EKONIVA
ЭКОНИВА
news
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20 years together!

EkoNiva
gathers its friends together. Off to the celebration.

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Food security and the Crimea crisis

The issue of Russian food security emerged in the 2000s. In 2010 a Food Security Doctrine was adopted. Over this time, much has been done to develop the farming segment. However, joining the WTO and the subsequent reductions in customs duties did not improve the farmers' position. Overall, Russia is now more accessible to imports. And this has happened despite the fact that in terms of basic food products, including dairy items, Russia had not yet achieved the desired self-sufficiency.

Today following the Crimea's annexation and Russia's ensuing stance on the Ukrainian issue, the West is threatening Russia with economic sanctions which put the country in a rather vulnerable position.

On the whole, however, the situation is not so bad for the farmers, considering that the state once again is declaring farming among its priorities, meaning that it will support the farmers and enable them to turn out more food. On the other hand, farming depends on modern means of production. Effective development of the farming industry needs imported agricultural equipment, seeds, chemicals, veterinary preparations, semen, etc. Once restrictions are introduced in the wake of the sanctions, the farming industry will be hit really hard and the consequences may be severe.

Another consequence of the crisis may be the buildup of the defence budget. It is desirable that this not happen at the expense of funds allocated for developing the farming sector, since food security is just as important as military security. People must be supplied with domestically produced food and the country must be duly protected against foodstuff shortages.

Of course, Western countries will also suffer from the economic sanctions. Russia is a fine market for the import of foods and manufacturing equipment. Europe wishes to further sell cheese, fruits, and agricultural equipment on the Russian market. The economic sanctions will hardly change the political situation, but they can easily damage farming integration.

Work must be done together and the obstacles which arise ought to be negotiated by joint efforts. Russian and Western farmers must not oppose each other. On the contrary, they should cooperate toward peace. By pursuing this policy they will cope with all calamities and cataclysms, be they brought on by the Crimea crisis or anything else in the world.

Stefan DUERR,
President of the EkoNiva Group of Companies

EkoNiva plays host

This year will mark EkoNiva's 20th anniversary. EkoNiva today consists of two large holding companies: EkoNiva-APK, a European leader in milk production, and EkoNiva-Tekhnika, a leading supplier of imported agricultural equipment.

Bringing friends and partners together for anniversary celebrations simultaneously in one location would be simply unrealistic. Therefore it was decided to hold several events on the occasion of the company's 20th anniversary.

The kick-off of the celebrations will be given in Voronezh oblast. There, on 6 June, a Fashion-Farmer event that has caught customers' fancy will take place.

EkoNiva-Semena and the Zashchitnoye farm will arrange a festive Field Day on 24 June. This will be devoted to new crops and their varieties.

In late July, EkoNiva looks forward to hailing guests from Ryazan oblast, where a new servicing centre will be opened. On an area of 8.5 ha, a modern building will be erected with repair workshops, stores, show- and classrooms. The total investments will amount to 230 million rubles.

Those unable to enjoy the hospitality of EkoNiva in summer will do this in October. The final celebratory party will take place in Moscow during the Agrosalon exhibition. Welcome. EkoNiva is always glad to see its guests!

By Svetlana WEBER

Outstanding strength

The Ryazan branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika presents a rich package of John Deere tilling and seeding equipment to local farmers.

The demonstration took place on one of the fields of Beryozovo LLC (Sasovsky district of Ryazan oblast). Sergey Shashel, head of the enterprise, said that the strength of the modern agricultural implement is in its versatility. Reliability is also important, but in the case of John Deere equipment it goes without saying.

The guests were keenly interested in the new models of John Deere tilling tools, such as the JD 2623 disc harrow and JD 2720 disc deep ripper. Thanks to increased mechanical strength, these tools can till very hard compacted soil.

The JD 2623 is finely suited both to pre-seeding soil preparation in spring and treatment of persistent crop residues in autumn. The wide variety of models, with a grip width from 6.3 to 15 m, makes it possible to till a field of any size.

The JD 2720 deep ripper performs such operations as crushing and distributing crop residues, ripping and grinding compacted soil, embedding and mixing crop residues, as well as soil surface levelling, all in a single pass.

"This deep ripper is one of the most versatile tilling machines in the world," says Ivan Glebov, head of the sales department, Ryazan branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. "Thanks to its deep tilling capability (up to 47 cm) the JD 2720 can easily replace a plough."

The outstanding strength of John Deere machines impressed the Ryazan farmers so deeply that many of them decided to purchase them as early as this season.

By Yulia SALKOVA

All about milk

The Academy of Dairy Science started operations with a scientific and practical conference for schoolchildren of the Liskinsky district, Voronezh oblast.

Christina Frank, the project coordinator, said that in the new season the Academy has prepared not only an interesting but also an informative and serious scientific agenda.

At school of the Zaluzhnoye village, they held the first conference in which children of the Liskinsky district schools took part. It was entitled "Milk as Old as Mankind".

The children highlighted the most diverse aspects, i.e. the usefulness, history, and culture of consuming milk and dairy products in the world, starting from the Liskinsky district and ending with India. Daria Krasnova, the youngest of the children, a schoolgirl of the second class in Liski school No. 9, spoke about the results of a sociological survey conducted among second class children who answered questions about the uses of milk.

