates produced at our farms (ad lib) three times per day.'

Koltsovo dairy will employ 37 people. Currently, the company is hiring vets, AI technicians and farm workers. The farm will include five cow barns with the total capacity of 4,500 stalls, nine calf

barns for 2,500 head, 2,000 individual hutches, a feed centre and a milk house for calves.

'Currently, 1,100 Holstein heifers, which are to be transported to Sugonovo dairy, are kept in three barns of Koltsovo dairy', continues Andrey Kamenskiy.

Anatoliy Artamonov commented on the extensive experience of Kaluzhskaya Niva in implementing modern technologies and underlined that the development of agricultural companies leads to positive changes in the rural areas: the number of working places is increasing and the demographic situation is improving. It means that people look into the future with optimism and are ready to work to achieve their goals.

By Darya DENISOVA

Orenburg: from words to deeds

On 27th March, Yuriy Berg, Governor of Orenburg oblast, held a meeting with Stefan Duerr. The meeting became the continuation of the earlier conversation between the president of EkoNiva Group and the head of the region, which took place in autumn, 2017 and was dedicated to the discussion of the prospects of the development of agriculture in Orenburg oblast, in particular, the investments in beef and dairy farming.

The meeting in March was called to continue the constructive dialogue. Besides the head of the region and Stefan Duerr, it was attended by Mikhail Maslov, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Processing of Orenburg oblast, and other officials.

With the federal and regional support, EkoNiva-APK Holding is planning to build two dairies for 2,800 head each in Severny district in the nearest time.

The construction of the first dairy will be commenced already in April and commissioned in autumn, 2018.

'I am happy to say that we have a very good and fruitful communication with the government of the region', comments Stefan Duerr. 'All conditions necessary for successful investment in the farming sector have been created.' Besides, the participants of the meeting touched upon the questions of the



development of beef farming. By 2020, the holding is planning to establish a cluster for 10,000 head of beef cattle in Buguruslan and Severny districts of the region and Abdulino city district.

Yury Berg is convinced that EkoNiva-APK Holding is a reliable partner and investor. For reference: a subsidiary of the holding, Severnaya Niva, has been operating in Orenburg oblast since 2002.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV



Machinery experts

The employees of EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding are true professionals in their field. It is not surprising considering that they undergo dedicated trainings several times a year to improve their skills and broaden their knowledge about modern farm machinery.

On 21st-22nd March Kaluga branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika held a training, attended by 17 employees of the Sales Department. The training programme traditionally included a large amount of valuable

information, which will soon be put into practice by the trainees.

The first day of the training session began with a brief overview of MEPU grain dryers. Afterwards, the attention of the attendees' attention was focused on the

time-proven Grimme machines, which were compared with their rivals to highlight their outstanding features. Another important topic covered at the training at the training was the sales plan and the current trends in farm machinery building.

'The training on Grimme equipment began with an insight into potato growing process', says Anatoly Sary-Terzi, Manager of Sales Department of Vladimir branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'This information plays an essential role in our work because we have to be 'fully armed' for the detailed questions which might be asked by our clients.'

The next day of the training was no less productive than the previous one. It was dedicated to JCB brand. The employees of EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding spoke about financial programmes, popular models and equipment. The demo show of the JCB 541-70 Agri Pro, which has just entered the market, became the highlight of the event.

'Such trainings are held several times per year', says Kirill Tagantsev, Head of Sales Department of Kostroma branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'First of all, such training sessions allow the staff to acquire additional knowledge and improve their qualification and competence, which translates into increased sales.'

By Viktor BARGOTIN

Good faith cooperation

The specialists of Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika have held a training for engineers and machine operators of the enterprises which are long-standing and valuable partners of the company.

The event was held in Kotelniki district at the premises of Iskra farming enterprise. Engineers and machine operators got together to discuss the characteristics of the John Deere W650 harvester in detail.

'The John Deere W650 is one of the best models in its range', says Dmitriy Lukin, Head of Service Department of Kirov

branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'It is a worthy representative of the W series machines. It provides reliable performance and high-quality harvesting.'

Iskra is one of the largest enterprises engaged in dairy farming in Kirov oblast. The enterprise has been cooperating with Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika for a number of years since the purchase of

the first cultivators and Vaderstad planters. Later Iskra bought John Deere 6130D, 8320R and 8310R tractors. And in 2011, the enterprise acquired its first John Deere W650 grain harvester.

'The harvester is still

operating and it is in perfect shape', says Aleksandr Gulin, Engineer of the enterprise. 'We were very happy with John Deere quality so we purchased two more W650 harvesters, in 2012 and 2017.'

The partners discussed the upgraded modification of the W650 harvester. The machine now features an improved separation system and increased screen angle, higher fan capacity and an upgraded cab.

To check how well the participants mastered the information, EkoNiva-Tekhnika held a professional test. Nikolay Ogorodov and Vladimir Nosov, machine operators with over 20 years of experience, demonstrated the best results. The specialists shared that within the 20 years of work they had to deal with a lot of uncomfortable conditions. The new harvesters have changed the situation dramatically.

'We can work for more than 14 hours non-stop during the harvesting season', comments Vladimir Nosov, Machine Operator of Iskra. 'Modern harvesters turn our work into pure pleasure. You don't even want to get out of the machine. We know our harvesters to the smallest detail, therefore, it was easy for us to pass the test.'

BY DARYA DENISOVA



Comfortable living for the countryside

How do we bring Russian rural areas back to life? First of all, it is necessary to create favourable conditions for work and a comfortable life in the countryside. Sibirskaya Niva is on the right track!

In Maslyanino village, the company is building an all-season amusement park, which will include a healthy food cafe serving the products of the Academy of Dairy Sciences. In the nearest future, Sibirskaya Niva is planning to build townhouses for the employees and open a dairy store under the Academy of Dairy Sciences brand.

The construction of the all-season amusement park, which is also referred to as the Siberian Disneyland, is in full swing. It is a joint project of the government of Maslyanino district and Sibirskaya Niva, the social partner of the project.

'We intend to launch the first phase of the recreational and entertainment project already this summer', says Natalia Valyukh, Deputy Head of Maslyanino

District for Social Welfare.

In winter, the park will offer mountain skiing, tubing and snowboarding; and in the summer - bicycles, segways and roller-blades. Active recreation requires a healthy snack, which will be provided by the healthy food cafe of the Academy of Dairy Sciences. The cafe will open its doors to the first visitors in summer.

'Our cafe will, in the first place, promote the consumption of milk and dairy products', says Sergei Lyakhov, Regional Director for Siberia, EkoNiva APK Holding.

The panoramic windows of the cafe will allow the visitors to take in the magnificent beauty of the Salair ridge.

To make the area even more attractive for tourists, Stefan Duerr, President of EkoNiva Group, decided to purchase a snowcat for the all-season park to prepare the tracks for skiers.

Comfortable living is as important as good recreation. Therefore, Sibirskaya Niva is investing funds in the construction of residential houses for its employees in the very centre of Maslyanino village. Young specialists will be able to purchase the houses from the company by means of a 10-year mortgage. The price of the houses offered by the company will be almost twice lower than the market price.

