

The corporate journal of EkoNiva Group

EkoNiva at the forefront of modern farming

Bright summer with state-of-the-art machinery

Pages 12-18



The Great Milk Road

First lot of milk is delivered to China

Page 7



Meet the winners!

Teamwork both in the field and on the water

Page 25



Contents

■ NEWS

In touch with Orenburg

as well as Tatarstan and Bashkortostan – Stefan Duerr holds online meetings.....4

Impact of embargo

The new face of the dairy industry after six years of counter-sanctions.....5

EKONIVA dairy products hit China's shelves

The first lot of milk is available on the shelves of Chinese shops.....7

New service centres

EkoNivaTekhnika is expanding into the Northwest region of Russia.....8

■ ORGANIC TREND

Organic sweets do exist

What has changed after the passing of the Law on Organic Production.....9

■ IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Cognitive Agro Pilot

Envisions the future.....12

■ FIELD NEWS

Tested and approved

EkoNivaSibir holds a demo show of John Deere combines in Altai Area.....13

■ TECHNICAL INSPECTION

Smart giant for forage harvesting

A new level of forage harvesting in Tula oblast.....16

From France with love

EkoNiva becomes an authorised dealer of Gregoire Besson.....18

■ HOME, SWEET HOME

Housing for newlyweds

Comfortable housing for the employees of Severnaya Niva.....21

■ OUR FUTURE

Unique educational project

EkoNiva and Kursk Agricultural Academy set new educational standards in agriculture.....22

Agricultural toehold

First alumni of agricultural classes enter universities.....23

■ OUR EKONIVA

Welcoming guests

EkoNiva has taken part in the hospitality festival in Kaluga.....26





Stefan Duerr: I am confident about our future

I often hear that young people nowadays are too pampered to live and work in a rural area. However, contrary to popular opinion, a large number of young people I have talked with are very enthusiastic about working in agriculture. These talented and dynamic young specialists are not afraid of challenges and are ready to develop the Russian farming sector!

For over 10 years, we have been cooperating with agricultural universities, technical schools and colleges arranging annual internships for students. Last year, over 1.5 thousand young people from 31 educational institutions underwent practical training on our farms. The students are happy to work not only in the central regions but also in Novosibirsk, Orenburg, Bashkortostan and Tatarstan. These are usually very determined boys and girls who want to achieve something in their lives, find their own way and carve out a

successful career. If I became a twentysomething again, I would choose a job at a developing enterprise. Of course, working at a newly established farming operation is more challenging because you have to set up all the processes from scratch but on the other hand, you are driven to learn a lot and develop your career.

Many former interns later come back to work on our farms as full-time employees. They value the chance to master their profession, take independent decisions and responsibility for them. They are not afraid to make a mistake. One of the essential components of our corporate culture is the right to error. I believe that without making mistakes, one will never learn to do things the right way.

Certainly, young people need an interesting job and a competitive salary. However, for 20-year-olds to settle down in a rural area and start a family, the living conditions

and infrastructure must be as good as in the city. A decent school, a kindergarten, a local community centre and a modern hospital are indispensable to make the village attractive for yesterday's graduates. In this case, the village will not disappear like, for example, in Argentina, where people come to work on farms from the city on a rotational basis. This is not our way! Throughout centuries, Russian villages have been the pillars of tradition and stability. Young people will help to develop rural areas making them stronger and turning them into a comfortable place to work and live in.

When I look at our youth, I feel confident about our future! We just need to help and guide them, create an environment where they can fulfil their potential, and they will achieve outstanding success!

NB!!! This year, specialists have a unique opportunity to find an exciting job and

move to a picturesque area located in Maslyanino district, Novosibirsk oblast.

The area resembles of the foothills of the Alps. It is a true paradise for those who enjoy hunting, rafting and mountain skiing! EkoNiva has chosen this amazing place to build a large cheese plant with the processing capacity of 1,150 tonnes of milk per day. The construction of the plant is already underway. It will be a progressive facility providing exceptional career opportunities for dairy processing specialists and cheesemakers. From 3 October until 6 October, the company is going to arrange a youth camp near the plant. Everyone can come and see what life and work at this beautiful place are like. Meanwhile, at the end of October, we are looking forward to welcoming aboard new colleagues! If you are burning with enthusiasm, value a corporate spirit and are eager to express yourself and find your way in life, join our team and you will never regret your choice!

Stefan DUERR,
President of EkoNiva Group

President of Tatarstan visits EkoNiva



Stefan Duerr, EkoNiva Group President, has had a meeting with the President of Tatarstan, Rustam Minnikhanov. In the course of the trip to Bugulma municipal district, the head of the Republic visited several operations including Severnaya Niva, one of EkoNiva Group companies.

First, the head of Tatarstan toured the fields to see the winter wheat harvesting campaign. This year, the crop is showing impressive yields – 4.2 tonnes per hectare. Stefan Duerr told Rustam Minnikhanov about the company and the large investment project EkoNiva is implementing in Narat village – the construction of a modern dairy operation for 3,550 head of milking herd and 5,100 head of young stock. The heifer facility has already been built. Currently, the metal structures of the cow barns are being assembled. The farm houses 1,060 cows, including 333 lactating ones. The daily milk yield amounts to 8 tonnes. Upon reaching its full

capacity in 2021, the dairy will produce 100 tonnes per day.

Among the questions discussed in the meeting were further development of the company and state support measures.

Rustam Minnikhanov thanked Stefan Duerr for the meeting and pointed out that the projects implemented by his company are extremely important for rural areas because they provide residents with employment. 'The government will always help farmers because agricultural enterprises ensure stability in the region', said the President of Tatarstan. 'In this regard, EkoNiva is a role-model in the farming sector.'

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

In touch with Orenburg

Denis Pasler, Governor of Orenburg oblast, has held a virtual meeting with Stefan Duerr, President of EkoNiva Group.

Sergey Balykin, Minister of Agriculture, Trade, Food and Processing Industry of Orenburg oblast, and Pyotr Dubyanskiy, Regional Director for Volga region, Severnaya Niva, also took part in the conference. During the online meeting, Stefan Duerr outlined the results achieved by EkoNiva farms in Orenburg

oblast in the current year, i.e. the winter crop yield amounted to 5 tonnes per hectare and the average daily milk yield was approx. 30 litres per milking cow. The participants discussed the organic cow-calf project in Severnaya Niva, which at present numbers 4,000 head, and touched upon the possibilities of



governmental support in the area of organic farming.

A separate item on the agenda was the regional

processing sector development and cooperation of EkoNiva with A7 Agro Pererabotka enterprise.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

New ways of fruitful communication

A regional field day has been held on the premises of Severnaya Niva Bashkiriya farming enterprise, Belebey district.

The day provided the local farmers with a great opportunity to share their hands-on experience and get an insight into the latest farming developments. Among the honoured guests of the event were Ilshat Fazrakhmanov, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bashkortostan, and Ildar Gabitov, Rector of

Bashkiriya State Agricultural University (BSAU).

'This is the first time we have held the field day in the form of a workshop in Belebey district. Our premises were already chosen as the venue for the event last year', stated Nikolay Lukerin, Director of Severnaya Niva Bashkiriya. Together with the

representatives of the local ministry of agriculture and BSAU, we chose the area for arranging over 250 trial plots. We have grown a wide variety of winter and spring crops. Rafael Ismagilov, Professor of BSAU, and the participants of the event are very happy with the results!'

During the field day, considerable emphasis was placed on modern agricultural machinery, proper fertiliser application, efficient plant protection and high-quality sowing material.

For reference: Severnaya Niva Bashkiriya is a young and promising operation within EkoNiva-APK. Among its numerous projects is the ongoing construction of Semyono-Makarovo free-stall dairy designed for 2,800 milking cows and 3,500 head of young stock. Once the farm reaches its full capacity, the daily output will amount to approx. 100 tonnes of milk.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

The impact of embargo

Six years have passed since the food embargo was introduced in Russia in response to the Western sanctions. Over these years, the country has significantly strengthened its food safety. The import-restrictive measures have had a positive effect on the dairy industry.

Since 2014, Russia has reduced food import by a third: from 43 billion dollars in 2013 to less than 30 billion in 2019.

'Through the hard work of our farmers and the efficiency of state support measures, the agricultural output has grown by 22 per cent', says Dmitry Patrushev, Minister of Agriculture of the Russian Federation. 'The farming sector has become one of the drivers of the Russian economy. All together we

have managed to change the perception of agriculture from a non-profitable, risky industry to a modern, technology-intensive and high-return one. Today, when Russia – like the rest of the world – is facing the consequences of the global pandemic, agriculture acts as a donor of workplaces for other economy sectors, which were affected by the lockdown.'

The dairy industry has received a particular boost. Russia has started producing considerably more raw



milk, thus increasing its self-sufficiency level to 80 per cent. The import of dairy products has gone down drastically. As a result, domestic producers have been able to increase their output volumes and it has become easier to gain access to major retail chains.

'The introduction of the embargo has had a great influence on milk processors', comments Stefan Duerr, Chairman of the National Dairy Producers Union, President of EkoNiva Group. 'The measure

was highly helpful as it has enabled us to get closer to our customers. When Russian milk processors had to tolerate the cheap import of medium-quality products, it used to be much more difficult for them to get onto shop shelves with their goods. The embargo has solved the issue promoting faster and more efficient development of our production. The current Russian dairy products are quite competitive and deserve to occupy the prime shelf space!'

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

Seeds take priority

Roman Starovoyt, Governor of Kursk oblast, has visited Zashchitnoye plant breeding and seed production enterprise located in Shchigry district, Kursk oblast. The honoured guest was welcomed by Stefan Duerr, President of EkoNiva Group, who introduced him to the specifics of seed production and plant breeding.

EkoNiva is one of the major Russian producers and suppliers of non-GM seeds of cereal and pulse crops. In 2020, the seed production volume is expected to reach 85,000 tonnes. The company produces seeds of 14 crops, with 57 varieties in commercial multiplication. The geography of sales comprises 58 regions. The customer base numbers over 1,000 agricultural enterprises in Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Ethiopia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Belarus.

'High-quality seeds are in high demand among this country's farmers', says Stefan Duerr. 'Over the last 4 years, the sales of seeds have increased threefold. For this reason, we are currently expanding the

production capacities. The construction of a plant breeding and seed production centre is underway here, in Kursk oblast.'

The project comprises a seed plant with the capacity of 200 tonnes of seeds per day, a temperature-controlled seed facility (15,000 tonnes of seeds) and a plant breeding centre. The investment volume amounts to 1.1 billion rubles. The annual rated plant turnover capacity is going to reach almost 70,000 tonnes. A third of the plant breeding centre construction work has been completed, currently the seed plant and the storage facility are being built. Next year, the construction of a logistics centre, the investment in which amounted to 400 million



rubles, is going to commence in Okhochevka. It will enable the company to ship 2,000 tonnes of packaged seeds by trucks and 600 tonnes of bulk seeds and 600 tonnes of bulk grain – by rail transport.

'Plant breeding is a top priority', says Yuriy Vasyukov, Regional Director of Zashchitnoye. 'The establishment of a plant breeding centre will have a positive impact on the development of domestic plant breeding in terms of search and creation of new competitive

varieties of field crops.'

The long-term plans call for shifting the core business area of the enterprise from selling seeds to entering the market with intellectual products.