"The jury was agreeably surprised to see the versatile efforts of the schoolchildren," said Natalia Krivtsova, a leading expert in the department of education, Liskinsky district. "It was a joy to see that works were supported by their own experiments, investigations and even sociological surveys. We are very pleased that the children are enthusiastic about the idea of research into milk, rather than fast-food."

In the end, the jury chose four winners. They were seventh class schoolgirls Irina Zarochentseva (presentation about the Russian Pancake Week) and Yelizaveta Voronina (history of stockbreeding in the Soviet era based on the example of the Michurin collective farm) and their younger mates from the 3rd and 4th classes, Stanislav Nikolayev (history of condensed milk) and Danila Borzykh who fascinated everyone by his tale about milk and dairy cattle breeding in Liskinsky district (based on the experience of his grandmother and great grandmother).

"As it happens, milk is good not only for health, but also helps to remind us about our ancestors," says Christina Frank. "We were profoundly touched by all the works, the best of which will go to the dairy museum of the Academy of Dairy Sciences which was opened this year."

By Yulia SALKOVA

Closer to Siberia

In the coming days, GEA Farm Technologies will open a new logistics centre in Novosibirsk.

The first lot of milking equipment cleaners and udder care formulas has been delivered. On the occasion of the opening, the GEA Farm Technologies is arranging a special promotional sale at which all those items can be purchased at a 15% discount.

Bjoerne Drechsler, GEA Farm Technologies Rus LLC director general, emphasised that thanks to effective logistics and distribution, the goods manufactured by the company in Voronezh oblast will be more accessible to customers in the Siberian and Far East regions.

"We are actively cooperating with farmers of the Novosibirsk oblast," says Alexander Venglinsky, EkoNiva-Farm executive director. "For us, one of biggest dealers of GEA Farm Technologies, the opening of the centre is quite a significant event. This will improve logistics and the interaction between the producer, supplier and customer."

By Anna BORDUNOVA

Seed symphony

Executives of the Kursk oblast farming enterprises met at an annual regional seminar to discuss the main tasks in the current year. EkoNiva-Semena participated in the event, presenting its highly productive varieties of field crops.

For the first time in the last few years, the seeding in Kursk oblast started in late March. The favourable weather enabled farmers to come on the field. The field work began with dressing of winter crops, more than 500,000 hectares of which have been sown for the 2014 harvest. This year the Kursk oblast has increased the sown areas of soya, maize, and grain crops.

At this event, the EkoNiva-Semena specialists offered new varieties of crops to the farmers. Among the new kinds of peas were the Madras green grain variety and highly productive Danish-selected Jackpot. The variety of Canadian soya, OAK Prudence, drew the attention of all. Its special feature is adaptability to different conditions. Its albumen content reaches 42%. The plant growers also got interested in new varieties of brewing barley of Danish and French selection, Evergreen and Calcule. Evergreen is well suited for growing based on low cost technologies. The variety forms good clusters, resists diseases, and requires no treatment by fungicide. Calcule is characterised by high productivity and excellent immunity. This is also a fine raw material for brewing.

By Anna BORDUNOVA

Stir at AgroVyatka

Over 60 producers and suppliers of agricultural equipment demonstrated their products at the AgroVyatka 2014 exhibition. The Kirov branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika pleasantly surprised the guests with its new solutions.

EkoNiva has come up with a product line of new equipment, such as John Deere tractors, Fliegl trailers, Lemken seeder and JCB telescopic loaders. For the first time, used machines were presented, and they found ready demand. The second-hand JD 7820 tractor and JCB 531-70 AGRI loader left for the Kirov Stud Farm right from the demonstration site.

"I know the quality of these machines very well. We use over ten units of John Deere equipment in our agricultural production," says Boris Ozhogin, director of the stud farm. "We never once doubted the purchase. We checked the main subsystems. All worked well. For machines like these five years of operation is not a serious challenge!"

Today 80% of the grain drying equipment in the Kirov oblast is showing serious wear. Given the new conditions of state support, the farmers are particularly interested in replacing this type of equipment.

"This year, the oblast budget will subsidise the construction of grain drying facilities by paying 30 to 50% of the cost of its equipment," noted Sergey Zykov, executive director of the Kirov branch. "This is a good chance to upgrade the grain processing equipment."

The company offers a complete range of services in erecting modern grain drying facilities from AGI, a North American manufacturer. The service ranges from design to delivery and installation of the equipment. Nikolai Kharkin, head of the Sredneivkino agricultural enterprise, puts his moneys on Fliegl ASW trailers. His company already uses two ASW 381 trailers and acquired one more at the exhibition.

Meanwhile, the partners of the Kirov branch look forward to the opening of a servicing centre whose construction is now in full swing. Many hope that as early as this winter their equipment will be repaired in the new servicing centre.

By Yekaterina GALUSHKINA

The impossible is made possible

This is the fourth year at EkoNiva-APK of the EkoNiva-Student scholarship programme under which students of the Russian agricultural universities participate in a contest for the best research work on agriculture. For the duration of five months, the company pays the winners a scholarship equal to 6,000 rubles.

In 2013, 130 graduates from 28 agrarian universities of Russia participated in the contest. Nineteen competitive works in four categories made it to the finals: "Mechanization in Farming", "Agriculture, Agronomy, and Plant Production", "Animal Husbandry" and "Veterinary Science."