'Normally, one square metre in a house like this costs over 50 thousand rubles. Our price is about 30 thousand rubles per square metre', emphasises Sergey Lyakhov.

The construction of the brand shop of Sibirskaya Niva is close to completion. The company will use it to sell its dairy products and high-quality refrigerated beef directly to the customers, which will help to establish good customer relations and make the life of the local residents even more comfortable.

By Tatiana IGNATENKO



we are happy with the result.'

As Bashkiria is quite remote from Black Soil region, effective logistics is no less important.

'It's the first time we've bought seeds from EkoNiva', says Favil Khabibrakhmanov, a farmer from Khabibrakhmanov farming enterprise (Buzdyakskiy district). 'The seeds are of good quality, and, most importantly, they have arrived on time.'

Since only strict adherence to expert guidelines combined with the right seed material secures farmers a rich crop, the company commits to provide continuous customer support all the way from the purchase of seeds to the end of harvest time.

By Tatiana IGNATENKO



Off to a good start

EkoNiva-Semena has attended 28th International Agricultural Trade Show AgroComplex 2018 in Ufa for the first time, getting off to a promising start in the new region.

AgroComplex is a major Russian agricultural trade show, which is distinguished by a wide geographical distribution of its exhibitors.

'Although EkoNiva is a first time exhibitor at the trade show, the interest to our product range is high', says Aleksandr Novoselov, Sales Manager of EkoNiva-Semena.

Product buyers were particularly interested in the seeds of traditionally sought-after crops: pea variety Belmondo and barley variety Margret. Also, varieties of durum wheat, forage grasses and lentils were in high demand. Seeds from EkoNiva feature advanced genetics of the leading global plant-breeding institutions.

'The performance of our seeds has been

highly appreciated by farmers from different regions of Russia, with their yields decidedly surpassing those of their counterparts', points out Aleksandr Novoselov.

The quality of the seeds is confirmed by EkoNiva's long-standing customers. Among them is Agli farming enterprise which has been cooperating with EkoNiva for almost 15 years.

'Triso spring wheat variety has been sown in the fields of Bashkiria for years', says Azat Yusupov, Chief Agronomist of the enterprise. 'Besides, we buy peas and oats varieties. We are also entertaining the idea of purchasing malting barley. Our approach is simple: we take a batch for trial, and we continue growing the variety if



Fully armed for the sowing campaign!

EkoNiva has been participating in AgroVyatka, one of the major agricultural trade shows, for over ten years. AgroVyatka 2018 has not become an exception.

Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika presented the latest novelties in farm machinery building, including John Deere 6135B, 6155M, 6195M tractors.

'Today we are displaying a new series of John Deere tractors with the capacity of 155 hp and 195 hp', says Sergey

Zhukov, Director of Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'The machines are equipped with additional options that will make the work easier and increase the operator comfort.'

John Deere 455 grain drills and John Deere 915 V-Rippers providing high quality tillage and reducing soil

compaction were among the hits of the trade show. JCB 531-70 telehandlers, John Deere 8300 self-propelled forage harvesters and the new development of the ROMAX plant - ALFA and BETA grain cleaning systems also raised great interest of the visitors.

'BVL V-LOAD Cutter Master 130 was one of the most popular machines', says Sergey Gylin, Head of Sales Department of Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'The mounted machine is designed for smooth silage cutting and loading into a vehicle or a feed wagon.'

Several JCB 531-70 Agri Telehandlers were purchased straight away by some farming enterprises of Kirov oblast.

'Participation in this exhibition is a good way to solve topical issues just before sowing,' says Lyudmila Zykova, Sales Manager of EkoNiva-Semena.

EkoNiva's booth was very popular with visitors. The farmers of Kirov oblast were interested in the seeds of cereals and legumes, especially in wheat varieties Triso and Licamero, barley varieties Margret and Calcule and pea varieties Rocket and Belmondo. Lentils were not in high demand, though, this crop is yet to gain popularity in Kirov.

'The main goal of the farmers from Kirov oblast is to feed the cows', says Lyudmila Zykova. 'Mostly they were interested in the seeds of fodder grasses and grain crops.'

*By Tatyana IGNATENKO
and Daria DENISOVA*

The secrets of farming taught at school

The students of agricultural classes of school 1, Maslyanino district, Novosibirsk oblast took part in UchSib 2018. Maslyanino school is doing a successful job of bringing up new specialists for the farming sector.



The students presented self-grown seedlings, self-made yoghurt, cheese, calf jackets and unique handicraft items made from flax and wheat straw.

'First of all, we teach the basics of farming', explains Aleksandra Liakhova, agricultural class supervisor, 'and after that we give a deeper insight into the fascinating world of agriculture.'

All knowledge acquired in class can be applied in practice — Sibirskaya Niva holds seminars for the future farming specialists and makes fascinating presents such as a milk quality testing device, which is very helpful in the

process of making dairy products. By the way, the yoghurts made by the students were very popular with the visitors of the trade show as well as grape seedlings, which sold like hot cakes.

Practice and interaction are the key components of industry-specific training. Sibirskaya Niva offers training sites for future crop farming and livestock farming specialists all year round.

The students of agricultural classes take their future profession seriously. The educational process is arranged so as to broaden the children's outlook and make agriculture an attractive career to pursue in.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

John Deere factory never stops operating. The guests were shown the assembly line used for the manufacture of the farm machinery. John Deere employs cutting-edge technologies to reach the world-renowned quality.

'John Deere production in Domodedovo is based on SKD assembly', says Sergey Plotnikov, Senior Sales Manager of Tula branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'Currently, the line is used for the manufacturing of John Deere 8R Series tractors, in summer it will be reequipped for the assembly of W and S Series harvesters. Our customers had an opportunity to see that the assembly of machines is performed at the highest level, with strict observance of all John Deere standards.'

The specialists of the company presented John Deere forage and grain harvesters, told the guests about self-propelled sprayers and informed them about new leasing programmes available in spring.

The guests continued learning about the work of John Deere and EkoNiva-Tekhnika at the service centre in Detchino. The customers visited spare parts storage facility, saw the model range of John Deere harvesters and tractors and learned about the characteristics of Vaderstad seed drills.

Sergey Bocharov, Manager of Rodnikovoye Pole, a young and



The X Files

Disclosing secrets! The customers of EkoNiva-Tekhnika learned about the details of John Deere machine manufacturing process and visited the service centre in Detchino.

developing company specialising in dairy livestock farming, with the herd of over 500 head, is interested in new technologies that can be successfully applied in the production process.

'Such meetings are very important for the customers', says Sergey Bocharov. 'We have learned a lot about Vaderstad seed drills and JCB skid steer loaders. The specialists of EkoNiva-Tekhnika provided detailed advice on all the topics that were of interest to us.'

The new dairy of Kaluzhskaya Niva in Aristovo for 2,800 head impressed the

guests with well-coordinated team work and application of advanced technologies helping to cope with enormous amount of work within a short period of time.