'Seed production and plant breeding are promising areas in farming', points out Roman Starovoyt. 'The entire industry will benefit from their progress.' In conclusion of his visit, Head of Kursk oblast pledged comprehensive administrative support to EkoNiva.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

The outlook is stable



Ekosem-Agrar AG, a parent company of EkoNiva Group, is the leader in the Russian dairy market and one of the largest companies worldwide in terms of raw milk output and herd size. According to Expert RA, the scale of production and vertically integrated business model of the Group are a testament to EkoNiva's strong competitive market position.

The agency based its rating on promising prospects for the development of the

Russian dairy industry for the next few years. The import of dairy products remains high amounting to around 7.1 million tonnes of raw milk equivalent in 2019, whereas the total consumption is just under 34.7 million tonnes. Depending on whether the estimate is based on marketable milk or dairy products as a whole, the degree of self-sufficiency in Russia varies between 76% and 82%, according to official statistics. Considering the introduction of

Ekosem-Agrar AG has been assigned ruBBB+ rating by Expert RA, a Russian credit rating agency. The outlook is stable.

more stringent market regulation aimed at improving the quality of dairy products, actual figures less adulterated milk may fall short of the above-mentioned ones. In view of Russia's food safety doctrine, where a self-sufficiency threshold for dairy products has been set at 90%, the dairy industry is one of the most promising branches of agriculture in terms of ramping up domestic production. Expert RA assumes that in order to achieve the required degree of self-sufficiency, the government will continue to provide support, i.e. capital expenditure reimbursement, soft loans and other measures facilitating the investment inflow and industry development.

Given that EkoNiva has significantly increased its raw milk production capacities in recent years and more than doubled its daily output from

1,100 tonnes at the end of 2017 to 2,400 tonnes at the end of 2019, the commissioning of new processing facilities is considered to be the most important growth driver in the coming years. In this context, the rating agency points out that the volume of products sold by EkoNiva to end consumers is going to increase in the future, which will have a beneficial effect on the profitability figures of the entire Group, with the full capacity utilisation expected in the years 2023-2024. The high quality of the strategic planning, corporate and risk management are also highlighted as positive aspects by Expert RA.

Stefan Duerr, President of EkoNiva Group, is very satisfied with Expert RA's rating and believes that a good rating opens up new opportunities for the development of the company.

By Svetlana WEBER

Medyn Processing Plant Upgrade

Acting Governor of Kaluga oblast Vladislav Shapsha has paid a visit to MosMedynagroprom, an EkoNiva milk processing plant in Medyn, Kaluga oblast. The tour of the facility included dairy products tasting. The produce of MosMedynagroprom enjoys great popularity both in Kaluga and in other regions of Russia.

Every day, MosMedynagroprom processes 130 tonnes of raw milk to produce 126 SKUs of natural dairy products under the EKONIVA brand. Currently, the plant is undergoing a scheduled upgrade, which will expand its production capacity up to 300-350 tonnes per day.

'The renovation works are in full swing', says Aleksandr German, Executive Director of MosMedynagroprom. 'We have already installed the necessary equipment in several process areas to increase the milk intake. It will allow us to produce

more fermented dairy and introduce a few new products such as baked milk, ryazhenka and Fitness Line drinking yogurts with new flavours. Besides, a separate production line will be used to produce EKONIVA ORGANIC milk.'

The plant has also seen the addition of a new automatic palletising unit with two manipulators for stacking and wrapping the finished and packaged dairy products, which are then sent to the storage facility.

'Blast chilling technology, a



part of the palletising system, is a new way of cooling sour cream, curds and bioyogurts swiftly', continues Aleksandr German.

Today, MosMedynagroprom employs 273 people. Competent staff, traditional Russian recipes and, the last but not the least, high-quality milk are

what enables the company to manufacture delectable dairy produce. It is not for nothing that EKONIVA dairy has received the Best Kaluga Product award, which attests to their safety and top quality.

By Darya DENISOVA

EKONIVA dairy products hit China's shelves

The first lot of UHT milk under EKONIVA brand has been delivered to the People's Republic of China (PRC). The shipment arrived at the Port of Dalian in August.

The volume of the first pilot shipment totals 22.5 tonnes', says Ildar Rakhmatullin, Leading Export Specialist of EkoNiva-Food Products. 'The retail price is 12 Chinese yuan, which is equivalent to around 130 rubles.'

The dairy products can now be purchased in the cities of northeastern China: at Yuguo supermarket (Heihe), Yigeer and Eluosi Diguo wholesale centres (Suifenhe, Heilongjiang province), Nanji shopping centre, Jiadele supermarket and Xiao Taiyang chain store (Harbin).

'EKONIVA milk sells well at Russian specialty supermarkets', shares Zhang Jie, Director of Heihe Eyoujia Import and Export LLC. 'Its selling point is the Russian packaging. Due to positive consumer perception of Russian goods in China, almost the whole lot has been bought up. Currently, I am getting purchase orders from other retailer chains such as Jiadele, Beijing Hualian, Zhongqun and Qishang. Later on, we are going to supply EKONIVA milk to Anhui and Junnan provinces.'



At present, EkoNiva is negotiating future deliveries and product range extension with the Chinese partners since Chinese consumers show interest in

0.2-litre whole milk, yoghurt with a shelf life up to 6 months and milk powder in 0.5 kg packaging.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

The largest cheese plant

Processing equipment for the cheese plant is arriving in Maslyanino, Novosibirsk oblast. Tetra Pak team are all set to start installation. The first batch of dairy products is expected to roll off the conveyor belt next year. Meanwhile, the works are in full swing.

The facility is a flagship project in the company's milk processing business. With the capacity of 1,150 t of raw milk a day, the plant will soon be processing half of the total milk produced in the Siberian region.

'There are five project milestones aligned with commissioning of five facilities', says Roman Denisevich, Construction Director. 'The first one will be launched in 2021 to start production of pasteurised milk, yoghurts and prepare the first cheese wheels for ripening. The start-up of the fifth facility is scheduled for quarter 1 of 2022.'

Currently, erection of steel structures and designing of building utility systems are underway. The next stage will be

processing equipment installation and utility connection.

'Our project fits well with the updated development strategy of EkoNiva Group', comments Sergey Lyakhov, EkoNiva-APK Holding Regional Director. 'We are a major raw milk producer, and now we are ready to enter the market with our unique Russian brand products which undergo a strict quality control from field to shelf. Cheese will be our key product. We are planning to produce three types of cheese.'

The three types include the classical semi-hard Gouda-type cheese (55 tonnes a day, 550 tonnes of raw milk), self-pressing cheese (35 tonnes a day, 350 tonnes of raw milk) and hard cheese ripening on



average from 6 to 12 months and for 18 months for the premium product. The plant is expected to produce approximately 10 tonnes of hard cheese per day, raw milk consumption will amount to 100 tonnes.

'The product line-up will include traditional dairy products, like ryazhenka, milk, butter, curds, kefir and yoghurt', continues Sergey Lyakhov. 'Moreover, we are planning to make around 35 tonnes of demineralised whey powder.'

The objective of the company is to supply most of the goods – about 70% – to the European regions of Russia and such promising markets as Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and China. Moreover, EkoNiva has already shipped the

first lot of its dairy products to the Celestial Empire.

'We hope that the quality of our cheeses will meet the standards of the premium segment', says Sergey Lyakhov. 'Furthermore, we want to introduce our goods to customers from the European Union, who associate Siberia with an unspoilt environment and a vast expanse of fields, which adds up to the positive image of the brand.'

Successful operation of the plant requires uninterrupted supply of high-quality raw milk. By 2023, about 90% of milk will be sourced from the company's own farms, while the rest will be purchased from third producers in the Siberian region.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

Small farm, big contribution



Among the participants of the meeting there also were Viktor Logvinov, Deputy Chairman of Voronezh Oblast Government, Igor Kirnos, Head of Liski district, Stefan Duerr, President of EkoNiva Group, and Aleksandr Rybenko, Regional Director of EkoNivaAgro for Voronezh oblast.

For reference: in 2020, 1.4 billion rubles was allocated regionally for the Comprehensive Development of Rural Areas state programme addressing the issues of infrastructure development and new job creation in the villages. According to Vladimir Netyosov, Voronezh oblast provides an impressive example

In the framework of a working trip to Liski district, the Chairman of Voronezh Oblast Duma Vladimir Netyosov has paid a visit to Vladimirovka tie-stall dairy, one of EkoNivaAgro facilities, the reconstruction of which is nearing completion.

of successful programme implementation. By creating new operations, upgrading existing ones and attracting young specialists to rural areas, EkoNiva helps the region to fulfil the goals set in the programme.

The farm has seen a capital repair – the barns designed for 500 head of milking cows and the maternity pen have been renovated. Besides, the milking block can now boast up-to-date equipment. At the moment, the dairy houses 260 cows of Holstein breed, the daily milk yield amounts to 5 tonnes.

'Not only megafarms, but also small-scale enterprises like Vladimirovka dairy play an essential role in securing the livelihood of villages, particularly of small residential areas on the outskirts of districts', says Stefan Duerr. 'Such facilities also provide residents with jobs, which opens up opportunities for village revitalisation.'

Once the farm reaches its full production capacity, it will employ 30 specialists. With the state support, EkoNiva is committed to breathing new life into the countryside.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

Expanding into Northwest Russia

EkoNivaTekhnika has increased its area of responsibility by gaining John Deere dealership in Northwestern Federal District. Modern service centres in Saint Petersburg and Vologda oblasts have welcomed local farmers.

In St. Petersburg oblast, the official opening day began with the showcase of the latest farm machinery. The array of models on display included John Deere 6195M and 6125M tractors, a JD 8000 Series forage harvester, a JD 639 hay pickup, a JD M740 trailed sprayer, a Fliegl ASW 110 trailer and a Fliegl ADS 120 manure spreader. The benefits of the unique Haybuster H-800 tub grinder were highlighted during the demo show: consistent chopping of the material while ensuring an optimal cutting length for both feed and bedding. The machine facilitates the work of herd managers significantly.

'The whole range of agricultural machines we have on offer is now available to the farmers of the Northwestern region of Russia', says Gennadiy Nepomnyashchiy, Commercial Director of EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding. 'Special emphasis is placed on forage harvesting equipment and units which are indispensable at livestock facilities. Due to the local climatic conditions, there are more enterprises engaged in dairy farming than in crop production in the region. Since the beginning of the year, we have already supplied 11 JD units to the enterprises in St. Petersburg oblast. We are determined to strengthen our



dealer position in the region through gaining farmers' trust.'

Within the framework of the event, EkoNiva-Tekhnika specialists told about the round-the-clock after-sales service and took the guests on a tour of the service centre and spare parts warehouse.

The dealership facilities in St. Petersburg oblast are located at the following addresses:

2g, Shosseynaya st.,
Fedorovskoye municipal

settlement, Tosno district,
St. Petersburg oblast,
– 50, Ananyinskaya st.,
Vologda.

The friendly staff is always at the clients' service to provide them with cutting-edge solutions, share hands-on experience for efficient farming, supply genuine spare parts, give a professional opinion and perform regular maintenance.

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

New organic law: what's next?

The federal law on organic production came into force on 1 January, 2020. What has changed in the organic sector over the 8-month period? Which products are already in the organic food basket and which are yet to be added? Experts share their thoughts on the subject.