Defence of a thesis on the subject "Mechanisation in Farming" took place in Detchino village, where the largest facilities of the EkoNiva servicing centre are located. After the thesis defence, a tour of the servicing centre was arranged for the students. At the workshops, they saw how engineering service specialists prepare the equipment for a new farming season. The graduates visited Kaluzhskaya Niva, one of the farms of the EkoNiva-APK agricultural enterprise, where last year a robotised stock breeding and dairy production facility was commissioned. The students unanimously agreed that they had never before seen such amazing machines as the milking robots. Incidentally, Yulia Kobeleva, one of the winners of the EkoNiva-Student 2012 contest, now works at the enterprise.

On other subjects, the defence proceeded on a leading dairy production farm of the EkoNivaAgro holding company.

Based on the contest results, eight scholarship recipients were designated. Second place went to a work devoted to animal mastitis treatment by Yulia Shutova, a 5th year student of the Don State Agrarian University. Yulia was very glad that she participated in the contest, where she learned about such an advanced enterprise as EkoNiva.

"Last autumn, I underwent a period of practical training at EkoNivaAgro," says Yulia Shutova. "Here I assured myself that the impossible is possible! At long last, I saw in real life how the Carousel milking system operates. I also acquired a rich knowledge of new technologies of calf care and animal feeding, particularly, calf rearing. On graduation from the university, I would like to work for EkoNivaAgro!"

By Anna BORDUNOVA

From the practical point of view

Fourth year students of the Agrarian Technologies Department of the Kursk Agricultural Academy and tutors of the Chair of Vegetation Material Storage and Processing Technology hold a training session at the Zashchitnoye farm, a seed production enterprise of EkoNiva-APK.

The students visited a new seed production plant for grass treatment (2 t/h capacity). The specialists said that this is a unique project, since there are just a few such plants in Russia. The guests watched the seed cleaning, drying, grading and packaging. They also evaluated the technical equipment of the facilities.

The students consolidated their theoretical knowledge of grain storage by watching the operation of the modern Twister mini-elevator (20,000 tonnes). Vadim Tsukanov, head of the seed quality control department, familiarised the students with the seed trial laboratory which monitors the quality of seeds due for sowing. The students were told that a state variety test plot operates on the territory of the enterprise where new varieties undergo preliminary trials.

The prospective specialists observed with interest a modern potato storage facility (2,800 tonnes) fitted with a state-of-the-art ventilation system. This year there are plans to plant four varieties of potatoes on an area of 150 hectares.

The students were informed that the enterprise actively supports young specialists, building houses for them and arranging regular training sessions in Russia and abroad.

After the excursion, many students thought about coming to Zashchitnoye for practice and subsequently staying here for permanent work.

By Anna BORDUNOVA

Roman Marochkin: “Changes come the hard way”

Russian farmers have started the second season of work in new economic conditions and with a new type of state support, the so-called per-hectare subsidies. We spoke about “the new times” with Roman Marochkin, director of the Mayak LLC. This is one of the largest and oldest agricultural enterprises in the Ryazan oblast.

We met with Roman at a demonstration of John Deere seeding and tilling equipment arranged by the Ryazan branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika.

Shock therapy

“Today the lot of Russian farmers is not easy,” says Roman. “I can’t say that about all branches of farming, but generally the agricultural industry was not prepared to join the WTO. I don’t blame the WTO for all the problems in our country. Joining was necessary but ought to have happened some two or three years later. Our agricultural enterprises were too weak for ‘free flight’. Thus far we’re unable to compete against Europe in anything except soil fertility. But this alone is not enough.

We’ve started getting per-hectare subsidies instead of the previous benefits for purchasing fuel, lubricants, mineral fertilisers and other materials. But in terms of ‘real money,’ these payments are many times less than what we had before 2013, even with all the multiplying coefficients applied. Such subsidies are absolutely not comparable with those in Europe.

Like many of my colleagues, I believe that per-hectare support, as a tool, is better than the huge package of subsidies we had in the past. The subsidy approval and delivery procedure is simpler and more convenient, but its amount is miserable. I hope that the Ministry of Agriculture will increase the payments. I understand that changes can’t be easy, but what we’re going through looks and feels like shock therapy. Even after a year, I still can’t realise what has happened to Russian farmers. A shock or attempted therapy?”

Is there a way out?

“We see the solution in diversifying our production. We grow grains and pulse crops and cultivate beetroots. The annual productivity of the latter varies between 42 and 47 tonnes per hectare. This year

Mayak LLC, Gavrilovskoye village, Sasovsky district, Ryazan oblast

- in operation since 1930 (Mayak Truda state farm)
- since 2002, part of the Sotnitsynskaya Sakharnaya Kompaniya LLC
- ploughed fields — 10,000 ha

we shall sow 2,200 hectares. This is a sizable part of the sown areas in the oblast.

In addition to our traditional crop production, we are also trying to develop dairy husbandry. We did some previously, but as an extra line. Today the demand for milk is high and its price is rising. There are no low cost imports of dairy products and domestically produced stuff is in short supply. Last year the country's milk production fell by 1.2 million tonnes and there are no forecasts for improvement. Under such circumstances, the state is acutely interested in developing this industry. Proof of this is the resumed subsidies for dairy husbandry.