Employees of the dairy demonstrated a Fliegl manure removing tanker and a Haybuster bale shredder in action, told about the specifics of livestock feeding and housing and showed the operation of a 72-stall milking rotary.

The clients of EkoNiva-Tekhnika were very happy with the trip, which allowed them to learn some know-how contributing to successful work.

By Daria DENISOVA

Powerful support

EkoNiva-Chernozemye held a seminar for the representatives of the local agricultural enterprises at the office of the government of Verkhny Mamon municipal district (Voronezh oblast).

The seminar was dedicated to soil cultivation, fodder preparation and plant protection. Besides, the hosts of the event demonstrated modern farm machinery: new models of combines, seed drills, telehandlers, etc.

Special interest of the audience was drawn to new items from John Deere: 6175M and 6195M tractors, R and 8RT Series tractors and 9 Series wheeled and track machines. John Deere S and T combine harvesters also enjoyed a great popularity.

'We have displayed the most powerful for today rotary harvester to date —

the John Deere S690', says Aleksandr Kirichenko, Sales Manager of EkoNiva-Chernozemye. 'Its technical characteristics are impressive: the working volume of 135 liters, the maximum power of 614 hp, the grain hopper volume of 14,100 liters, and the discharge speed of 135 liters per second!'

Besides, attention was paid to T660 and T670 harvesters and self-propelled 8000 Series machines were covered.

For small farms, the most interesting part of the seminar was the one dedicated to the John Deere F450E fixed baler that forms high density bales with the diameter of 1.2 or 1.5 m.

The organisers of the seminar also presented the machinery produced by other

manufacturers, in particular, Vaderstad Tempo planters (capable of sowing 500 hectares per day with an average speed of more than 20 km/h) and JCB 5 Series telehandlers. By the way, farmers have an opportunity to benefit from exclusive terms when buying JCB equipment. Telescopic loaders are available at 0% appreciation with a minimum advance payment. All front loaders are available at 3.99% rate and mini-loaders can be purchased in installments at 0% appreciation.

In addition, EkoNiva-Chernozemye told about financial systems enabling farmers to purchase equipment on favourable terms: John Deere Financial and JCB Finance.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV



Stefan Hipp: integrity is our top priority



I first met the head of the German baby food manufacturer HiPP at BioFach 2018 trade show in Germany.

There was no way I could get an interview with Stefan Hipp whose day is planned to the very last minute then. However, his kind eyes and smile lingered in my memory. That is exactly what a person producing baby food should be like, I thought to myself. After a while Stefan Hipp agreed to speak about his company, business partners and family.

HiPP philosophy

The very principle of organic farming speaks volumes about our philosophy. All HiPP employees work in compliance with established transparent in-house ethical principles and undergo a training in sustainability. Thus, we ensure that the philosophy is put into practice in our daily activities. We are aware of the magnitude of our responsibility. For this reason, our guiding principle is sustainability and never quick profit. This firmly established traditional principle of operation is at the same time the driving force behind our innovation.

Currently, for example, we have developed a lot of exciting products for the group of toddlers aged 3 and up and in doing so created a completely new category of products, that has never existed before. They are being introduced in Germany right now and we are planning to bring them to the market for our Russian customers in the future.

Environment protection

Long before organic products became a trend, HiPP recognised that there was no alternative to ecological farming, if we wanted to protect the nature and the environment for our future generations

and set uncompromisingly high standards of quality for our products. As suppliers of baby food, we must guarantee our customers — that is the youngest and consequently, the most vulnerable in our society — top quality at all times. This works only if we set consistently high standards: from the choice of the best suited soils and refusal of the use of chemical pesticides to the use of crop rotation and employment of modern cultivation, production and control mechanisms in accordance with strict organic criteria. No other company can draw on such extensive experience in organic

will help us to preserve the world a loveable and liveable place for the future generations. More and more mothers nowadays want to be sure that the products they are buying are produced in an ethical way. Organic baby food is produced with great care and undergoes strict quality ensuring process. A product may go through over 100 quality tests on the way from the field to the shelf. We are very ambitious. We are continuously improving the quality of our milk which is used in HiPP infant milk formula. We strive towards the gold standard of breast milk. In addition to the regulation, we have our

'Only biological farming will help us to preserve the world a loveable and liveable place for the future generations.'

production of baby food.

Baby food from conventionally produced raw materials may contain harmful substances. The raw materials of biologically produced baby food come free of pesticides or chemical fertilisers. Organic baby food is preferable as it is better for healthy growth and development. Only biological farming

own requirements that each product must meet, which are far stricter than the legislation.

In Russian expanse

As all mothers, who want the best for their child, Russian mothers are also interested in good nutrition of their offspring. In comparison with other European countries, Russia has the



Stefan Hipp with Anatoly Nakaryakov, Director of Savinskaya Niva, at BioFach, Germany

'We as a family enterprise in the fourth generation with our own organic seal and over 60 years of experience in organic production deserve the highest possible trust.'

highest birth rate. At the same time there are a lot of local and international suppliers in Russia. This makes the country one of the most competitive markets. That is exactly why we want to show Russian consumers that we as a family enterprise in the fourth generation with our own organic seal and over 60 years of experience in organic production deserve the highest possible trust. Vegetable and meat menus as well as fruit purees are especially popular in Russia. For example, pureed white carrots and sweet corn were developed exclusively for the Russian market.

Vigorous control

As the world's largest purchaser of ecologically produced raw materials, we work with a network of 8,000 Hipp dedicated organic farmers from all over the world. Besides, individual raw materials require specific conditions in order to grow ideally and naturally. Our bananas, for example, grow under ideal conditions in the rainforest of Costa Rica, where we support over 1,000 small farmers and the fruit grow-

naturally — without any dangerous pesticide cocktails — with the use of conventional cultivation practices rather than at mono-crop plantations. The same applies to the raw materials for our Russian factory which come from

those suppliers who comply with our stringent criteria. We are quite happy with the cooperation with Savinskaya Niva, which supplies organic beef to us. The quality is excellent. As with all our partners, our cooperation is also a long-term one. The company has created perfect conditions for the production of high-quality organic beef and veal. It holds potential for the future.

Stefan & Stefan

Our partnership with president of EkoNiva Stefan Duerr is highly professional and trustful. We meet up regularly. During the meetings, we discuss the challenges of agriculture in Russia and worldwide, our shared passion for organic farming and our cooperation in this area. We hope to be able to implement further projects together in the future.

Family values

I spend the weekends with my family, outdoors on my farms — it gives me power and energy. I am glad to see how the farms are developing, how cereals and vegetables are growing and, above all, how the biodiversity is recovering under the influence of organic management.

Success secrets from Stefan Hipp

It is important to have vision for the future, believe in it and consistently pursue your goals. Integrity thereby comes first. Not quick success, but conviction and passion should be the driving force.

By Daria DENISOVA





A centennial of amazing machines

**JOHN DEERE
TRACTORS
100
YEARS**

'Everything related to tillage, ploughing and crop cultivation is our passion', declare John Deere employees. Indeed, only the overwhelming love and passion for agriculture can explain the outstanding results achieved by John Deere within the century of operation.