Previously, few companies applied for organic certification. Now, we are seeing the opposite trend', says Oleg Mironenko, Executive Director of the National Organic Union. 'But for the quarantine measures introduced in spring, over 50 enterprises would have been in the process of conversion now.'



In February 2020, the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation established the Unified Register of Certified Organic Producers aimed at protecting consumers from adulterated goods.

'According to the new law, the logo "organic" can only be used on the packaging of commodities if the producer is listed in the unified state register, which currently comprises over 30 companies', continues Oleg Mironenko. 'Each of them is entitled to label their products with the Russian organic brand.'

Since the introduction of the unified register, packaging has to feature a QR code providing consumers with accurate information about the origin of goods.

'The certification in Russia is carried out by Organic Expert and Roskachestvo', comments Oleg Mironenko. 'This year, many producers

have prolonged their European accreditation. Out of the 94 Russian organic producers, 30 are certified in accordance with the Russian standards and 76 possess an EU organic certificate. Approximately 80 per cent of the above-mentioned companies operate in the Russian organic market exclusively.'

EkoNiva contributes to the development of the organic sector in Russia. Rassvet stock-breeding farm, which is a part of EkoNiva Group, has passed the required inspections and obtained organic certification for crop production and dairy farming in accordance with the Russian standard GOST from Roskachestvo. Earlier, the compliance of the farming crop practices with the respective European laws and regulations was confirmed by Kiwa-BSC.

'Currently, the daily milk production amounts to 5 t, comments Maksim Vanin, Director for Northwestern district of EkoNiva-APK Holding. 'Obtaining organic certificates is instrumental in unlocking the potential of organic production. It will enable us to expand the range of organic SKUs under the EKONIVA brand.'

At the moment, only 14 Russian producers are engaged in organic beef and dairy production, their market share accounts for less than 50% of all the organic food made in Russia. All of the companies also have organic certification for crop production as they grow their own feed for the livestock. Over 40 companies, 70% of which are small-scale farming enterprises targeting the domestic market solely, are focused on crop growing. Large-scale facilities, on the opposite, tend to be export-oriented.



'Thirteen companies specialise in organic growing and harvesting of wild crops: berries, mushrooms and nuts', says Oleg Mironenko. 'The accredited certifying agencies are based abroad, almost all such produce is made for export. Unfortunately, there are still no enterprises that would focus on organic aquaculture development, despite it being a promising area in organic sector. As is the case with organic wild crops, there is no certifying body for it in Russia.'

Nevertheless, positive changes in the domestic organic market are apparent – it has welcomed the first producers of organic chocolates, grapes and soft drinks. However, for an average



consumer, there is not much difference between organic and conventional produce.'

'Organic sector in Russia has a great potential for expansion', states Anatoliy Nakaryakov, Director for Organic Production, EkoNiva-APK Holding. 'There is still a long way to go: we need to gain consumers' trust and recognition. I am convinced that ecological products should be placed on separate shop shelves or even in special 'organic' shop sections. It is high time to promote and raise public awareness of organic

products and their numerous health benefits nationwide. Consumption of organic milk and other organic produce at kindergartens and schools – a common practice in many countries – would be a sound decision.'

According to Anatoliy Nakaryakov, once the demand for organic milk picks up, EkoNiva will go ahead with expanding the range of SKUs and stepping up the production volume. MosMedynagroprom, an EkoNiva milk processing plant in Medyn, Kaluga oblast, has received a certificate for organic production. Plans call for certification of EkoNiva milk plant in Shchuchye village, Voronezh oblast, in the near future.

In the meantime, organic producers expect further governmental support which will give new impetus to the industry development, i.e. subsidising the direct costs incurred for the certification as well as the production of 1 litre of milk and 1 tonne of meat, granting organic farmers subsidies per hectare during the entire production period, including the conversion time. As no organic seeds are currently available in Russia, state support is required for organic seed growing for all types of plants: cereals, legumes, vegetables, perennial grasses and industrial crops. Besides, partial reimbursement of the cost of organic fertilisers and biological crop protection agents is required. Soft loans and subsidies are essential for the organic enterprises engaged in protected horticulture, fruit tree nursery and bee farming.

By Darya DENISOVA

Real-life communication for better performance



In association with the Department of Agricultural Policy of Voronezh oblast, EkoNiva Group has held a large-scale agronomic seminar in a trial field located close to Dobrino service centre. Over 150 farmers gathered for the event.

The seminar programme included three sessions: examination of emerging crops together with EkoNiva-Semena experts, acquaintance with the advanced agricultural machinery displayed by EkoNiva-Chernozemye and a tour of Dobrino dairy.

Two hundred and ninety-one trial plots were showcased to the guests by twenty-nine plant breeding companies. The crops on display included lentils, peas, spring and winter wheat, barley, triticale, winter rye, sugar beet, sunflower, corn, organic barley, soya beans and emmer.

For the first time, the world's only hulless variety of organic emmer was presented to a wide audience. The modern breeding practices allowed to improve threshing quality and post-harvest handling. The brand-new variety was developed specially for baby food. It

contains several times more fiber, protein, amino acids and mineral elements than its hulled counterparts.

'Emmer is traditionally grown in the Middle East', says Anatoliy Nakaryakov, Director for Organic Production of EkoNiva-APK Holding. 'The crop is resistant to drought, high temperatures and waterlogging. What's more, it is suitable for almost all climatic zones of our country. This variety has already been sown on the trial plots of Savinskaya Niva. By the end of the year, we will have it registered and start producing it on a commercial scale. Plans are afoot to export the emmer to Iran and Syria and sell it to infant formula manufacturers.'

Experts of EkoNiva-Semena shared their best plant breeding practices with the attendees of the forum. In total, the company has planted 33 varieties of winter wheat, spring barley, oats, peas, soya

beans and lentils. Farmers were especially interested in soya bean varieties bred in-house. For several years in a row, Prudence has remained the flagship, being among the top ten bestsellers in Russia. It differs from other varieties by uniform ripening and high pod attachment. Its seeds are widely used in the food industry.

This year, EkoNiva-Semena has registered a new soya bean variety – Argenta – in the 5th region. It is an early-maturing crop, which requires 2,300 heat units and does not shatter, lodge or form hard seeds. During the trials, Argenta yielded more than five tonnes per hectare. Today, the cultivar is in a league of

its own. It will come onto the domestic market next year.

EkoNiva-Semena is the first privately-owned company in Russia which is engaged in winter wheat breeding. Cepheus is known to be among the most highly demanded varieties, distinguished by frost resistance and high yield. Although the newcomer was entered on the register not so long ago, it has already gained popularity with Russian agricultural producers.

'For about 10 years, we've been collaborating with EkoNiva-Semena', says Andrey Tsvetkov, Head of Tsvetkov farming enterprise located in Voronezh oblast. 'This year, we've bought and sown Explorer barley and hope to





harvest a 30-35-tonne crop. At the seminar, the company specialists have recommended a new variety of peas to us. We will definitely purchase it for the next farming season.'

EkoNiva-Chernozemye displayed over 30 units of cutting-edge agricultural machinery manufactured by the world-leading companies.

At the demo show, the guests' attention was attracted by the performance, manoeuvrability and comfort of JCB machinery, particularly the 541-70AG telescopic handler, the SSL 175 mini loader and the WLS 434 S wheel loader. The farmers were also impressed with the JCB 426ZX wheel loader – it is a versatile vehicle on pneumatic tyres with a lift capacity of 7.66 tonnes and automatic traction control.

The John Deere tractor lineup was represented by the 6135B, equipped with the 4-cylinder PowerTech 135 hp engine. Thanks to the highly productive systems, the JD 6B Series machines cope with tillage, cultivation, fertiliser placement and pest control perfectly well. These all-rounders give a good account of themselves in the fields, pastures and yards and can be used for transportation works. The 6135B compares favourably with its domestically manufactured counterparts in terms of air-tightness, which is especially relevant when working with sprayers. Besides, the model is fitted with a reliable PTO shaft and an oil bath clutch, which makes it much more robust.

'Another notable model showcased at the seminar was the Vaderstad CRXL 625 trailed disc cultivator', says Eduard Ivanov, Sales Department Manager, EkoNiva-Chernozemye.

'The powerful unit ensures high-speed primary tillage, efficient seedbed preparation and low fuel consumption. A wide range of front-mounted implements, rollers and discs enables the operator to perform both shallow and deep cultivation with equal efficiency. The versatility of the machine makes it possible to reduce the number of passes and the cost of works per

hectare, securing the best possible start for the crop.'

The farmers also took an interest in two more machines operating at separate demonstration sites – the ROC RT 1220, the largest continuous belt merger, and the Haybuster H-1130

of forage crops and preserving important proteins in the feed.

The Haybuster H-1130 tub grinder is a reliable 315 hp machine with 8 belts, ideal for preparing feed and distributing bedding for livestock. The model meets the most stringent herd management



mounted tub grinder.

One of the key advantages of the ROC RT 1220 is that it lifts the harvested material in order to transport it on a conveyor belt, while conventional mergers drag it along the ground. The model is designed to ensure a higher quality of grass by protecting stems and leaves

cooperate with benchmark companies so that we could learn the best practices from them. I have known EkoNiva for about ten years. During my previous employment, I worked with EkoNivaAgro and EkoNiva-Semena. When the decision to buy cutting-edge machinery was made, I wasted no time in contacting EkoNiva-Chernozemye, a machinery-trading subdivision. Last year, we spent 100 million rubles to enlarge the farm's fleet. We are very happy with the performance of the machines and the level of services provided by the company. One of our latest acquisitions is the Vaderstad Tempo 16-row planter. Even now, evaluating just intermediate results of its work, we can say for sure that the choice was right.'

According to Stefan Duerr, President of EkoNiva Group, one of the goals of the seminar was live communication, sharing professional knowledge essential for effective partnership and development of the regional agricultural sector. The coronavirus has taught farmers to solve a lot of issues remotely, but nothing can be as effective as face-to-face interaction.

'Many advanced farms run their business in Voronezh oblast', emphasises Stefan Duerr. 'We all need to meet more often, communicate, share experience and our secrets of success. Joint work is a prerequisite for maintaining our leading position in Russia.'

Having attended all the open-air sessions of the seminar, the guests headed for Dobrino dairy where they could see state-of-the-art machinery, modern herd management technologies and advanced livestock housing facilities.

After the exciting outdoor seminar and the fascinating dairy tour, the guests tasted fresh dairy products and enjoyed a light-hearted conversation in a cool room, which was especially pleasant after several hours under the scorching summer sun.

By Viktor BARGOTIN
Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV



Cognitive Agro Pilot: envisioning the future

Farming continues to ramp up its production rate and volumes, adopting the latest technologies. Working in close contact with agricultural producers enables engineers to offer highly efficient technical solutions to reduce costs and improve product quality. One of successful examples of the cooperation is the development of the autonomous farm machinery steering system Cognitive Agro Pilot by the Russian company Cognitive Pilot.

Esentially, it is smart robot based on the machine vision function. The suite of hardware installed onto a combine includes a video camera, a control unit with a neuroprocessor, a digital hydraulic unit for steering control, four wheel turning angle sensors, a tablet inside the cab, a set of cables and high-pressure sleeves for connecting to hydraulics. As a result, the machine literally starts 'seeing' the field. It has been designed to enable farmers to achieve a harvesting quality breakthrough.