Today we have 450 milch cows of locally selected Holstein variety. However, we can't yet boast high milk yields. On average they are only 14 litres per day. But we are determined to study, to experiment and to develop this line of business."

EkoNiva-News dossier

Roman Marochkin

- **2001 —** graduated from Sasovsky Agricultural College; **in 2007,** from the Ryazan University of Agrarian Technology;
- **2010-2013 —** deputy head of administration, chief of department of agriculture and Sasovsky municipal district administration, Ryazan oblast;
- **since 2013 —** director of Mayak LLC;
- in free time pursues fishing, hunting and car repair.

Only modern equipment in modern times

"On joining the WTO, each farmer re-examined the economy of his farm. We've cut many expense items, trying to do without some things. But the soil must be treated and economising on tilling appliances is out of the question. The imported appliances, however, are not subsidised, except fodder procuring types. Domestically manufactured agricultural tools come in a poor second to their foreign counterparts. Our machines are inefficient and unreliable. This saddens me as a Russian, but as the head of an enterprise shaping the fate of people and production, I realise that highly efficient machines are a must-have. Therefore I'm glad that dealers of agricultural equipment arrange demonstrations of machines. A working machine is the best possible advertisement."

By Yulia SALKOVA

Forum of colleagues

At the Moscow Forum of Machine Operators and Agronomists, farmers discussed some issues of agricultural modernisation. EkoNiva-Tekhnika participated in the event, presenting its latest specimens of farming equipment.

When he opened the forum, Vladimir Barsukov, Minister of Agriculture of the Moscow oblast, noted that this year 4.2 billion rubles were allocated to the region's agriculture, 400 million more than a year previously. The Moscow oblast farmers will get 20% reimbursement of the cost of equipment they purchase.

Participants of the forum were introduced to new examples of agricultural machines and equipment. Among them is the John Deere 6150M wheeled tractor, which first appeared at the Agritechnica 2013 exhibition in Germany.

"The John Deere developers created the 6150M model expressly for Russia," says Dmitry Kostev, deputy head of the EkoNiva-Tekhnika sales department. "This model is a worthy replacement of the popular John Deere 6930 tractor. The new machine has an improved hydraulic system with pump capacity reaching 114 l/min. In addition, it is fitted with an upgraded transmission and premium class cabin."

The 6150M tractor interested specialists of both large agricultural holdings and farmers. Many would like to have a machine like this on their farms. On some farms, the new series 6 machine will start seeding as early as this year.

By Anna BORDUNOVA

Caterpillar tractor, an ideal machine on the field!

The 8th interregional Agrosezon exhibition was held at the exhibition centre of the Voronezh Agricultural University. It was attended by farmers of the region seeking interesting solutions from high technology.

Each year EkoNiva-Chernozemye starts the new season at this event alongside agricultural workers. This year the demand for caterpillar tractors that began as early as last season is expected to grow. The company came up with the John Deere 9510RT (510 hp) caterpillar tractor.

The specialists of EkoNiva-Chernozemye point out that these machines differ considerably from the ones that operated on Soviet collective farms. They are based on a new conception which includes modifications in caterpillars combined with excellent traction and care of soil. In the end, this gave birth to a virtually new caterpillar tractor.

"Tests at the Nebraska Independent Research Institute showed that in terms of power the skidding of the JD 9510RT caterpillar tractor is 0.2% lower than that of a similar model of a another brand," says Stanislav Kurkin, head of the EkoNiva-Chernozemye director for development. "We, too, carried out tests on the farm of a customer of ours and compared the fuel consumption of the JD9510 RT tractor to that of a similar model from the other brand. In a 24 hour period, the JD 9510RT consumed 382 litres less than its competitor. What an impressive performance! They truly say that an old caterpillar machine is the right thing on the field!"

EkoNiva-Chernozemye also introduced exhibition guests to a new cultivating mower, the John Deere 1745, which is a successor to the time-tested DB model, known for its simplicity and reliability. It is a recommended solution for both minimum and no-till technologies. The mower mounts on medium power tractors. The movable design of the JD 1745 frame ideally follows features of the terrain, and, in conjunction with the MaxEmerge seed-out sections, makes the seeding process pin-point accurate.

By Yulia SALKOVA

Based on intellect

On the eve of the new farming season, the farmers of Tula oblast met with EkoNiva-Tekhnika specialists over a round table to discuss the burning issues of the agricultural industry.

Among the subjects was the impact of the current economic situation in the country on procurement of farming equipment. Gennady Nepomnyashchy, EkoNiva-Tekhnika executive director, pointed out that the high currency exchange rate has led to a 15% rise in the cost of modernisation compared to last November. The farmers realise that re-equipment is a must in any situation. EkoNiva will help its partners find a way out of the present predicament. The company offers a flexible payment system and various financial schemes for purchasing the equipment on beneficial terms. Among them is a fast and convenient John Deere Financial leasing plan.

The John Deere Financial LLC offers different leasing programmes for purchasing self-propelled, trailed and mounted appliances. The customer has at his disposal a beneficial price rise coefficient, seasonal chart of leasing payments and an individual approach to dealing with him. The period for review of applications is up to 5 days. EkoNiva arranges spring promotional sales. For example, the JCB loader spare parts are sold at a 10% discount.

The farmers were told about new John Deere machines. Series 6, 8 and 9 tractors, series S and W grain combine harvesters, fodder choppers, and the first samples of tilling and seeding equipment will appear on the Russian fields this year.