The success story of John Deere inspires nothing but admiration. Let us recall at least some of the key stages in the development of the company.

The Lanz Bulldog showcased at DLG exhibition in Leipzig in 1921 became synonymous with the word 'tractor'. The bright start was followed by further confident steps: the next model John Deere D produced in 1923 was in demand for nearly 30 years. By the way, at that time, our countrymen already knew how efficient John Deere farm machinery was: within the first five-year planning period (1928-1932), the USSR imported over 8,000 John Deere tractors!

After World War II, John Deere started supplying its products to Europe. The R model tractors were exported to the Old World pursuant to Marshall Plan. Among other innovations, this tractor was distinguished by the usage of 3

John Deere, one of the world's key farm machinery manufacturers, celebrated its 100th anniversary on 14th March. We join in the celebration together with thousands of successful farmers from all over the world. Back in 1918, the acquisition of Waterloo Gasoline Engine company laid the foundation for the whole new era in tractor manufacturing. The era of John Deere.

energy sources: an electric drive started a small gas engine, and that, in turn, engaged the main diesel unit.

Just a few years later, in 1956, the brand gained the visual features which have become its hallmark. The John Deere 520 was revealed to the world in green with yellow stripes.

In 1969, the Corporation introduced the 3120 model, the first six-cylinder-engine tractor in the history of farm machinery manufacturing. The machine was a timely response to the growing needs of agriculture in Europe.

The 1980s were marked by new breakthroughs, including the developments, aimed at taming the most capricious terrain worked by farmers. In particular, John Deere 4040S and 4240S Series Tractors were equipped with the new mechanical axles with a 13-degree steering axis inclination.

After the fall of the Berlin wall, John Deere's machines became even more popular in the European markets. A fundamentally new perspective on the development of agricultural machinery was embodied in the 6 Series tractor. Due to the innovative design and a modular

frame, the machines became lighter and more stable, opening up almost endless possibilities for configurations. Two years later, the 8 Series Tractors set the trend in the large-sized machinery segment.

At the turn of the millennium, John Deere retained the role of tractor fashion legislator: the triple-link front axle suspension implemented in the 6910 model resulted in significantly increased driver's comfort and 8% better grip.

Having realised the importance of saving resources in agricultural production earlier than others, in 2009, the company started manufacturing the 8R Series tractors, which broke all fuel efficiency records.

In 2016, John Deere launched its probably most powerful 'beast' — the 670 hp 9RX Series machines with an articulated frame and caterpillar tracks!

Looking at John Deere's success path, we wonder: what new breakthroughs can we expect from a manufacturer with such a biography, considering the current pace of the technological progress? John Deere will definitely continue impressing us. After all, the only fuel the company is not saving is the passion for work.

By Alexander KUTISHCHEV





A new chapter in the glorious story

The model range of tractors offered by EkoNiva-Tekhnika Holding is welcoming a new addition — the efficient John Deere 6155M.

The John Deere M Series tractors entered the Russian market in 2012 and have gained the enviable reputation as definitive all-rounders. The M Series machines demonstrate incredible productivity in the field and easy road transportation. The innovative characteristics of the machines make them more versatile, powerful and efficient than ever before.

'The John Deere 6155M is equipped with the 155 hp 6-cylinder PowerTech PVS engine', says Sergey Plotnikov, Senior Sales Manager of Tula branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'The engine was specially developed for farm machines. It ensures the required capacity and reduces fuel consumption.'

The PowerQuad transmission provides rapid shifting including speed matching when shifting between ranges, which increases the operator comfort. It is operated by a single-angle lever, and the SoftShift technology keeps the transmission smooth even under load.

'Another distinctive feature of the

John Deere 6155M is the outstanding hydraulics system', observes Sergey Plotnikov. 'The Pressure and Flow Compensated system is capable of producing a maximum flow of 114 l/m. When the flow is no longer needed, the system returns to "no flow" stand-by mode. This improves fuel efficiency and machine performance.'

The cab is equipped with a wide range of devices, including sensors and measuring gages, which ensure maximum implement control precision. The basic package also includes air conditioning and a heater which serve for setting optimal temperature inside the cab in order to ensure comfortable working conditions for the operator.

'The John Deere 6155M has a huge potential in the Russian market', continues Sergey Plotnikov. 'The 6 Series models are famous for their reliability and versatility. They will be irreplaceable on any farm.'

Companies of EkoNiva-Tekhnika Group have already started selling John Deere

6155M tractors. A number of machines have started operating at Russian farming enterprises.

'At the end of last year, our company decided to expand the machinery fleet', says Evgeniy Kolychev, Chief Engineer of Bogoroditskiy Alliance farming enterprise (Tula oblast). 'We are engaged in seed potato production, so we always have a lot of work to do, therefore, we have opted for the John Deere 6155M. We have high expectations for it in the coming season.'

'The acreage of our enterprise grows every year', comments Mikhail Zaporozhtsev, head of Service Department of Prodimeks (Voronezh oblast). 'The key area of activity of our holding is sugar beets growing and processing. John Deere tractors are our reliable assistants. We are sure of the quality, therefore we have purchased a John Deere 6155M tractor without any hesitation.'

By Viktor BARGOTIN



Important details

How to choose the right equipment and operate at full capacity without doing harm to the environment — these questions are of great interest to modern farmers. The specialists of Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika met with their colleagues to discuss these important topics in detail.

Finnish quality

Finnish company MEPU has been successfully manufacturing grain drying equipment for professional agricultural producers for more than 60 years. Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika has been delivering MEPU grain dryers to clients for 4 years. The range of dryers is quite wide, as the company offers continuous flow, RCW, mobile and stationary types of dryers with capacity from 3 tonnes/h to 150 tonnes/h.

'The key advantages of MEPU grain dryers are easy installation and maintenance, prompt and high-quality processing of large volumes of grain and zero loss. MEPU machines dry grain gently and evenly. They are energy-efficient and reliable even in harsh conditions', says Vladimir Maryin, Chief Engineer of Kirov

branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika.

Grain batch humidity has no effect on the outcome since the grain drying process is based on constant circulation of kernels through drying cells in order to make the entire grain batch fully dry. Another advantage of MEPU grain dryers is the possibility of installing an environmentally friendly furnace. It gives the machine the ability to work on organic fuel in addition to diesel or gas.

'Finnish grain dryers are in great demand in the Russian market,' continues Vladimir Maryin. Within 4 years, Kirov branch

of EkoNiva-Tekhnika has sold 17 grain drying equipment packages, which comprised MEPU dryers.'

The right choice

Kaspars Pavars, regional representative of MEPU, came from Latvia specifically to support the colleagues from Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika and to give advice to potential customers on how to choose the right dryer for their farms.

'When choosing a dryer, it is important to consider the climate conditions of the region', says Kaspars Pavars. 'Besides, it is necessary to understand what crops the grain drying equipment is intended for. It is essential to consider how many tonnes of grain the farmer wants to dry in a shift, calculate the nominal capacity correctly and specify the percentage of the grain moisture. All these factors affect the drying quality as well as the cost and the performance of the grain dryer. I also recommend studying the commercial offer terms attentively.'