First of all, the Cognitive Agro Pilot ensures that the harvester follows the track in strict compliance with the geometry of the

edge, windrow or row. No GPS connection is required for the operation. The maximum deviation from the set trajectory does not exceed 15 cm. In other words, the system takes over a number of tasks which were previously carried out by combine operators manually. The operator's fatigue and the influence of human factor on the whole goes down: harvest losses are eliminated, the area covered over a shift is increased, fuel economy is achieved through the precision of every single pass.

'It is a known fact that in the process of harvesting the crop the operator does not always use the full width of the header, as much as a metre can go wasted,' says Alfiya

Kayumova, Vice President of Corporate Development and Investments at Cognitive Pilot. 'By the end of the shift, even the most qualified operators are incapable of driving the machine with the precision offered by the Cognitive Agro Pilot. The thinking behind the development of the system was to pass some of the operator's tasks to the robot, to decrease the human factor impact, thus improving the harvesting efficiency.'

The testing revealed that the use of the Cognitive Agro Pilot reduces the harvesting time by 25% on average as compared to the conventional manned operation.

'Another important and useful feature of the system is obstacle recognition',

Along crop rows



Along crop edges



Along windrows



adds Alfiya Kayumova. 'The combine harvester signals about dangerous proximity to other machinery, people, trees, posts 30-40 metres in advance. Automatic braking is available as an option. This prevents mechanical incidents and downtime, facilitates uninterrupted operation even in poor visibility conditions.'

A significant advantage of the system is the possibility of functionality expansion via software upgrading. For example, installing a camera on the grain discharge spout will help to make the process control more exact without the need for a major capital investment.

'Application of Cognitive Pilot solutions marks a milestone towards precision farming', comments Bjoerne Drechsler, First Deputy Director General of EkoNiva-Tekhnika Holding. 'The new technology is going to improve overall farming efficiency and drive grain harvest losses down. From 1 to 2 years are going to pass before the optimum adjustment and mass introduction of such systems on imported and domestic combines takes place. The market for it is great, we could equip up to 10,000 machines in the future. The system is reliable, and the operators' feedback following the first trials is positive.'

EkoNiva-Tekhnika Holding has concluded an agreement with Cognitive Pilot on selling, installation and maintenance of Cognitive Agro Pilot systems in 35 regions of Russia.

In the coming years, thousands of farming enterprises will be provided with an opportunity to benefit from the efficient tool reducing costs and crop losses.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

Obstacle detection





Tested and approved

S and T Series John Deere combines were featured at the demo show arranged by EkoNivaSibir on Virt farm in Altai within the regional Field Day programme.

The Field Day is a significant event to the local producers attracting hundreds of farmers from all over the region and serving as a platform for networking with industry co-workers, getting updated on and discussing innovations and cutting-edge farming practices, planning their investments in machinery and negotiating maintenance agreements for the next year.

'I'm always excited to attend such events', stated Stefan Duerr, EkoNiva Group President, in his welcoming speech. 'We used to go to Europe and US seeking for the most state-of-the-art achievements. It is not a must any longer as we can learn and take over best practices from our neighbours. The farming holding hosting us today is perfect evidence to my words.'

Pavel Beyfort is considered one of the most successful agricultural producers in Altai area. His enterprises total over 30,000 ha of land with beef and crop productions making the core businesses. Even being experienced and efficient decision-maker, Pavel never stops learning to keep up with the times.

'Robust and high-power machines are what the farm wants to invest in', says Svetlana Medvedeva, Manager of EkoNivaSibir branch office in Biysk. 'And we as a dealer are always there for the client to offer the latest innovations. To field test S770i and T670i John Deere combines coupled with 730FD headers, today we're harvesting and measuring the

losses using modern smart solutions such as the ICA2, MachineSync and AutoTrac.'

The John Deere S770i combine arrived at the farm last year and has already delivered record performance: reduced grain losses and significantly improved grain processing quality – all thanks to the integrated ICA2 automatic adjustment system. It is as easy as handling a smartphone: crop harvest parameters are set using ergonomic control system and a 10-inch colour display.

'The benefits are obvious: the John Deere T670i is fitted with a big 11,000-litre bunker discharging at up to 125 l/sec', says Ivan Beyfort, Chief Engineer of Virt farm. 'The spacious and noiseless cab feels like home. The 730FD header deserves a special credit. The 9-metre header perfectly suits our fields – we can harvest rapeseed directly, which is much more cost-efficient.'

The show at a different site demonstrated the ability of the MachineSync system to synchronise the relative speeds and positions of the combine and the grain cart tractor. The solution optimises on-the-go unloading. At the same time, the AutoTrac system boosts the productivity by reducing input costs and increasing assisted steering efficiency.

At the demo show, the local farmers observed not only John Deere machines, but also the Haybuster H800 tub grinders for straw and grain as well as tilling equipment: the Vaderstad Carrier 820 disc harrow, the Gregoire Besson Explor T90 harrow and the Bednar Swifter SE 10000 seedbed cultivator with a Ferti-Tank. Each test ride had its audience – potential buyers.

At the event, EkoNiva was also represented as a seed supplier.

'Machines aren't the only basis of our cooperation with the company,' shares Emil

Ishmuhamedov, Director General of Elli Group (Altai area and Novosibirsk oblast). 'For several years running, we have been buying wheat and barley seeds from EkoNiva and are extremely happy with the yield of 4.0-4.5 t/ha.'

The visitors enjoyed natural dairy products and ice-cream from EkoNiva as much as the impressions from the show.

Five-year old Maksim Beyfort could not resist the most delicious treat to gain some energy before his most favourite adventure – riding a combine into the field next to his father and grandfather. The little member of the farming family business already knows the story of the tractor that brought luck and started the long-standing partnership of the grandfather's farm and EkoNiva. Back in 2006, John Deere in collaboration with EkoNiva arranged a mini-football tournament for non-professional teams from various farming enterprises, which, after a tough competition, was won by the team of Pavel Beyfort's farm. At the ceremony, Pavel received the Cup and the key to a new John Deere 6920 tractor from Stefan Duerr. Today the machine still operates on the farm with a total of 25,000 engine hours. The family is positive that this partnership is bound to continue even when little Maksim takes over the family business.



By Tatyana IGNATENKO



At the forefront of modern farming

On 23-24 July, the regional Field Day was held on the premises of Vyshgorodskiy farming enterprise, Ryazan oblast. The entire EkoNiva Group took part in the event displaying the world's best machinery supplied by EkoNiva-Tekhnika, the new varieties offered by EkoNiva-Semena and the delicious dairy products manufactured by EkoNiva Produkty Pitaniya.

It is all about machines

EkoNiva-Tekhnika holding specialists showcased the best-selling John Deere 8245R and 6135B tractors, the JD M740 Series trailed sprayer and the John Deere 8200i Series self-propelled forage harvester.

The John Deere 8200i harvester grabbed the farmers' attention. The hallmark of the unit is the HarvestLab 3000 system with a sensor mounted on top of the spout enabling the operator to take real-time composition and moisture readings of the material.

'We have been cooperating with EkoNiva-Tekhnika since 2008', recollects Igor Skonnikov, Head of Skonnikov farming enterprise, Ryazan oblast. 'Back then, imported equipment was more an exception rather than the rule – acquisition of a John Deere 7830 tractor became a significant milestone in the development of our farming enterprise. Currently, a team of John Deere tractors – two 8 Series, two 7 Series tractors and one 6 Series tractor - operate on the premises. This year, we have replenished our machinery fleet with a few more green units – a John Deere 7400 tractor and a self-propelled sprayer.'

EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding never fails to surprise its clients with machinery novelties. At the event, EkoNiva-Tekhnika showcased the Bednar Swifter SE 10000 pre-sowing cultivator.

'The unit has been available in the Russian market for a while now', says Sergey Krasavin, Head of Ryazan branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. 'The Bednar Swifter SE 10000 is perfect for tillage before sowing rapeseed. It ensures an optimum seedbed. The ability to turn at the headland while keeping the implement in its operating position allows to achieve 100% efficiency. After the harvesting campaign, we are going to do a number of demo-shows for the local farmers.'

EkoNiva-Tekhnika's display featured a wide range of agricultural equipment of global brands: John Deere, JCB, Vaderstad, Fliegl, Gregoire Besson, Bednar, Grimme and Haybuster. All the tractors, front and telescopic handlers, harvesters, trailed sprayers, soil cultivators and other units complement each other providing farmers with reliable solutions for tackling the most difficult tasks.

'EkoNiva-Semena is committed to maintaining top quality of its produce', says Anton Malkov, Head of Eco-Agrofarm Mikhaylovskoye, Ryazan oblast. 'Buying seeds from them, we can be sure that the yields will not disappoint us as used to be the case with other suppliers.'

For over 20 years now, EkoNiva-Semena has been sharing hands-on experience in crop production with the Russian farmers providing them with a plethora of useful knowledge.

From the fields for your health!



The key to a bumper crop



The portfolio of EkoNiva-Semena comprises over 30 varieties of cereals, pulse crops and grasses – the latest achievements of both in-house and global breeding. This year, the winter wheat variety Cepheus bred by EkoNiva has been approved for use. Its main distinctive feature is winter hardiness. Cepheus stands out with its consistent yield and high lodging resistance. The maximum yield produced in the fields totals over 10 tonnes/hectare. In Ryazan oblast, winter wheat varieties are grown on a large scale, so EkoNiva-Semena specialists bank on the new variety.

Sampling of tasty dairy produce became a welcome highlight of the day – both adults and children were treated to fresh milk, yogurts, quark desserts and kefir.

'I enjoy EKONIVA dairy products', says Mariya Abramova, an attendee of the event. 'About half a year ago, I tasted the products for the first time. The natural milk and kefir are the particular favourites of my family members. We start every day with the healthy EKONIVA produce.'

Filled with smiles, good mood, innovative solutions and new discoveries, the joint booth of EkoNiva Group had the pulling power for both long-term partners and new accounts. Despite all the challenges, the field day format has been gaining popularity year on year as it provides a great opportunity for agricultural producers to see and be seen as well as to make the right choice ensuring a boost in future harvests.

By Viktor BARGOTIN

John Deere breaks new ground!



John Deere machinery is not only efficient, reliable and productive, it can also handle the toughest jobs. To prove that nothing can beat John Deere in the field, EkoNivaSibir held a demo-show in the fields of Sibirskaya Zernopromyshlennaya Kompaniya farming enterprise, Kupino district, Novosibirsk oblast. On a sunny day in July, the John Deere 9RX tractor coupled to the John Deere 2100 Minimum-Till Ripper appeared on the virgin lands of Siberia. The mission was accomplished: previously unploughed ground was perfectly cultivated by the powerful tractor.

Sibirskaya Zernopromyshlennaya Kompaniya opted for John Deere's green and yellow machinery a couple of years ago. The managers and professional staff of the company stay up to date with the latest developments in modern farm machinery building. They believe that reliable cutting-edge equipment is indispensable for the steady development of the company.

'Our company is relatively young, it was founded in 2013', says Aleksandr Nechitailo, Chief Agronomist of the enterprise. 'We started out with one thousand five hundred hectares. Currently, our company owns 15,000 ha and we are planning further expansion. Thus, we definitely need efficient machinery and a reliable dealer. We have chosen John Deere and EkoNivaSibir.'