EkoNiva specialists pay special attention to smart software systems and services thanks to which the equipment will soon be controlled straight from the office.

JDLink, the innovative telematic system from the John Deere Corporation, makes it possible to fully control the equipment, fuel consumption, and operating time as well as to plan maintenance and receive a variety of diagnostic data for analysing and optimising operations. As from this year, the JDLink smart system is installed as a 3-year free subscription on all series 8 and 9 new tractors, grain and fodder harvesters and self-propelled sprayers.

JCB has a smart development of its own. This is the LiveLink system that controls every step of the loader in real time and monitors the fuel consumption. The LiveLink System comes supplied with a standard loader component package.

“LiveLink enables the servicing department to precisely plan its work,” says Semyon Kostin, a JCB representative. “It allows us to establish and observe the machine maintenance schedule, service the equipment in good time and thus avoid delays and stoppages.”

Much attention is given to the work of the servicing department. Aleksey Plakhotnikov, head of the engineering division of Tula branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika, pointed out that over its seven years of operation the servicing department has grown considerably, so that it can promptly respond to customer calls.

By Anna BORDUNOVA

The English accent

Each year EkoNiva arranges trips abroad for its partners to agricultural equipment manufacturing plants. This is a unique opportunity to see how equipment used on Russian farms is being manufactured. This time a group of customers went to the UK to see the production of JCB telescopic loaders.

The visit began with a tour of the JCB museum, where experts recounted the history of the company, familiarised the guests with rare old samples of the machines and revealed the plans for the future. The company intends to start building two new plants in Staffordshire and to invest in development of infrastructure. Construction of a golf course began not far from the plant. All the work is being done using JCB machines. A game of golf will be the chief attraction of the agenda for guests.

The farmers visited the world JCB spare parts supply centre. Well-organised logistics makes it possible to deliver spare parts within 24 hours to any point in the world.

At the facility workshops, the guests saw a complete cycle of the machine's manufacture. The modern equipment used here includes laser metal cutters, robotic machines and fully automatic assembly lines.

The farmers saw JCB machines in operation on the farm of Anthony Benford, the plant director. Twelve people work here with their aids, the loaders. The farmers liked that before offering new models the JCB specialists test them on their own farms. Thus, they detect and eliminate the machines' weak points.

Mikhail Troinin, director-general of Rodnik LLC, Voronezh oblast, was visiting the JCB plant together with EkoNiva specialists for the second time.

"After the first trip to the JCB production facilities, I had not hesitation about buying a telescopic loader," Mikhail Troinin tells us. "Thanks to the machines' quality, reliability and versatility, the company fully lives up to its reputation of world leader in telescopic loader manufacturing. I assured myself of this more than once. In the near future we plan to expand our production and acquire the JCB 541-70 loader."

By Anna BORDUNOVA

JCB does the best job!

The new JCB SSL 175 telescopic loaders appeared on the Russian market very recently. EkoNiva gave the farmers an opportunity to test these machines on their own farms.

The JCB SSL 175 loader demonstrated its capabilities at eleven agricultural enterprises of the Moscow, Tula, Ryazan, Kaluga, Vladimir and Kirov oblasts, as well as in the Perm Territory.

At the Molochny Produkt Group of Companies, Ryazan oblast, engineers found it interesting to test the JCB SSL 175 PowerBoom loader fitted with a lateral swivel system and a single-beam jib, given that the farm already uses a similar loader, though of a different brand. The engineers pointed out that JCB offers a number of advantages. It performs all the loading and unloading operations much faster, moving at a speed of 18 to 20 km per hour, while its competitor's maximum speed is only 13 to 14 km/h. They also liked the agility of the loader. It easily comes through the smallest of gates and passages, which are too narrow for other loaders.

"The JCB SSL 175 loader did the best possible job!" says Alexander Teryoshin, sales manager of the Ryazan branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. "It distributed the fodder on the preparation table, cleaned the stalls and was used as a loader in snow clearing."

Company specialists generally believe it is a joy to use the JCB machine on the farm! It is simple to control and needs no extra manipulations from the operator, enabling him to carefully monitor the work process.

Following the demonstrations, many company managers fell to thinking about acquiring the JCB equipment.

By Anna BORDUNOVA

Loading operations at the Ilkino agricultural production cooperative, Vladimir oblast

Work on the fodder preparation table at Molochny Produkt Group of Companies, Ryazan oblast

Optimum solution

EkoNiva-Sibir has held a number of seminars on equipment and technologies for the farmers of Novosibirsk and Tomsk oblasts. Their main goal was to help the farmers find the optimum solution for high yield harvests.

At this event, the farmers pointed out that the last two years were particularly difficult. The abnormal drought of 2012 was followed by showers that were just as abnormal, which made it impossible to gather the harvest fully and on time. Given that the fields practically had not been treated in autumn, the farmers encountered a variety of problems in grain quality, seed stock and soil preparation for spring sowing.