Ecology

Agricultural machines emit a large amount of dust into the atmosphere. The producers of MEPU grain dryers look to the future and want the farmers to work in an ideal environment. Therefore, they have developed a special system of dust collection and noise insulation for all MEPU grain dryers.

Following the current trends in environmental protection, Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika introduces a completely new line of equipment, including a processing and recycling system for manure and other agricultural waste. According to the experts, the new developments of the well-known brands will allow the farmers to avoid a large number of problems and help to protect the nature.

By Daria DENISOVA





John Deere DN350: power, precision, reliability

Fertiliser application is an important stage of crop farming. The availability of nutrients in the soil makes a direct impact on the harvest. In order to ensure optimal plant nutrition, farmers need fertiliser spreaders such as John Deere DN 350.

The operator-friendly high-precision DN 350 spreader with the capacity of 7,200 l or 9,500 l meets all requirements set for reliable and precise equipment. The new machine combines operation ease, high efficiency and reliability. This is just what large-scale farms need to increase their profit and reduce costs when applying expensive fertiliser.

'The key advantages of the DN 350 spreader are large hopper volume and uniform spreading of fertiliser within 40-50 metres', says Sergey Plotnikov, Senior Sales Manager of Tula branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika.'

The DN350 spreader is equipped with a durable chemical-resistant 800 mm belt with continuous automated centre adjustment. The belt ensures uniform feeding of fertiliser to achieve optimal spreading speed throughout the field.

'It is also important that all the parts of the spreader coming in contact with fertiliser, which is an aggressive chemical environment, are made of stainless steel', continues Sergey Plotnikov. 'It preserves the parts from corrosion and ensures a long service life.'

Painting and protection against corrosion are the key stages in machine manufacturing. All spreaders go through 13 preparation stages:

cleaning, washing, electrophoresis, pre-coating and final coating in order to endure harsh environmental conditions and contact with aggressive chemicals ensuring maximum reliability.

'Another outstanding property of the machine is that the fertiliser application speed can be easily synchronised with the tractor speed by means of the drive-wheel of the spreader, the chain wheel gear and the drive shaft', underlines Sergey Plotnikov. 'It excludes belt slippage and keeps the application rate stable.'

The chassis of the machine are designed to operate in the most challenging conditions at the highest load. The model is equipped with a single-piece hopper manufactured with the use of continuous welding to ensure maximum robustness. The drawbar and linkage reduce the load on the spreader and the tractor in challenging

weather conditions and during road transportation at high speed.

'The application rates are set by means of opening the flap gate, the hydraulic cylinder with right and left side manual control mechanism allows the operator to make adjustments promptly and easily', explains Sergey Plotnikov.

'The slide ruler allows determining the correctness of the settings based on the material density.'

The uniform fertiliser distribution throughout the working width of the sprayer is a challenging task. John Deere has developed the most perfect and precise spreading system, employing triangular patterns. The triangular spreading pattern is less sensitive to uneven ground, wind and low quality fertiliser. Unlike its rivals, John Deere minimises losses of expensive material. The Tribord 3D system makes a good contribution to cost saving. The system ensures easy and prompt switching among the three available colour settings: green — spreading along the entire field, yellow — intensive spreading at the field border and red — spreading at the field border in the environmentally friendly mode. All this prevents oversaturation of soil and ensures targeted application. Everybody knows that good harvest can be received only from fertile soil, and to make the soil fertile, we need to fertilise it.

By Tatiana IGNATENKO





JCB is welcoming guests

In March, EkoNiva-Tekhnika Holding arranged a trip to England for a group of clients. The interesting business and cultural programme made a lasting impression on the guests.

More than 750 dealers around the world offer JCB equipment. Today, the company sells its products in 150 countries, including Russia.

The group of EkoNiva's clients had a tour of all production facilities used for the manufacturing of telehandlers including the assembly line.

'This trip allows our clients to see the incredible scale of JCB production', says Ivan Glebov, Manager of Ryazan branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'The factory is working 24 hours per day, the assembly process never ends. Besides, the centralised assembly contributes to the outstanding quality of products.'

JCB is famous for its high-quality service and after-sales customer support. A few million pounds has been invested in the establishment of the World Parts Centre with the constantly developing automated control system. The World Parts Centre or the International Dealer Support Centre ensures prompt processing of a dealer's application and delivery of the required

spare part to the client within 24 hours, even if the model of the loader has long been out of production.

'I like the spare parts storage facility, I have never seen anything like that', admires Tatiana Meshcheryakova, General Director of Yubileynoe joint-stock company (Voronezh oblast). 'It's absolutely impressive. You can have any spare part you need within just five days. Besides, urgent orders can be fulfilled within 24 hours.'

Yubileynoe farming enterprise is engaged in beef cattle farming. The company has been cooperating with EkoNiva-Chernozemye for several years. Currently, the management of the farm is interested in the properties of the high-performance JCB silage clamp.

The manufacturer held a demo show of JCB machinery for the Russian guests at the testing grounds not far from the factory. Everyone could get behind the wheel and experience the strength and efficiency of the machine.

'It's not the first time that I have taken part in such customer trips', says Aleksander Pechyorkin, Head of Pechyorkin farming operation (Kemerovo oblast). 'This year, the programme of the trip is even more intensive and interesting. Before making purchasing decisions for my farm, I usually compare the characteristics of the equipment to find out what would be more appropriate for us. The main factors influencing my choice are the price policy and the quality of the machines. JCB machinery meets all the criteria.'

'However, the dealer is no less important than the quality of machines', says Anatoly Korsakov, Head of Zarechye farming enterprise (Ryazan oblast). 'EkoNiva-Tekhnika is a reliable partner, which has never let us down. Just selling the equipment is not enough; you need to ensure after-sales support to the client. That's exactly what EkoNiva does. If there are any problems with the equipment, they are solved in no time. It is very important to us since having a machine down during harvesting is tantamount to death.'

Zarechye farming enterprise is engaged in crop growing. The farm has already acquired one JCB 531-70 telehandler. Currently, the management is considering buying another.

Novomarkovskoye farming enterprise, which is a part of the MOLVEST group (Voronezh oblast), has been engaged in successful and efficient cooperation with EkoNiva-Chernozemye for more than five years. The company possesses almost the entire range of JCB equipment — 20 units in total.





'Every year, we upgrade and expand our fleet with JCB machines,' says Alexander Khoroshilov, Head of Customer Service Department of Novomarkovskoye farming enterprise. 'This year, we have acquired a JCB 535-95 AGRI and we are satisfied with the new machine.'

A visit to the famous 2,500-square-metre JCB Story Museum made a special impression on the members of the group. The Museum offers its visitors a fascinating journey through time. For instance, one can go to 1945, to the same garage where the history of the world-famous machine manufacturer Joseph Cyril Bamford starts. The idea of

establishing his own business occurred to the 29-year-old Bamford in a period of despair, when he had lost his job. He bought a welding machine for 1 pound and with its help, made his first invention — a backhoe loader.