In the early 2019, EkoNivaSibir supplied six John Deere S780 combines to Sibirskaya Zernopromyshlennaya Kompaniya. In winter 2020, the company added two John Deere 9520RX track tractors to its machinery fleet. At the moment, these machines are the only 9 Series

tractors behind the Urals. Only four tractors of this kind operate in the Russian fields.

'The 9520 RX tractor has a number of benefits', points out Aleksandr Burmak, EkoNivaSibir Senior Sales Manager. 'The machine has four tracks which evenly distribute the weight of the tractor, minimising soil compaction and increasing traction due to good ground contact. Besides, the tracks are highly manoeuvrable both in and outside the field.'

Another advantage of the tractor is a reliable and powerful John Deere PowerTech™ Plus 13.5 L, 6-cylinder engine with the maximum power of 572 hp. The engine has a constant

power range up to 2,100 rpm and a 38 per cent engine torque rise. The distinctive feature of the tractor is an 18-speed PowerShift™ transmission with the Efficiency Manager system. The latter delivers smooth gear shifting while maintaining the desired ground speed, and all of this is achieved at the minimum rpm.

'An operator just sets the necessary speed', continues Aleksandr Burmak, 'and the computer takes over to achieve the target speed with the minimum possible rpm and fuel use. One of the benefits of the 9RX tractors is improved ride quality. The two mid-roller track system design minimises vibration inside the cab. The drive lugs, which are 12%

wider than on rival machines, the wrap angle, which is 24 degrees larger, and the 60% higher belt tension prevent slippage.'

Operator comfort is one of the most important factors. The spacious CommandView cab and 24 LED lights provide optimum ergonomics and visibility. Last spring, Sibirskaya Zernopromyshlennaya Kompaniya had an opportunity to experience all the advantages of the 9 Series tractors first-hand. The machines worked non-stop! Each of them did approximately 500 engine hours during the spring sowing campaign. All operators enjoyed driving the John Deere 9520RX.

'The tractor impressed us with its reliability, excellent performance and ease of operation', adds Aleksandr Nechitailo. 'We need such heavy-duty machinery to break the new ground here.'

The company is going to reclaim over 3,000 ha of cropland that has fallen into disuse. Those lands were withdrawn from agriculture in the 80s, and only such powerful farm machinery as John Deere can succeed there.'

During the demo-show, the John Deere 9520RX coupled to the John Deere 2100 Minimum-Till Ripper showed outstanding results. The tool allows to rip much deeper than 40 cm. It is also able to break up the compacted soil while preserving the required residue level in no-till fields or on dry grounds affected by drought.

'We have demonstrated the performance of the John Deere 2100 Minimum-Till Ripper and the pulling capacity of the tractor under the real field conditions', says Aleksandr Burmak. 'The demo-show received positive feedback of the participants and resulted in a purchase contract for the till ripper.'

A strong team of the ground-breaking tractor and the till ripper accomplished a tough task. The hosts of the event decided to buy the showcased equipment – it will be indispensable in cultivating new and disused lands in Siberia!



By Tatyana IGNATENKO



Smart giant for forage harvesting



In Tula oblast, forage harvesting has been taken to a whole new level. The John Deere 8400i self-propelled forage harvester appeared in the region this May, making a fantastic addition to the fleet of Otkormochnoye CJSC. Although the 8000 Series are familiar to the local farmers, the new machine represents a major breakthrough in harvesting for both the enterprise and the entire Tula oblast.

In our region, the JD 8400i is a unique machine combining an unprecedented power and intelligent systems', says Sergey Plotnikov, Senior Sales Manager of Tula branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika.

'This is the first 532 hp forage harvester in our neighbourhood equipped with the HarvestLab 3000 and the Active Fill Control systems.'

These functions help farmers to control the harvesting on a continuous basis and decide what adjustments need to be made. The high-capacity harvester

produces excellent forage laying a foundation for a healthy and productive herd, and the development of the farming business.

The HarvestLab 3000 sensor takes real-time moisture readings of the crop using Near Infrared Technology (NIR). The instrument enables automated length of cut adjustment based on dry matter content. It also provides highly accurate, real-time readings on crude protein, starch, crude fibre, sugar and crude ash which can be transmitted to the John Deere Operations Center. From

here, farmers can observe the measured data, make the real-time analysis and adjust harvester settings on the go.

The John Deere Active Fill Control is another option for Precision Ag Technology. The system automatically detects the trailer next to the forage harvester and begins filling with a preselected fill strategy. Besides, it controls the filling of the truck, the spout and cap position based on the settings chosen by the operator.

'The sensors on the spout automatically detect the boundaries of the trailer and ensure consistent filling of the container within these boundaries', continues Sergey Plotnikov. 'Thus, the system minimises spillage and ensures a steady fill, even in darkness. While the intelligent system takes over control of the filling, the operator experiences less fatigue, maintaining optimal performance.'

The speed is another remarkable feature of the harvester. The specialists of Tula branch of EkoNiva Tekhnika and local John Deere representative Ivan Bayak customised the John Deere 8400i during its commissioning, enhancing the speed of the silage harvesting up to 15-16 km/h!

'It was a successful experiment, which helped us to prove that this machine can harvest silage twice faster than

its rivals. And there is still ample power!' adds Sergey Plotnikov. 'To reach it, there must be more swaths on a larger area. After the demo-show, the farmers decided to take up this challenge.'

Otkormochnoye CJSC and EkoNiva have been cooperating for a long time. Since the beginning of 2000s, the farming enterprise has been constantly adding John Deere combines, tractors, seed drills and other machines to its fleet. It is not surprising that a cutting-edge forage harvester appeared exactly on this farm.

'When we decide to purchase a new machine, we opt for maximum efficiency and comfort', says Aleksandr Telyshev, Chief Engineer of Otkormochnoye CJSC. 'Our company is going to expand its dairy business. We needed a new forage harvester, and EkoNiva-Tekhnika offered a powerful machine which is absolutely suitable to perform the required tasks. We have around 500 hectares of forage crops, 400 hectares of which have already been harvested with the help of the new machine. We have noticed that operators feel comfortable throughout the day, the intelligent systems are highly efficient, besides, the dosing has become much more precise. This autumn we will test the John Deere 8400i in harvesting corn.'

The 'giant' from John Deere has proved to be fast, confident and inspiring. It demonstrated a new extremely efficient way of harvesting to Tula farmers!

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV





Striving for better results

Siberian farmers continue familiarising themselves with modern machinery which can significantly improve production output and business efficiency. This season, the newly-designed tractor John Deere 6135 B is the most talked about release. EkoNivaSibir has held a number of demo shows of this model on the premises of several enterprises.

The manufacturer presents the John Deere 6135B as an operator-friendly, powerful and reliable 'workhorse'. This tractor is equipped with a John Deere PowerTech E 4-cylinder diesel engine with Common rail direct fuel injection, which provides superior fuel economy.

This tractor can conduct any fieldwork, including soil preparation, fertiliser application, cultivation, etc. The John Deere 6135B works perfectly well in tandem with a loader. Due to the high-performance hydraulic system and the powerful drivetrain, a wide range of implements can be attached to the machine.

In late June, the demo show of the tractor was held

at Omskiy stud farm OJSC (Maryanovka district). Coupled to a fixed chamber baler TRB-20L, the John Deere 6135B transported 13.5 tonnes of hay.

'No other tractor that we used before stands the comparison with the John Deere 6135B', shares Vladimir Golman, Chief Engineer of Omskiy stud farm OJSC. 'This machine ensures a superb

coupling, the hydraulic system runs smoothly, the bales are loaded on the go. Our previous tractors were massive and slow, they occasionally dropped bales because of loose coupling, therefore, we were wasting time and material resources. The John Deere 6135B is operator-friendly, comfortable and fast. It does the work promptly and precisely. This is

'The tractor has done over 2,000 engine hours', says Roman Selin, Chief Engineer, APK-Mosalskoye LLC. 'We use it for harrowing, fertiliser application, grain handling and sowing with an 8-row seed drill. The hydraulic system is very efficient and the sowing quality is excellent! The machine shows unsurpassed reliability: we have not replaced a single part yet! EkoNiva-Chernozemye plays an important role in ensuring uninterrupted operation of the tractor by supplying original consumables and performing planned maintenance.'

extremely important in rainy periods: the machine bales hay so swiftly that it leaves rain no chance.'

On 7 July, EkoNivaSibir demonstrated the JD 6135B at Pushkinskiy agricultural co-operative (Omsk district). To find out more about the novelty, specialists and managers of several other enterprises (Omskoye Federal state unitary enterprise, Self-employed entrepreneurs Kabdenov T.E. and Petrosyan U.R. etc.) visited this showcase.

This time, the tractor was coupled to was coupled to an AVR GE-FORCE HD rotary hillier. The two units showed their talents in preparing the soil for potato planting.

'The new tractor delivered much better performance than its predecessor, the JD 6920 manufactured in 2012', comments Mikhail Chelin, Chief Engineer of Pushkinskiy agricultural production cooperative. 'The wide transmission range makes for high-quality tillage. The tractor passes, leaving behind fewer stones, thus ensuring high crop yields.'

The demo shows held by EkoNivaSibir helped Siberian farms to upgrade their machinery fleets with cutting-edge equipment inspiring them to even better results.

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

Performance, precision, profit



A demo-show of the John Deere M4040 has been held at LIGA farming enterprise in Zonalnoye, Altai area.

The spraying precision and manoeuvrability at an unprecedented speed (the 6.8-litre 6-cylinder inline diesel engine enables the machine to perform spraying at the speed of up to 32 km/h) made a powerful impression on the attendees of the event.

'The John Deere M4040 self-propelled sprayer has a number of new features', says Andrey Lobov, Sales Representative of EkoNivaSibir subdivision in Biysk. 'The underframe clearance has been increased by 20 cm to reach 1.7 metres, which allows

farmers to use the machine even on the crops at advanced vegetation stages. The flow divider traction control system helps to provide additional tractive effort when needed. The division of the flow is equal even in case of wheel slippage'.

The sprayer instantly adjusts to different types of terrain with the help of BoomTrac automatic boom height control system. Regardless of the boom position, the level weight distribution helps to keep the machine steady even on slopes. The machine insures excellent spraying accuracy and crop protection.

Each of the 9 sections is equipped with the nozzle control system. The SectionControl and ExactApply systems eliminate overlaps and reduce chemical use on the crops.

Liga farming enterprise

has been using the JD M4040 sprayer since April to treat over 4,000 ha of different crops, including wheat, barley, soya, sunflower and buckwheat.

'This sprayer is reliable, efficient and operator-friendly', says Aleksey Yanov, Chief Agronomist of Liga farming enterprise. 'We are also very happy with EkoNivaSibir, our local John Deere dealer. Their service centre and spare parts storage facility are conveniently located in Biysk, which saves us time and money.'

The demo-show has once again proved that cutting-edge machinery and professional service enhance the development of the farming business. EkoNivaSibir is always there to help its clients to achieve great results!

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV



From France with love!

EkoNivaTekhnika-Holding has recently become an authorised dealer of Gregoire Besson, one of the oldest manufacturers of tillage equipment in the world. The company has been producing high-quality farm machinery for more than 200 years.