Willy Drews, EkoNiva adviser in agrarian technologies, gave several recommendations on field work. John Deere 730 pneumatic seeders, suited to sowing based on the traditional and no-till technology, are very popular in the Siberian region. This machine can sow in direct mode, i.e. tilling and sowing at the same time. Willy Drews recommends, prior to sowing, to cultivate the field by the Strawmaster toothed harrow from Degelman; it evenly distributes the straw by its powerful (16 cm) teeth. If the farm uses Rapid seeders from Vaderstad, it is necessary to shallowly cultivate the soil (to a depth of 3-4 cm) using the Carrier cultivators from the same manufacturer. Under no circumstances is it allowed to cultivate deeply before sowing. The seeds must lie in a hard seed bed.

Together with the John Deere Corporation, EkoNiva offers the John Deere Financial leasing scheme to farmers. Danila Lazarev, John Deere finance manager, spoke about special offers under the leasing programme which provide highly advantageous rates for some kinds of John Deere equipment.

By Anna BORDUNOVA

Stand by for seeding!

The Ryazan branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika arranged something like an initiation ceremony for the farmers of the central region embarking on the sowing campaign.

The event took place at the facility of the servicing centre of the Ryazan branch in Polenskoye village, 2 km from Ryazan.

Specialists of the company and of Swedish concern Vaderstad familiarised farmers with the Top Down and Carrier tilling systems and the Tempo sowing machine for cultivated crops. They also presented the Rapid seeding system, the winner of a gold medal in the contest "The best farming machine of 2013."

The presentation of each machine was accompanied by consultations on the subject of farming from doctor of agronomy, Willy Drews.

"At the seminar, we spoke not only about the technical capabilities of Vaderstad equipment, but also about the results achieved when using them," says Sergey Krupsky, director of the Ryazan branch of EkoNiva-Tekhnika. "One can be armed 'to the teeth' with all sorts of tools but still be unable to obtain material or economic returns. Nothing like that will happen with Vaderstad tools. They are universal and multifunctional, all of which assures not only a rich harvest but also savings of time, power, funds and land resources."

As per tradition, guests of the seminar participated in a raffle, which brought them presents from EkoNiva and its partners, along with the chief prize, a trip this summer to the Vaderstad facility in Sweden.

By Yulia SALKOVA

A drill also needs understanding!

The Seed Hawk (Väderstad) stubble grain drill appeared on the Russian market around 8 years ago. The machine received a lot of comments, both positive and not so positive. Some farmers are wary of the no-till technology, others of its large row spacing (25 cm) and still others have had bad experience with it.

However, Vladimir Pavlenko, head of a farming enterprise in Kochenevsky district, Novosibirsk oblast, insists the Seed Hawk machine just needs to be properly understood. Then its full potential will become clear. As Vladimir points out, Seed Hawk is worthy of respect for many of its capabilities.

Reliability

"We've purchased the 18 m Seed Hawk machine in 2006," says Vladimir Pavlenko. "Over this time, it has sown more than 37,000 hectares. We also use another drill of a famous manufacturer. Its operating tools grind down after two thousand hectares. However, over the same period, the Seed Hawk tools have lost not more than 15% to wear. And there wasn't a single breakage all through that time. This seeder is practically eternal."

Excellent yield and planting precision

"We were not particularly impressed when we first tried Seed Hawk on the stubble. The yield was low, the inter-row spacing 10 cm wider than traditional, and the seeding by far not as precise as guaranteed. But we decided that Vaederstad would not offer a substandard machine to farmers. We probably just didn't understand properly how to use this equipment correctly. So we turned to EkoNiva, and they contacted the manufacturing plant. We adjusted the seeder together and that's how we came to know its secrets.

As it happens, Seed Hawk must handle crop residues finely crushed by the combine harvester. Once we met this requirement, the productivity rose on average by 2.5 t/ha while the common figure in the oblast is 1.8 t/ha.

Contrary to many misgivings, the wider spacing didn't reduce productivity. We used as a basic method the so called 'now much, now nothing' technique proposed by our countryman Anatoly Konev, professor of the Novosibirsk State Agrarian University. Its essence is that such space helps to retain the soil moisture and provides room for the plants to develop, though not to excess. The ears of such plants contain heavier grains with higher gluten content. The yield does not fall at a lower seeding rate.

Despite the grip width of 18.3 m, Seed Hawk excellently maintains the seeding depth. Unlike other seeders, it is free from yet another fault that compromises the seeding precision - the plant residues do not stick to and wind on the press wheels.".

Productivity and affordability

"We use this seeder in two shifts, covering 240 hectares in 24 hours. It demonstrates superior productivity. In addition, just two operators do the job on 5,000 hectares of arable land, which also counts given the current labour shortage.

Today the cost of fuel is rising daily. This seeder is very economical, consuming only 4 to 5 litres per hectare. We use an 18 m Hawk Seeder in conjunction with the John Deere 9420 tractor (420 hp). We also tried to mate it with the John Deere 8430 model (295 hp) and it worked well enough, though at a somewhat lower speed.

Using Seed Hawk, we always do the seeding job on time. We often even help our neighbours!

By Yulia SALKOVA

Laying the table
together with John Deere

How to procure fodder well and on time? This is one of the most important questions for farmers engaged in dairy production. Much depends here on the choice of equipment. John Deere offers a new range of fodder procuring equipment on the Russian market.

Under the press

The new John Deere 400 pick-up balers were first presented to dealers last year in Berlin. Russian farmers familiarised themselves with these machines at the Agritechnica 2013 exhibition. EkoNiva specialists have said that this year the new machines will start working on Russian fields.