The exhibits of the museum tell about the evolution of the company and the innovations, which JCB introduces in the process of development, manufacturing and service of the equipment.

'JCB Museum never stops to surprise you', says Mikhail Kiryakov, Manager of Sales Department of EkoNiva-Chernozemye. 'For me, one of the most impressive exhibits was the giant model of the

JS200 Crawler Excavator designed and manufactured by a group of specialists from metal rods about 15 mm thick. The spectacular lighting certainly showed it to advantage.'

The entertainment programme was also full of fascinating events. The group of clients saw the main attractions of London and visited the countryside which also offers lots of interesting places.

However, the most important thing is that the visit to JCB factory gave the clients a unique opportunity to see the entire production cycle and the world-renowned British accuracy. The World Parts Centre has convinced the clients once again that the after-sales service and support are not a problem for the farmers any more. Any spare part can be changed within just a few days, or even hours.

JCB machinery will soon be added to the fleets of many participants of the trip!

By Tatiana IGNATENKO

The one and only!

All the existing epithets may not be enough to describe the new versatile productive and, most importantly, cost-effective JCB 541-70 Agri Pro Telehandler, which enters the Russian agricultural market this year.

The companies of EkoNiva Tekhnika-Holding are planning to start selling an unprecedented novelty, JCB 541-70 Agri Pro. It is worth saying that this is the first telehandler in the world with the JCB DualTech VT hybrid transmission combining the advantages of hydro-mechanical and hydrostatic transmissions. The machine is designed to perform a number of different agricultural operations. The hydrostatic drive provides precise low-speed manoeuvring control, and the PowerShift drive guarantees superior high-speed efficiency and towing ability.

'The machine is equipped with the 145-hp JCB EcoMax Engine ensuring increased torque at low revs, which improves transmission efficiency and makes the machine more cost-effective', says Artem Konoplev, JCB Brand Manager of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'The maximum lift capacity of the telehandler is 4,100 kg, and the maximum lift height is 7 m.'

The machine has a huge number of advantages. For instance, in comparative tests, AGRI Pro handlers have delivered a higher repeat-cycle productivity than competitor machines

and a 16% advantage when towing. The Smart Hydraulics system ensures fuel saving making the machine one of the most cost-effective in its segment.

'Most functions of the telehandler are automated,' continues Artem Konoplev. 'Automation of such functions as switching from hydrostatic transmission to PowerShift, four-wheel drive turn-off, pressure relief on the additional hydraulic line and fully emptying the material from the bucket reduces the operator's fatigue and increases productivity.'

JCB takes good care of operator comfort: the cabin of the JCB 541-70 Agri Pro telehandler has everything the operator needs ensuring easy and more efficient work. The JCB 541-70 Agri Pro can be characterised by a high level of comfort, ease of operation and drivability.

By Viktor BARGOTIN





Large-scale Kazakh farming enterprises have been successfully cultivating EkoNiva's seeds for a long time. Such crops as spring wheat — Licamero variety in particular — and peas have shown good performance in the fields of Kazakhstan, with yields of 3.9 tonnes/hectare and 2.9 tonnes/hectare, respectively.

'Our crops, among them peas, barley and wheat, are well suited to the region's climatic conditions', says Valentina Sarayeva, Sales Manager of EkoNiva-Semena.

Skipetr winter wheat variety shows a good lodging resistance in low- and medium-fertility soils, an excellent winter survival at the germination stage, rapid spring regrowth, and a high tolerance to spring frost. At the trade fair in Astana, the variety appealed to Nikolay Kupavtsov, a farmer from Volya farming enterprise from Central Kazakhstan.

'We hope the variety will produce a rich crop in this country's climatic conditions, which are not always favourable for winter crops', says Nikolay Kupavtsov.

Together with the seeds of winter wheat, Nikolay Kupavtsov purchased seeds of Licamero spring wheat. The high-yielding variety uniquely combines early maturity and a high yield. It rapidly develops in the early stages and has a high kernel protein content.

'The seeds have already been shipped to our farm', says Nikolay Kupavtsov. 'We are quite happy with the way the company's logistics is organised: everything is very prompt. And as to the seeds, they are clean and of superior quality. We look forward to continuing our cooperation with EkoNiva in the future. We'd like to buy seeds of oil and pulse crops next year.'



EkoNiva's seeds gain popularity in Kazakhstan

In the first spring month, EkoNiva-Semena has attended a whole host of major trade shows, with two of them in Kazakhstan: the 13th International Agricultural Trade Fair AgriTek Astana — 2018, which was followed by the 4th Annual Regional Agricultural Trade Show Agrokostanay — 2018 in late March.

Peas, soybeans, lentils are all in high demand in export markets. Modern varieties of these crops grow well both in fertile and poor soils.

'We are offering CDC Redcliff lentil variety to our customers at trade fairs this year', says Valentina Sarayeva. 'The variety gives you a guaranteed rich crop at low input.'

CDC Redcliff red lentil variety of Canadian breeding is a new solution for increasing profit and crop diversification.

The seeds sprout as soon as soil temperature reaches a mere 5 degrees Celsius. Redcliff tolerates drought and a mild freeze. Among those who have decided to buy the seeds of this variety is Aleksandr Belkin, Head of Vydrikhinskoye (Vostochno-Kazakhstan oblast).

'Growing lentils sounded like a good idea, so we

decided to give it a go in our fields', says Aleksandr Belkin. 'We've already bought Triso, Sonore and Licamero wheat varieties from EkoNiva and the result came up to our expectations.'

At the 4th Annual Regional Agricultural Trade Fair Agrokostanay — 2018, EkoNiva-Semena has presented its products for the first time.

With over 5.5 million hectares of cropland, Kostanay oblast is the main breadbasket of the republic.

'The trade fair is a great opportunity to inform our potential customers about the excellent quality of our seed material', says Alexander Suntsov, Sales Manager in EkoNiva-Semena. 'Our high-yielding varieties are resistant to adverse environmental factors.'

Despite the fact that EkoNiva-Semena was a first-time attendee in Kostanay, even Archimed Mukhambetov, Akim of Kostanay oblast, showed an interest in the booth designed in the white and green corporate colors, where the seeds from EkoNiva were presented to him.

By Darya DENISOVA
and Tatiana IGNATENKO



Smart farming

At the beginning of the third millennium, agriculture has received a new and powerful impetus for development through the integration of agricultural machinery industry and information and space technologies. This is how the term ‘smart farming’ was coined.



According to experts, the resources and farming management practices covered by the term are going to become common practice for any major agricultural enterprise throughout the world in 3 to 5 years. We discuss how smart farming works with Bjorne Drechsler, First Deputy Director General of EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding.



Bjorne, where and how did smart farming emerge?

The pioneer in this area definitely was and still is John Deere. In 1999, they started researching GPS-based technologies, took first steps

in introducing them into agricultural production and went on to design proprietary software. Applied as a package, the developments have taken farm machinery management to a principally new level. For enterprises with over 10,000 hectares of farmland, the technology is an absolute must-have.