The founders of the Gregoire Besson company were contemporaries of Alexandre Dumas, a celebrated French author and one of the world's greatest writers. In 1802, Joseph Gregoire set up a blacksmith's shop at Montigne-sur-Moine and started producing ploughs, paving the way for the future of one of the world's leading farm machinery companies.

to the reliable brand. In Russia, the company is represented by its subsidiary, Besson-Vostok in Belgorod.

'We have been supplying our customers with the Gregoire Besson machinery since 2019', says Sergey Skrobkin, EkoNiva-Tekhnika Central Region Sales Department Manager. 'We offer mounted ploughs, semi-mounted ploughs,

'Another bestseller is the Gregoire Besson Voyager semi-mounted plough', says Galina Kochergina, Head of Gregoire Besson-Vostok. 'These ploughs are developed for 150 HP to 600 HP tractors. The number of working bodies ranges from five to thirteen. The machine ensures perfect ground contour following and even ploughing. The choice of in-furrow or on-land model is based on the farmers' working conditions, they can also choose between the shear bolt or non-stop hydraulic safety systems.'

'The affordable price of the Gregoire Besson machinery was a pleasant surprise to us', says Eduard Daniilkin, Head of Novaya Zhizn farm, Tula oblast. 'We have already acquired two Voyager C80 ploughs for our enterprise. They cultivate about 3,500 ha of land during the season, proving to be reliable and easy to use. We are happy with these tools and planning to purchase another Gregoire Besson plough in the future. I am sure EkoNiva-Tekhnika will help us to make the right choice.'

The Explor disc harrow is also on demand in the Russian market. There are two models available: T70 and T90. The Explor is designed for deep tillage of heavy soils and clearing rhizome crops. Harrow discs with the diameter of 1,020 mm ensure good penetration into stony and rough terrain, making the implement unique as compared to its rivals.'



The recent history of the company started in 1956, when Victor Gregoire and his son-in-law Alphonse Besson founded the Gregoire-Besson partnership. Later, the partners developed a line-up of tillage equipment and applied for the first patents. Nowadays, the company is managed by their descendant, Patrick Besson. The Gregoire Besson Group comprises four modern manufacturing plants in France and Italy and more than 60 dealerships. Farmers all over the world trust their fields

one-pass finishers, disc harrows, deep stubble cultivators, shallow stubble cultivators and subsoilers of the French brand. The Gregoire Besson tillage equipment has been marketed in Russia for about 30 years and has proved to be reliable, productive and easy-to-handle.'

One of the most popular products is the Rover reversible mounted plough. The Rover meets the needs of both small and large enterprises and can be coupled to 90 HP to 250 HP tractors.

'On our farm, tillage is performed solely by the Gregoire Besson machinery', says Anatoliy Shcherbakov, Chief Engineer of Kaluzhskaya Niva-South Operation. 'Last year, we bought a semi-mounted Voyager S70 plough and an Explor T90disc harrow. The machines are maintenance-friendly, easy to service, and most importantly, allow us to achieve our goals in a timely and effective manner.'

The Gregoire Besson Helios sub-soilers are available at every dealership of EkoNiva-Tekhnika Holding. The Helios works at the depth of up to 60 cm, removes soil compaction and allows proper circulation of air and water. The tool is able to eliminate the consequences of poor soil preparation at the depth of 25-35 cm. Fields where tubers are grown can feature areas of different degree of compaction, which is especially noticeable after harvesting. The Helios sub-soiler easily recovers these areas.

About 150 units of the Gregoire Besson machinery are sold in Russia every year. Next year, the sales are expected to be even higher thanks to the cooperation with EkoNiva-Tekhnika Holding, which has recently enlarged its responsibility by adding new territories in Arkhangelsk, Vologda, Leningrad, Novgorod, Omsk, Pskov oblasts, Altai area and the Republic of Karelia. The Gregoire Besson machinery available for purchase at the new dealerships is ready to work in the Russian fields and confirm its excellent global reputation.

'We are glad to resume our cooperation with EkoNiva – our friends and partners since the year 2000', says Nicolas Petit, Gregoire Besson Area Director, CIS countries. 'For over 25 years, EkoNiva has been one of the leading dealers of international agricultural machinery in Russia. This proves that the company has a highly professional team and follows the right development strategy. EkoNiva is our reliable partner and we hope for a long-term collaboration.'

By Viktor BARGOTIN



Efficient crop farming in Chuvashia

EkoNiva-Semena has expanded its sales activities. The company's seeds and agricultural consulting services are now available in Chuvashia. To meet its potential clients and establish a good and trusting relationship, the company has held a seminar on cereal and pulse crop growing technologies at Ivanova farming operation (Chuvash Republic, Urmary district, Shorkistry village).

Chuvashia has always been an agricultural region whose main treasures are people and land. 80% of its farmland is used for growing agricultural crops. In this respect, the republic ranks first in Volga Federal district and sixth in the country. The development of agriculture is a high priority in the region, which means, local farmers need reliable partners, such as EkoNiva-Semena.

'Three years ago, we began to supply seeds to local farmers', says Aleksandr Ryabenko, EkoNiva-Semena Sales Representative. 'This region used to be unjustly

underestimated. Now we can see that our seeds demonstrate excellent germination ability and produce high yields here. Sometimes the result is even better than in some areas of Black Soil region. We have conducted a seminar in Chuvashia to get a better understanding of our customers' needs and assess the potential for growing our crops in this region.'

Participants from 45 companies located in Chuvashia and neighbouring areas – Kirov oblast and the republic of Mari El – attended this seminar. The advantages of EkoNiva's crop varieties

were shown at demo plots. Four spring wheat varieties came into focus: Kanyuk, Cornetto, Calixo and the best-selling Licamero. Spring barley varieties displayed by EkoNiva-Semena were Laurikka, Paustian, Margaret and Explorer. Pea variety lineup included Rocket and Belmondo.

'Farmers are enthusiastic about our crop varieties', says Willi Drews, Ph.D. in Agronomy, Crop Farming Advisor of EkoNiva. 'The climatic conditions of the region call for top-quality frost tolerant varieties with high lodging resistance. We have

a lot to offer! The region opens boundless opportunities for crop growing. However, local farmers are wary of new varieties until they see what they are worth in the field. We have provided a very good example of our products at the demonstration plots on the premises of Ivanova farm. All varieties show uniform germination and meet the most stringent requirement.

I can say that the result has surpassed our expectations.'

Last year, Triso wheat produced 6.2 tonnes per hectare in the fields of Ivanova farm, while its average yield potential across the republic is 2.7 tonnes per hectare. Despite the severe drought, the expectations for yields this year are also high. Plans are afoot to increase yields up to 8-10 tonnes per hectare.

'We have sown wheat supplied by EkoNiva-Semena for three years', says Dmitriy Ivanov, a co-founder of the agricultural enterprise. 'The seed quality is splendid. Our crops produce the highest yields in the republic! We are planning to expand our crop portfolio. Next year, we will plant barley and peas. These crops performed very well at demo plots. We recommend EkoNiva to our countrymen as an excellent supplier. Our common goal is to boost the yields in the region and now we have everything we need to do it!'

Cutting-edge equipment, innovative approach and the common desire to improve the efficiency of agriculture make Ivanova farming enterprise and EkoNiva-Semena a perfect tandem capable of achieving the most ambitious goals!

By Tatyana IGNATENKO





The lucky ones!

The employees of OkaMoloko, Ryazan oblast, have received certificates for purchasing new houses under the Comprehensive Development of Rural Areas state support programme recently launched in Ryazan oblast. The programme is aimed at making health care, social welfare, education, housing facilities and well-developed infrastructure available to the residents of rural areas.

The first certificates have been granted to the employees of OkaMoloko. Moving into a new house was a cherished dream of the Kondrikovs family. Thanks to the state programme and OkaMoloko, their dream has come true.

'We are so happy!' shares Artyom Kondrikov, OkaMoloko Engineer. 'We've received a certificate for two and a half million rubles! All we have to do now is find a construction company and start building a new house.'

Yuliya Ryabukhina, a mother of a large family, has been working as a milking rotary operator for OkaMoloko since 2016. Together with her children, she lives in Aladyino



village in a dwelling which is far from perfect. A certificate for over one million rubles came as a complete surprise to the woman.

'We live in, so to say, spartan comfort', says Yuliya Ryabukhina. 'We heat the house with firewood in the winter and we are not

connected to the water supply system. The well water pump, shower and toilet are outdoors. It is hard to live like this. For this reason, at the end of last year, I applied for the programme. I did not even hope that I would receive the certificate so soon! My kids and I have already found a lovely

new house. Now, we only need to settle a few things with the present owner.'

Sergey Dyukov, Loader Operator, learned the much-anticipated news about the certificate when he was behind the wheel of his machine. His family received a subsidy in the amount of 800 thousand rubles, and now, they are planning to buy a new house. Under the programme terms, the dwelling will become their property after just five years of employment with OkaMoloko.

Moreover, certificates are not the only benefit provided by OkaMoloko to its employees. Construction of 50 houses in Aleksandro-Nevskiy district, which will partially be sponsored by the company, is about to start. Over the next few years 160 more homes are planned to be built for the families of OkaMoloko staff in Shatsk, Sasovo and Pitelino districts. The company is planning to invest over one billion rubles in the project.

'OkaMoloko provides comfortable living and working conditions for its specialists', says Vladimir Kavin, Regional Director for Ryazan oblast. 'Their children should have an opportunity to go to modern schools and kindergartens, do sports and develop their abilities right where they live without having to go miles away from home to the regional and district centres. That is why participation in the Comprehensive Development of Rural Areas programme is one of the priority tasks for our company.'

By Viktor BARGOTIN





Housing for newlyweds

Over the past few years, Severnaya Niva, EkoNiva Group farming enterprise, has given fresh impetus to the development of agriculture in Orenburg oblast, the Republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan.

Where old timers used to bemoan complete desolation, young voices are breaking the silence and cutting-edge facilities are being built! Modern farming enterprises and new jobs are essential for young specialists to come and settle in the country. Moreover, when the 20-year-olds meet their soulmates and start families, it is solid proof that this rural community stays alive.

In 2018, when Severnaya Niva was implementing its first projects in Orenburg oblast and the adjacent republics, the enterprise realised the need for comfortable accommodation for new employees, so the management took every opportunity to provide the workers with housing as soon as possible. Fortunately for the employees, the farm purchased by EkoNiva in Bugulma district,

Tatarstan, came with a building of a former seed production office. Not long before selling it, the previous owner had decided to repurpose the space as a dormitory. Once it was taken

Maksim and Anara Moiseyenko met in 2018 when they started their careers at Severnaya Niva. Maksim, Herd Manager of Kurskaya Vasilyevka dairy, is from Rostov

Dmitriy Patrushev, Minister of Agriculture of the Russian Federation

'Our country has not seen such a large-scale construction of new housing facilities in rural areas for a long time. I am convinced that we will be able to improve the quality of life in the rural areas considerably in the nearest future.'

over by EkoNiva, it underwent a complete transformation within a few months. The dormitory turned into a block of flats divided into 10 apartments fully furnished and equipped. After the completion of the works, the first young family moved in straight away.

oblast, and Anara, Veterinarian, comes from Sol-Iletsksk.