Pick-up balers with a permanent capacity pressing chamber are designed for small and medium livestock facilities that need a single, multi-role machine. The F440M pick-up baler can be used for work with different crops. It is designed to make 1,000 to 3,000 bales of hay or straw per season. The chamber includes a conveyer that ensures reliable mass adhesion in handling hay or straw. The new pick-up baler forms high quality, optimally dense and smooth bales measuring 1.2 or 1.5 m in diameter. After the passage, the John Deere pick-up baler leaves nothing but a clean field. The new models of pick-up balers are ideally suited to work with the new series 6B John Deere tractors.

Mowing like John Deere

The new series W100 John Deere self-propelled mowers appeared on the Russian market last year. Due to the quickly detachable reaping units with a band conveyor and auger-type platforms, the W110 (110 hp) and W150 (148 hp) mowers do an excellent job harvesting different crops like grains, oil-bearing plants, annual and perennial grasses, sunflowers, peas, lentils and lupines. The mowers are fast and agile, operating at a speed of up to 22 km/h. Clearance above 114 cm ensures excellent movement over a field seeded with high growing crops. The W150 model has an extra system of reaper reversal. The system switch is located opposite the reaper drive switch, so that the operator can easily handle situations when fouling must be removed. New self-propelled mowers are multi-functional, suited for use by both large holdings and small farms.

By Anna BORDUNOVA

All about winter wheat

Due to its better utilisation of autumn and winter moisture and thanks to a longer vegetation period, winter wheat has a biologically higher potential for yield, exceeding by 20 to 30% that of the spring variety. Therefore farmers' hopes of getting a rich harvest and high profits in crop production are always associated with winter wheat.

Over the last two years the yield of winter wheat at EkoNiva has grown significantly. The yield of the Gubernator Dona variety of wheat at Zashchitnoye LLC, Kursk oblast, the main seed production division of EkoNiva, was 5.6 t/ha in 2012, reaching 6.7 t/ha in 2013 on an area of 2,500 hectares.

The growth of yield results first from introduction of new technologies for protection of crops against pests and diseases, as well as from selection of new, highly productive varieties.

At EkoNiva, all the seeding stock of winter wheat is treated not only with fungicide but also with conventional insecticidal formulas like Cruiser (active ingredient Thiamethoxam 350 g/l) or Tabou (imidacloprid, 500 g/l). These treatment agents have substantially reduced the damage done by Hessian and Swedish flies. The flies settle on and destroy the central plant stalk, thus weakening significantly resistance of the stalk and reducing the crop yield. Thanks to insecticidal agents, we have improved the plant stand, increasing the pre-harvesting ear number to 500-550 stems per square metre.

In choosing winter wheat, we opt for the best varieties of Russian and foreign selection which undergo first preliminary and then competitive trials at the state variety test plot in Zashchitnoye LLC, Kursk oblast.

Gubernator Dona remains the main variety of winter wheat at EkoNiva Agro in 2014. It is characterised by excellent productivity, effective resistance to falling down even on the highest elevations, active response to fertilisers and outstanding gluten content. This is

one of the most widely used varieties in the Central Black Earth zone of Russia.

The **Skipetr** variety is less widely used at EkoNiva. It is intended for growing

winter wheat in northern regions. It is characterised by high resistance to cold and high productivity even in the harshest of winters.

The novelty of the 2014 season is the **Roskishna variety.** Its originator is the Kharkov-based V.Ya. Yuryev Research Institute of Plant-Growing. In a preliminary trial in 2013 at the Shchigrovsky state variety plot, this variety demonstrated excellent results in terms of productivity (8.36 t/ha), resistance to falling down (5 points), grain content (828 g/l) and wintering (4.4 points). Roskishna is a bearded variety up to 94 cm in height with a red grain (erytrospermum variant). 1,000 grains weigh 41 to 46 g. It is of high quality, with gluten content of class 2 to 3. In terms of agro-technical capabilities, it is remarkable in that it can be sown after different previous crops. In addition to fallow land, the best preceding crops are leguminous plants and rapes. In case of early sowing (before 10 September), the seeding rate is 4 to 4.5 million sprouting grains per hectare. If the same variety is sown on barley, maize and sugar beet root or the sowing is carried out after 10 September and the conditions for autumn tillering are very unfavourable, then the seeding

rate will be increased to 5.0-5.5 million sprouted grains per hectare.

Like all varieties of winter wheat, Roskishna responds well to introduction of mineral fertilisers. It is necessary to bear in mind the special role of nitrogen fertilisers in crop production. It is generally believed that the production of 100 kg of grain (together with straw) needs 2.7-3.0 kg of active ingredient nitrogen. Therefore, for harvesting 5 tonnes per hectare on fallow-sown predecessors, it is necessary to introduce 120 kg of nitrogen per hectare. Other factors to be considered are optimisation of nutrition with phosphorus and potassium, depending on their content in the ground. Complex fertilisers are best digested in local introduction into rows by a two-circuit seeder. For example, the Rapid seeder introduces a full batch of fertilisers into individual rows 2 to 3 cm deeper and 6.25 cm off the main crop.

The chemical plant protection agents mandatory for Roskishna include seed treatment with fungicidal and insecticidal formulas, processing the sowed crops with fungicide (in stage 39 on the flag) plus at least two-fold treatment by pest control insecticides of the pyrethroid group.