What is the rationale behind the growing adoption of smart farming practices?

Smart farming provides a tremendous management edge. The software, which is currently being tested, combined with record keeping software, satellite-based and other cutting-edge solutions allow the owner to keep track of and analyse all the key parameters — from soil

and crop stand condition on a given square metre of a field to employee performance. This, in its turn, makes it possible for the farmer to evaluate the input structure, make good and timely management decisions and efficiently work the soil using modern machinery. Thus, the economy of the enterprise improves: the yield increases, whereas the cost of production goes down.

What IT solutions to this end are currently available for farmers?

There are plenty of tools. For record keeping, John Deere Farmsight and JD Link are conveniently integrated into 1C system. Another development is the CPS software lineup for automation of agriculture by branches. John Deere HarvestLab is a useful data management and documentation tool. The opportunities are so ample that it could be a topic of a separate article.

What elements of smart farming are currently being put into practice in Russia?

We have begun extensive testing of smart solutions in Voronezh oblast with the current focus on the following three areas: variable rate fertilisation, variable rate chemicals application,

and variable rate seeding. We carry out green mass analysis, soil structure analysis, yield mapping. Once all the data is consolidated, we manage the soil accordingly.

Variable rate technology is already used in this country, isn't it?

Yes, until recently, it was used haphazardly and so without significant effect, guided by the following principle: if a crop grows poorly on a field plot, then it requires more fertiliser, if it grows well — less. Nobody wondered: what if the crop fails to grow not because of soil depletion but due to ill-suited soil type or some other reasons? And why waste fertiliser if the effort will anyway be in vain? Is it not better to apply it to more promising plots? The aim of our developments and testing is to provide optimal conditions for every plant. No more and no less. In the coming years, we are going to determine, which smart farming methods provide economic benefit in Voronezh oblast. I suppose, we will have a clear understanding of the same in the context of variable rate fertiliser application and variable rate seeding by next year. It is my firm belief that an exciting practice and impressive results are in store for us.

By Alexander KUTISHCHEV





Livestock farming school for professionals

The unique educational project — livestock farming school — has now been launched in Sibirskaya Niva. The first educational session for agricultural students came to a close at the end of March. Currently, the students are preparing for the next training season.

The trainees of the livestock farming school are 5th-year students of agricultural universities. During the intensive 3.5-month training on EkoNiva's farms, the students are to receive a detailed insight into high technologies and learn to use them efficiently.

'It is the first time we have held a session like this in Siberia', says Natalia Zvereva, HR Manager of EkoNiva-APK Holding. 'In Elban village, Novosibirsk oblast, we are building our largest dairy. The students we are training in Sibirskaya Niva now will form the team of the new dairy.'

The enhanced and intensified training includes several professional areas of activity. The key ones are veterinary science and herd management.

'The young specialists receive the knowledge they will really need in

their professional practice, I call it "the war weapons"', says Sergey Lyakhov, Regional Director for Siberia, EkoNiva-APK Holding. 'We choose the students who understand the incredible prospects of modern agriculture.'

The educational project was first implemented in 2015 at Shchuchye dairy in Voronezh oblast. The first students had classes in a small study room, remaining from the Soviet times. Specially for the project, the room was equipped with audio and video facilities and has been used as the site for theoretical training ever since. Five groups have undergone the training since that time. All alumni of the livestock farming school are now working for EkoNiva and making successful careers.

'I have a dream', says Viktor Pisarenko, Manager of the Educational Centre of

EkoNiva-APK Holding. 'I want our students to be regarded as high-class industry specialists, as international consultants.'

To make this dream come true, the team of the Educational Centre holds serious trainings. Theoretical knowledge applied in practice is the basis of successful education.

'We provide intensive theoretical training and test it in practice straightaway', shares Yaroslav Zybin, Supervisor of the livestock farming school in Siberian region. 'There are times when we go out to cow barns several times per day.'

Valeria Sverchkova, a trainee of the livestock farming school from the Republic of Komi, shared that she would love to work with young stock. Nevertheless, she confessed that the practical training at the fresh cow group produced the most powerful impression on her.

'I saw DA prevention practices in place at EkoNiva, which really impressed me', shares Valeria. 'There is a wire line above the fresh cow group, which is used for drenching post-partum cows. It helps the animals to recover more quickly and feel better.'

Anastasiya Protopova, student of Saratov State Agricultural University, has been dreaming of becoming a veterinarian since childhood. She is determined to come to work for EkoNiva. Her favourite area of activity is reproduction.

'It is interesting to watch cows and look for the signs of heat', says Anastasiya Protopova. 'It is important to be able to use heat synchronisation programmes to have a uniform estrus cycle in the herd.'

The students are not afraid to move to Novosibirsk oblast. They are very enthusiastic about working at the new dairy for 6,000 head in Elban.

'We have already seen Sibirskaya Niva and we liked it', states Andrey Silayev, student of the Veterinary Science Department of Saratov State Agricultural University. 'What attracts us most is the close-knit and friendly team and the career prospects.'





Healthy babies

How to raise healthy calves and reduce the risk of disease? Experts from the USA and Germany arrived at Kaluzhskaya Niva to share the recent findings in young stock feeding and healthcare. Robert Corbett, a leading bovine veterinarian from the USA, knows all about the most advanced livestock farming practices.

Calves must drink pasteurised milk', explains Robert, 'they are like children, their digestive system is very sensitive, and pasteurised milk helps to boost their immune system.'

Doctor Eller, manager of a veterinary clinic in Germany, supports the colleague's point of view and believes that pasteurised milk will allow avoiding such diseases as diarrhea and pneumonia in calves. To improve the digestibility of concentrates, the German expert suggests processing them with an extruder. It will help the digestive system and improve the function of the rumen, one of the four stomachs of bovine animals.

'The experts also advised that we should increase the protein level in our TMR to 27%', says Andrey Kamenskiy, Chief Herd Manager of Kaluzhskaya Niva-East. 'It will help the calf to grow faster and gain weight.'

Another important recommendation is to let the calf drink 6 litres of milk during the first ten days of its life. Then, the amount of milk should be gradually increased to 9 litres per day. The weaning process should also be performed gradually, by

reducing the milk amount by 1 litre every week. Since the age of three months, the calves must be fed TMR.

'We used to give concentrates and TMR to the calves separately', continues Andrey Kamenskiy. 'From now on, we are going to mix all ingredients together: concentrates, hay, silage and haylage.'

The international experts suggested avoiding the use of antibiotics when treating calves and using them only if the body temperature rises to 41 °C and higher.

'For example, if a calf has diarrhea', says Robert Corbett, 'I suggest using

electrolytes. They will restore the fluid and electrolyte balance. Electrolytes are also used for the treatment of gastrointestinal diseases and the improvement of the intestine function.'

The experts had a tour of the dairies of Kaluzhskaya Niva. Georg Eller paid special attention to training young employees and praised the work of Kristina Farneyeva, a young nutrition specialist. Kristina has been working at Bushovka dairy since last November but she is already a valuable part of the team.