'Not long after we joined the team of Severnaya Niva, we learned that the company provided young specialists with flats and that the refurbishment was almost completed. Shortly afterwards,



we were offered to move into a new flat', says Maksim. 'Our apartment is a turnkey home with everything we need from furniture to household appliances; best of all, it is completely free of charge. We were happy to move there.'

Maksim and Anara became lawfully wedded spouses a year ago and on 31 March, 2020, Anara gave birth to their first son, Artyom, and the family changed the flat for a bigger two-room apartment.

This year, the Moiseyenko family met their neighbours – Nikolay Gryada, Artificial Insemination Technician, and Anna Ionova, Veterinarian, both working at Kurskaya Vasilyevka dairy. The couple planned to get married in summer, but the wedding ceremony has been postponed until September because of the COVID-19.

'We have everything needed for both comfortable life and work', says Nikolay Gryada. 'By providing employees with new homes, the company shows that it truly cares about its specialists. Anna was the first to move into our flat and I followed her a couple of weeks later. What I particularly like about our new accommodation is its convenient location: it takes me only about thirty minutes to get to Kurskaya Vasilyevka dairy, and just a quarter of an hour to go to Bugulma.'

In the not-too-distant future, every window of the block of flats will be glowing with warm light in the evenings. Children's laughter will be heard in the quiet and cozy backyard. Imagine two of them chatting with each other:

'What do you want to be when you grow up?' 'A farmer! And you?'

'And I am going to be a minister!'

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV





A unique educational project

At the beginning of the academic year, Kursk State Agricultural Academy and EkoNiva launched a joint educational project, establishing an Interdepartmental Advanced Bachelor Course and a Specialised Applied Seed Breeding and Growing Department. All practical work related to the project will be carried out on the premises of Zashchitnoye Operation (Kursk oblast, Shchigry and Solntsevo districts).

Young, talented and professionally minded students, eager to learn and conduct academic research, feel confident about pursuing their careers in agriculture. Farming operations of EkoNiva will become their second home after they leave their alma mater. The Advanced Bachelor Course is formed from the best students who intend to continue their career path at EkoNiva.

'This is a unique educational project', says Yekaterina Kharchenko, Acting Rector of Kursk State Agricultural Academy. Second- and third-year students

from different departments will study and work within the project groups. Young people will work on their diploma projects and conduct academic research at Zashchitnoye. Yuriy Vasyukov, Regional Director of Zashchitnoye Operation, will supervise the educational process.'

'We are interested in obtaining talented and professional employees, therefore, we consider this project extremely useful!' emphasises the Regional Director. 'Students doing the advanced bachelor course will undertake a paid internship at



EkoNiva. Besides, in their last year of study, they will be able to work in accordance with their university specialisation on an individual schedule. Moreover, we are ready to act as mentors for the students of the Department of Secondary Professional and Further Education.'

The Specialised Department of Applied Seed Breeding and Growing is one more important area of cooperation. Leading experts of Zashchitnoye Operation will hold seminars

on legal, methodological and technological aspects of seed breeding and early generation seed production.

'The Specialised Department of Seed Breeding and Growing will work in close cooperation with the State Variety Testing Commission and EkoNiva-Semena', continues Yekaterina Kharchenko. 'This will help to improve the quality of education and boost the research activity in this area.'

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

EkoNiva summer recruitment



One more session of the all-Russian agricultural student team Milk Standard (MOST) has come to an end. For two months the participants of the project were mastering the ins and outs of agriculture under the professional supervision of the specialists of EkoNiva (Voronezh oblast).

EkoNiva has been welcoming students of agricultural universities at its production sites for five years in a row. Every year, their number grows! This time, another record has been broken: 80 students from 22 regions of Russia have undergone an internship at 10 cutting-edge dairies of EkoNivaAgro and a milk processing plant. The young people studied modern practices of agricultural production and

milk processing and operated efficient state-of-the-art farm machinery.

This year, besides the traditional professional areas, the students could try their hand at economy and accounting. The informative lectures ran by the leading specialists of the holding were a valuable addition to the hands-on training.

'I am very happy that you have found an opportunity

to take part in our summer internship programme despite all the difficulties', said Stefan Duerr. 'Every time, the Milk Standard team demonstrates their best skills and an enormous professional potential! We have great hopes for the young and will be happy to see the team members as our full-time employees in the nearest future!'

The two months seem to have flown by, as if only yesterday, the warm June air

was ringing with the sound of the melody accompanying the solemn opening ceremony. However, when you are busy with an interesting task, time dashes by, and the moment has come to say good bye.

'I could not imagine that after the first year of study I will have this unique opportunity to do an internship at EkoNiva!' says Sofia Chugainova, a student of Perm State Agricultural University. 'I have obtained a lot of valuable experience and professional knowledge, met new friends and got to know a great number of leading industry experts.'

The cutting-edge technologies implemented at EkoNiva and the immense production scale have left a lasting impression on me! I would like to thank the company specialists for sharing their unique knowledge and experience with us!'

We can only wish the student team members success and inspiration on their professional path!

By Viktor BARGOTIN

An agricultural toehold



The students of the first agricultural class organised 4 years ago at Maslyanino School No. 1, Novosibirsk oblast, have finished school. 13 girls and boys, future students of agricultural universities, are confident about their choice of profession. After the university, they are planning to come back to their native village and start working for Sibirska Niva.

Four years of intensive practical training and interesting lectures flew by like one moment.

The personnel issue in agriculture remains burning, that is why EkoNiva starts preparing its future employees as early as possible. At the agricultural class at Maslyanino school No. 1, students learn the basic theory of farming and receive the invaluable practical training in the areas of crop production, veterinary medicine and herd management under the wise supervision of Sibirska Niva specialists.

'Theory is very important, but only the hands-on experience allows farming specialists to build up professional competence', says Ivan Poddubniy, Deputy Regional Director of the Siberian region. 'We show all the opportunities for efficient production available at our company and tell the students about the overall potential of the agricultural industry. A deep insight into our production processes, interesting work alongside the leading experts and mutually beneficial interaction are extremely important to both the students and us.'

Only the most motivated and talented children are admitted into the agricultural class. The students must not only demonstrate good academic progress but have a calling for agriculture.

'There is no doubt that agricultural work is extremely important', says Artyom Gunther, one of the mentors and Manager of Penkovo dairy, Sibirska Niva. 'From my point of view, agricultural classes are essential to give children an opportunity to understand that farming is vital to the development of any country.'

On the farm, the students learn about modern farm machines, agricultural crops, organisation of working processes at a modern dairy. Specialists explain how to feed the cows and how important it is to formulate a balanced ration. EkoNiva focuses on feed quality that is why all fodder crops are grown in the company's fields.

'We place a special emphasis on cow health', continues Artem Gunther. 'Students often laugh when we tell them that our cows have a regular pedicure. It might sound funny, but hoof trimming is extremely important for cows. Our dairy beauties do not walk in the fields unlike grazing animals whose hooves naturally rub off. Concrete flooring calls for regular trimming procedures to keep cows healthy and comfortable. Besides, hoof health is essential for reproduction.'

To make the winter easier for calves, the students of agricultural classes make warm and beautiful jackets for them.

This creative idea came to Alina Kosogova, a ninth-form student of Maslyanino school, three years ago. She made the first jacket and soon became the key fashion designer of Sibirska Niva. Her unique project gave start to the calf healthcare practice now widely used on EkoNiva's farms – prevention of respiratory diseases in young stock by means of EkoGreen Kits (which are nothing else than calf jackets).

got a deeper understanding of farming. Now I know for sure that I want to study milk processing at Kemerovo Institute of food industry. After the university, I will come back to Maslyanino village to work at EkoNiva milk processing factory.'

Viktoria Yurko, one more agricultural class alumnus, is going to study agronomy at Novosibirsk Agricultural University. Now the girl is preparing for exams and taking care of her front garden. Except traditional vegetables, Viktoria grows lavender, sage and myrtle. Viktoria's favourite plant is jacaranda, a sub-tropical tree native to South America. This plant is thermophilic, that is why in West Siberia it is



Artyom Gunther: 'From my point of view, agricultural classes are essential to give children an opportunity to understand that farming is vital to the development of any country.'

impossible to grow it outdoors. Viktoria dreams of creating a new variety of this plant that will be able to grow in the local Siberian climate.

'Genetics and breeding are extremely interesting subjects', says Viktoria. 'I think it is a fascinating experience to produce new crop varieties. I learned about this at the agricultural class.'

Yesterday's students have a wide array of opportunities in front of them and an entire life, which they are starting with an agricultural background and a heart burning with enthusiasm!

By Tatyana IGNATENKO

One team – two awards!



EkoNivaAgro football team (Voronezh oblast) has taken part in Rosglavspor Cup Crimea 2020 in Yevpatoria. This tournament has become the first one for our employees after the long pause due to the lockdown. However, the break in training did not prevent them from scoring two victories!

Every year, EkoNivaAgro team participates in different countrywide, regional and district football competitions. This season was opened by the team only three weeks ago because of the COVID-19 lockdown. Having resumed training, the footballers quickly got in trim. Professionally coached by Vladimir Muravlev, EkoNivaAgro sports team

won silver and bronze medals in Rosglavspor Cup Crimea 2020 tournament.

'Initially, we had one team with 12 players', says Vladimir Muravlev. 'But one of the 16 teams dropped out of the competition and we were asked by the organisers to divide our sportsmen into two teams: EkoNivaAgro and EkoNivaAgro-2.'

EkoNivaAgro was second

in its group and got into the play-offs. In the quarter-finals, the team won the match with Magnes (Novorossiysk) in a penalty shoot-out with the final score of 3-2. In the next game, our sportsmen faced a dangerous opponent, Novatsentr. EkoNivaAgro conceded to the rival with a minimum score of 1-0. In the fight for the third place, our players beat Sevastopol team

RSVO and took a bronze medal in the Gold Cup competition.

'Of course, lack of exercise had a negative influence on the physical shape of the team members', continues Vladimir Muravlev. 'Before the tournament, we paid special attention to exercise, that is why our players managed to reach good results and play all the games without substitutions.'

EkoNivaAgro-2 became the third place winner in its division and got a chance to fight for the Silver Cup award. Our team, coached by Vladimir Muravlev, beat Novatsentr-2 in the quarter-finals with the score of 1-0. After that, EkoNivaAgro-2 met with Krymteplokomunenergo in the semi-finals. Our sportsmen won with a minimum score. However, in the finals, the award went to Druzhba Narodov.

'Our goal was to become one of the top three prize winners', summarises Vladimir Muravlev. 'We have done even more and won two sets of awards. Our players did their best, fighting for victory until the last moment. They played with passion, it was a pleasure to watch them. I would like to thank the management of EkoNivaAgro for the unique opportunity to participate in such competitions and for the promotion of sports within the enterprise. The team has good prospects for development, and I am sure that a lot of victories are in store for us!'

By Viktor BARGOTIN



Keep it up, EkoNiva!



The traditional dragon boat race in Voronezh was held on 26 July, on the Russian Navy Day.

On the warm sunny morning, crowds of people gathered around the modern rowing centre at Chernavskaya

dam. The race participants were warming up before the competition, the supporters were engaged in an intense discussion of the team

line-ups and passers-by were taking pictures against the background of the colourful boats some of which were displaying the white-and-green EkoNiva flags.

EkoNiva-Chernozemye team took part in the competition and showed an outstanding performance as usual! The team's 20-seat boat won a gold medal in the 200-metre race leaving no chance to the rivals.