'In my third year of studies, I did internship at Kaluzhskaya Niva. It was then that I understood I had chosen the right profession', shares Kristina



Farneyeva. 'I am glad I have come to work for EkoNiva. We have a very good team. I can be sure that my colleagues will always support me and give professional advice when I need it. There can be success and failures in professional life. One cannot avoid mistakes, but I always try to get things right and move on.'

Georg Eller and Robert Corbett promised to return to Russia to get to know the young specialists better and share their extensive knowledge in the area of young stock raising, because healthy calves are the future of any dairy.

By Darya DENISOVA





New professor at VSAU!

Stefan Duerr, President of EkoNiva Group, was appointed Honourable Professor of Voronezh State Agricultural University named after emperor Peter the Great.

EkoNiva has been engaged in the cooperation with the main agricultural institution of higher education in the region since the first days of its operation in Voronezh oblast. For over fifteen years, the agricultural university has been preparing young specialists for the leading farming holding of the country.

The solemn appointment ceremony started with the meeting of Stefan Duerr and the students and teachers of the university. The president of EkoNiva Group told about its enterprise, the future growth prospects and young staff development. After Stefan Duerr's presentation, the students bombarded him with questions. The future specialists were interested in

internship, employment and career prospects at EkoNiva enterprises. Nikolay Bukhtoyarov, Rector of the university, shared that the farming holding has a long-standing friendly and successful relationship with the university. 'Currently, over 200 alumni of our university are employed by EkoNiva', says Nikolay Bukhtoyarov. 'We work with a large number of companies, but our cooperation with EkoNiva Group is the most friendly and productive.' Therefore, today, we are rising to an entirely new level of joint work. Together, we will prepare specialists which will come to the enterprise after graduation to work with advanced technologies putting in practice the high-level knowledge obtained at the university instead of having to learn everything from scratch at work.

Nikolay Bukhtoyarov awarded the diploma of the Honourable Professor of Voronezh State Agricultural University named after emperor Peter the Great and the academic gown to Stefan Duerr.

'EkoNiva puts special emphasis on attracting young specialists and improving the skills of its employees', says Stefan Duerr, President of EkoNiva Group. 'Regular qualification improvement, training abroad and comfortable working conditions allow us to ensure attractive career prospects for our employees.'

Stefan Duerr, Honourable Professor of Voronezh State Agricultural University named after emperor Peter the Great, underlined that the university and the farming companies of the region can join their efforts to achieve new goals in the development of the Russian farming sector and raise the prestige of agricultural education.

By Viktor BARGOTIN



Ready for mass inflow of tourists!

The first breath of the longed-for spring awakes beautiful dreams and makes us all think of wonderful plans for the warm season: meeting interesting people and setting off on exciting journeys. Young people take these thoughts seriously.

The organisers of the Children's Tourism and Recreation Trade Fair held on 30th March at the Officers Club in Voronezh did their best to provide exhaustive answers to all questions asked by enthusiastic tourists. The event combined several activity types: discussions, presentations, exhibitions.



Oleg Mosolov, Manager of the Department of Education, Science and Youth Policy of Voronezh oblast, Galina Abrichkina, Head of the Department of Entrepreneurship and Trade, Igor Mekhanryev, Head of the Federal Service on Surveillance for Consumer rights protection and human well-being for Voronezh oblast and other public officials took part in the opening of the trade fair.

Hall 1 housed the conference Tour Operations Safety, hall 2 served as a round-table discussion site – the participants discussed the topic of organisation of safe summer recreation for children. Among the participants of the discussion were

the representatives of the Ministry of Emergency Situations, Road Traffic Safety Authority and Federal National Guard Troops Service. Tourist projects were displayed at both halls as the background for the discussions.

Certainly, the Academy of Dairy Sciences could not let an event like this pass unnoticed. Thanks to the initiative of the Academicians, over 30,000 people have gone on a tour of EkoNiva's dairies to see the milk production process in detail and learn a lot of interesting facts from the history of milk in the framework of the unique Milky Way Project.

The Academicians told the participants of the event about the projects and treated them to fresh dairy products. By the way, Cow Marta also attended the trade fair. She saw the sparkle of great interest in the eyes of the guests and called her colleagues from the dairy straight away. 'Be ready for the mass inflow of tourists', said Marta.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

Healthy snacks for future champions!

Sports competitions are always perceived by children as a holiday filled with smiles and a great deal of positive emotions. The Academy of Dairy Sciences makes sports events even more memorable for young athletes by giving them a pleasant and healthy taste.

Last weekend a competition in rhythmic gymnastics was held at the Children's and Youth Sports School 26 with the support of the Academy of Dairy Sciences. The incredible gymnastic skills demonstrated by more than fifty girls under the age of nine impressed the judges and the guests of the event. Everybody won on that day as all the children were awarded medals and gift sets from the Academy of Dairy Sciences for their excellent performance. Everyone could taste natural dairy products at the company booth located at the entrance to the school gym.

'I really liked the cherry yogurt', says

Sasha Markova, participant of the competition. 'It is delicious and as Zhu-Zhu bee says, is very healthy.'

After the competition finished, the children continued the merry celebration with the characters of the Academy of Dairy Sciences: cow Marta, Professor Zorkin, Polya

and Zhu-Zhu bee. All together, they played outdoor games, took photographs and performed acrobatic elements.

By Viktor BARGOTIN





4-7 June

Trip to Vaderstad factory in Sweden

Venue: Sweden

Organiser: EkoNiva-Tekhnika Holding,
Vaderstad

7-8 June

Don Field Day Trade Show

Venue: All-Russian Research Institute of Grain
Crops named after I.G. Kalinenko, Zernograd
district, Rostov oblast

Organiser: DonExpocentre under the auspices
of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian
Federation

7-10 June

18th interregional Kurskaya Korenskaya Trade Fair 2018

Venue: Exhibition centre Kurskaya Korenskaya
Trade Fair, Svoboda, Zolotukhino district, Kursk
oblast

Organiser: Department of agriculture of Kursk
oblast

10-14 June

Trip to John Deere factory and DLG Field Day

Venue: International Crop Production Centre,
Strenzfeld, Germany

Organiser: EkoNiva

20-21 June

Siberian Field Day 2018

Venue: Siberian Agro-industrial park, Prutskoy
village, Pavlovsk district, Altay area

Organiser: Centre of Agricultural Consulting

22 June

Fashion Farmer 2018

Venue: Vysokoe, Liski district, Voronezh oblast

Organiser: EkoNiva-Chernozemye,
EkoNiva-Semena

22-23 June

Kaluga Field Day

Venue: Kaluga Experimental Agricultural Station,
Peremyshl district, Kaluga oblast

Organiser: Centre, LLC

28-29 June

Interregional agricultural machinery and technology trade show Voronezh Field Day 2018

Venue: LLC Agrotekh-Garant-Berezovskiy,
Komsomolskiy, Ramon district,
Voronezh oblast

Organiser: Centre, LLC



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10-14 June

Visit DLG Field Day and John Deere factory together with EkoNiva.
We are looking forward to meeting you!

12+