From the very start, the team demonstrated efficient interaction, confidence and will to win. The team spirit seemed to have permeated the air around the boat making twenty people act as one.

'Our friendship and excellent teamwork have once again helped us to win the gold!' commented Stanislav Dolbilin, After-Sales Department Manager of

EkoNiva-Chernozemye, and the team captain. 'Last year, we came in first as well. We were so much inspired by the victory that this year, at the beginning of June, as soon as the lockdown restrictions were partially lifted and it became possible to gather for training in the open air, we started preparing for the race straight away. We had no doubt that we would win again!'

Besides the gold medal in the 20-seat boat race, EkoNiva-Chernozemye also won a bronze medal in the 10-seat boat competition. This is a very good result taking into account that the team has taken part in a smaller boat race for the first time.

Our congratulations to the boat racers! Keep it up, EkoNiva!

By Aleksandr KUTISHCHEV

A match with star players

One of the events of the traditional hockey tournament was held at the ice hockey palace n.a. Vyacheslav Fetisov in Bobrov, Voronezh oblast, on 29-30 July. A local team faced the Russian Press.

The squad of famous players has come to Voronezh oblast for the eighth time in the course of their hockey tour of Russia. Every year, the team takes part in charity tournaments to raise the popularity of the game and promote a healthy lifestyle in all regions of the country.

As always, The Russian Press was studded with hockey stars. Dmitriy Sychyov, a Euro-2008 bronze medal winner, Aleksey Kopeykin, a former professional hockey player, Anton Vernitskiy, a Channel One reporter, Denis Kazanskiy, a Match-TV sports commentator, and other media personalities hit the ice rink in Bobrov to outmuscle the locals.

Bobrov squad also had a couple of aces up their sleeve. The lineup was made up of

six EkoNivaAgro employees with Sergey Lyashko as the captain. The home team gave the guests a good fight, but the experience of their renowned contenders came into play, and two games ended with the final score of 4-7 in favour of The Russian Press.

'For our team, it was the first encounter after the quarantine', says Vyacheslav Zhuravlyov, EkoNivaAgro coach. 'We missed some goals, but managed to score a few too, which is a good result considering that the team had not trained for several months. Overall, EkoNivaAgro squad played a spectacular game and demonstrated excellent teamwork. I would like to say thank you to my team-mates for the commitment and to our fans – for their support and trust!'



Following the two games, Yuriy Shashkin, Deputy Head of Bobrov district, handed the cup of the tournament to Denis Kazanskiy, the captain of The Russian Press. The ice palace was still bubbling with excitement long after the medal ceremony was over. The star players signed autographs and chatted with the local

hockey fans who were taking memorable photos with them.

For EkoNivaAgro staff, the games with The Russian Press became a real challenge in the lead-up to the coming season of the regional Night Hockey League.

By Viktor BARGOTIN

Welcoming guests!

A trade fair called Kaluga Style Hospitality took place in Kaluga. The attendees of the event had an opportunity to taste and buy meat delicacies, pastry and dairy products supplied by the leading food manufacturers.

EKONIVA displayed its high-quality natural dairy products which are so popular with the residents of the city. Milk, sour cream and kefir are the time-proven dairy best-sellers, and fruit yoghurts and quark desserts are a must have for any family with children.

The Sashnikovs opt for a healthy lifestyle. Olga, the mother of the family, says that she is very careful about choosing products at the supermarket. She always studies the package carefully and pays attention to the information on the ingredients and the manufacturer. Olga makes sure that her two children get only the best food!

'One of my daughters, Anya, drinks only ryazhenka, while the other one, Dasha, likes fruit quark desserts', says Olga. 'My husband can't live without milk – he drinks no less than 2 litres per day!'

Another fan of toothsome dairy treats, a five-year-old Sonya Kolesnikova, was very impatient to get to EkoNiva booth, pulling her mum's hand to make her move quicker. Sonya's favourite product is strawberry flavoured drinking yoghurt.

'Our motto is "Not a day without yoghurt or kefir", says Svetlana Kolesnikova, Sofya's mother, smiling. 'Both products make an excellent snack – delicious and healthy at the same time. We adore EKONIVA yoghurts and buy them on a regular basis.'

EKONIVA Fitness Line drinking yoghurts are made from premium-quality milk that contains easily digestible protein, calcium, and live starter culture.

'These yoghurts contain a lot of natural fruits and minimum sugar', says Irina Nechaeva, EkoNiva Retail Trade Department Manager. 'They are ideal for children and adults doing sport and keeping to a healthy diet.'

The Kuznetsovs family love Medynskiy cheese produced by EkoNiva. Grilled cheese sandwiches and pizza with this cheese are two of their favorite foods.

'The product is of superb



quality', says Marina Kuznetsova, 'there is always a piece of Medynskiy cheese in our fridge. The children can add some cheese into a bowl of pasta or make a grilled cheese sandwich in a microwave oven. We trust EkoNiva and hope to try new kinds of cheese soon!'

EkoNiva specialists are always glad to receive such positive feedback and do their best to make the consumers happy.

'Medynskiy cheese is in great demand', says Irina Nechaeva, EkoNiva Retail Trade Department Manager. This cheese is made from natural milk produced on the company's farms. We employ the highest quality standards and use unique recipes to produce cheese with an

exquisitely tender creamy taste, which makes it so popular with the consumers.'

Aleksandr Ivanov, Head of the local self-government, also visited the fair. He was curious to taste the products which have won the hearts of Kaluga residents.

'I am happy to see that local food manufacturers boost their output and improve the production quality every year', observed Aleksandr Ivanov. 'This indicates that the agricultural sector in our region continues its successful development.'

EKONIVA dairy produce is extremely popular in Kaluga and Kaluga oblast. To date, seven retail brand shops have been opened in the region. Two more shops will be launched in September, and by the end of 2020 there will be 10 of them!

By Darya DENISOVA





Trending questions

EkoNiva's consumers forward hundreds of questions on WhatsApp and by hotline number given on each EkoNiva package. In this issue, we are going to tackle five trickiest questions and take the wraps off some EkoNiva's recipes. Viktoria Golyshkina, milk quality specialist of EkoNiva-Food Products, helps us to dispel 'dairy myths.'

'Lifetime' of milk

Why do natural EkoNiva products keep the taste and stay good a few days past its declared shelf life date?

– It is evidence of high hygiene requirements at the production facility and excellent microbiological quality of the product. We use only best milk from our own farms and apply the most advanced technologies for you to enjoy the taste and benefits of the milk. The shelf life of all our dairy products is validated by accredited labs, for which a set of organoleptic, physicochemical and microbiological tests are carried out. Our listed shelf life includes a safety margin also estimated by the lab procedure. However, we recommend consuming our product before the date declared on the package expires.

Natural in every aspect

Is UHT milk less beneficial than pasteurised milk?

– For UHT milk we also use natural milk from our farms. It is heat treated at higher temperature than pasteurised milk. Besides, the 6-layer aseptic package preserves all the properties.

The taste and flavour of our UHT milk are no different from

the pasteurised, which has been confirmed by numerous customers' tastings.

The shelf life of UHT milk may vary from 6 to 9 months, which is ensured by careful process equipment control and the most stringent sterility requirements at each stage.

No milk fat replacers!

Why do drops of fat float up the milk surface after heating? Does it indicate that palm oil was added?

– EkoNiva does not use palm oil or any other fat substitute in milk processing! We care about our consumers' health and use only cow's milk for production. Just before the boiling point, the milk fat coagulates with denatured proteins and calcium and phosphorus transformed to non-

soluble compounds and forms a film over the whole surface, which proves high quality of the milk. Another explanation might be that the milk was past its listed shelf life and formed some coagulated particles looking like fat. So, make sure the shelf-life of the product is ok and the containers you use are clean.

The RF Government Order No 50 dated 28 January 2019, which took effect in July 2020, obliges retailers to separate the produce made from natural milk from the produce with fat replacers placing them on different shelves marked with special abbreviations and manufacturers – to ensure proper labelling of package.

The government now tightly regulates and controls the

issue. EkoNiva products are placed on the shelves marked as 'No Milk Fat Replacer' at any shop and you can be confident that there is no palm or any other oil in our milk.

No secret ingredients

Why do the labels of EkoNiva yoghurt and quark feature black carrot juice?

– Our company uses only high-quality fruit preparations containing real fruits and natural colours and flavours. To reach the right shade with natural colours, concentrated black carrot juice is additionally blended into



strawberry and cherry yoghurts and blueberry quark. As strange as it may seem, the black carrot has nothing to do with a carrot, in fact, it is a rhizome of the sunflower family, which is rich in vitamins and other nutrients.

'Spicy' kefir

Why does open EkoNiva kefir turns a little 'spicy' after a few days in the fridge?

– Real kefir is a 'live' product. The distinct 'spice' or 'crisp' flavour is caused by intensive fermentation of the yeast starter. The taste of fresh kefir is soft. However, after opening, fermentation processes are activated in the exposed kefir and therefore, several day later, it develops more expressed flavours.

Dear friends, our consumers' wellness and accurate and transparent labelling are our top priorities and the basis of the brand integrity. We are happy to address any of your questions. You can always contact Stefan Duerr, EkoNiva Group President on WhatsApp +7 930 421-44-44 or call a Quality Management specialist by 8 800 550-57-00.



Summer vibes



6-10 October*

Agrosalon 2020 Trade Show

Venue: halls 13,14,15, pavilion 2, IEC Crocus Expo, Krasnogorsk, Moscow oblast

Organiser: Russian Association of Specialised Machinery and Equipment Manufacturers Rosselpetmash, German Association of Agricultural Machinery Manufacturers VDMA

* The events may be postponed or cancelled depending on the epidemiological situation

18-19 October*

Golden Autumn 2020 Trade Fair

Venue: Palace of Entertainment and Sports, 126, Krasnoarmeyskaya st., Tomsk

Organiser: Department for Social and Economic Development of Tomsk oblast

27-29 October*

AgroExpoSiberia

Venue: Sports Centre TEMP, 9, 1st Baltiyskiy proyezd, Barnaul

Organiser: DLG RUS, LLC



ekoniva.company



ekoniva.company



ekonivacompany



EKONIVA
ЭКОНИВА

Publisher and founder of journal «ЭкоНива-Вести/ EkoNiva-News»: IA EkoNiva-Media LLC

Registered office:
79A Radishchev Street, 305004, Kursk

Editor-in-Chief:

Ms. Svetlana Ivanovna Weber

Address of the editorial office,

publisher:

79A Radishchev st., 305004, Kursk,

tel. +7 (4712) 39 26 60

www.ekoniva-apk.ru

vesti@ekoniva-apk.com

The journal «ЭкоНива-Вести/EkoNiva-News» is registered by the Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Communication and Mass Communications. Registered Certificate for Mass Media **ПИ № ФС77 - 34820 of 23 December 2008**. Signed for printing According to the schedule: 09.10.2020 at 11 am, In fact: 09.10.2020 at 11 am. Issue date: 19.10.2020

Translated by the International Projects Department of EkoNiva-APK Holding, LLC

Printed by VIP Publishing House LLC, 51st Mokovsky lane, 305007, Kursk
The circulation of the issue: 910 copies. Order № vesti@ekoniva-apk.com
Distributed free of charge