You can see Roskishna and other varieties at the variety testing lots of the Shchigrovsky state variety plot and on the fields of the Zashchitnoye LLC in Shchigrovsky district, Kursk oblast. There are plans to hold an Open Door event in May through June and a large-scale Field Day in the last ten days of June.

Welcome! We are glad to see you!

By Willy DREWS
Doctor of agronomy, adviser to EkoNiva

Elite of dairy business

The Dairy and Beef Industry international exhibition brought representatives of the dairy industry together for the twelfth time. Participating in the event for the first time this year were the largest milk and meat producers. Thus, it was possible to present the complete cycle of the dairy and beef production process, from raising, husbanding and fattening pedigree livestock to product processing. EkoNiva-Farm also presented its products at the exhibition.

The prospects for developing the dairy industry were an issue keenly discussed at the event. Over recent years, Russia has dramatically reduced its dairy cattle stock, and this has led to reductions in production of raw milk. At the same time, the share of counterfeit products is growing. According to the Russian National Statistics Committee (Rosstat), over the last 14.5 months the price of milk has risen by nearly 20% while its production, compared to that in 2012, decreased by 3.7%, meaning by 1.2 m tonnes. Dairy producers believe that the situation deteriorated because of deferred subsidies and insufficient state support of dairy production in general. The situation was aggravated by the crop failure of 2012 and high prices of fodder grain and combined fodder.

According to Vladimir Labinov, director of the Department of Animal Husbandry and Pedigree Stockbreeding of the Russian Ministry of Agriculture, the latter – in association with federal agencies of executive power – is optimising the methods of state support provided to the dairy industry to maximise its efficiency.

Vladimir Labinov pointed out that future development of animal husbandry belongs to modern large farms. A good example of this is EkoNiva, a leader in the volume of milk production both in Russia and Europe (400 tonnes per day). Last year alone, the company opened three state-of-the-art livestock facilities at its agricultural enterprises in Voronezh and Kaluga oblasts. One of them is equipped with a robotised milking system. Now under construction is a 2,800 head mega-complex in Voronezh oblast. All of the livestock facilities have been built using foreign technologies and are equipped with modern equipment supplied by EkoNiva-Farm.

“Our chief task is to maximise the facility’s operating efficiency,” says Alexander Zuyev, head of the EkoNiva-Farm sales department. “For this purpose, we shall select a complete range of equipment for each farm on an individual basis and taking into account its special needs. This comprises milking parlours, cooling tanks and hoof care machines including animal comfort and hygiene items.”

At the stand, EkoNiva-Farm specialists gave advice to farmers on all the issues of stockbreeding. Many were interested to know how the robotised farm functions. On learning this, they concluded that in conditions of labour shortage the milking robot is an excellent solution. They also discussed the problem of maintenance and spare parts supply. The EkoNiva-Farm servicing department operates round the clock. Thus, its engineers can arrive at the farm, rectify the fault and advise on all operation-related problems.

Alexander Venglinsky, EkoNiva-Farm executive director, noted that there are now under consideration more than ten projects to equip both small farms (above 150 head of stock) and large complexes (up to 4,000 head).

“Farmers acutely need to modernise their production,” says Alexander Venglinsky. “However, at the moment due to the uncertainty about subsidies and instability of the currency exchange rate, the dairy producers have taken a wait-and-see stance. I think that if these problems are resolved soon, then there will be more modern livestock facilities.”

EkoNiva participated in the awards for winners of the “Elite of Dairy Business” contest and participants of the exhibition. It received a certificate of appreciation for its sizable contribution to the development of Russia’s agro-industrial complex and a worthy presentation of unique capabilities and achievements of the company.

By Anna BORDUNOVA

Dr. Heinz Joseph Beiwinkel, an expert on robotic equipment from GEA Farm Technologies

Cows vote for high technologies!

Over the last 15 years the countries with developed dairy cattle breeding have witnessed a growing interest in robotised milking systems. Among the countries where this technology is gaining momentum, Denmark is in the first place, France comes second and the Netherlands third.

In Russia, the first milking robots appeared in 2006. Today, Russia has more than 450 automatic milking farms in operation, 33 of which are in the Kaluga oblast. EkoNiva-Farm held a seminar for the region's farmers on the subject "Robotised Farms, or Russian Cows Vote for High Technologies"!

Opening the seminar, Alexander Venglinsky, EkoNiva-Farm executive director, noted that robotising is one of the promising trends in the development of the dairy industry. It ushers in new opportunities for creating highly profitable dairy cattle breeding.

This year the "100 Robotised Farms" project was launched in the region. It is scheduled for implementation in two years with support from the oblast administration. It is expected that implementation of this project will increase the milk production by 25%.

Thanks to the regional programme, an increasing number of dairy farms in the Kaluga oblast are embracing robotising. One of the speakers at the seminar arranged for farmers willing to acquire robots was Dr. Heinz Joseph Beiwinkel, an expert on robotic equipment from GEA Farm Technologies. He spoke about special features and advantages of robotised milking and showed how the Mlone milking robot, a unique development of GEA Farm Technologies, operates.

"When installing a new milking parlour, ever more farmers across the world opt for milking robots due to their obvious advantages over the traditional milking machines," says Dr. Heinz Joseph Beiwinkel. "The robot creates an environment in which milking proceeds with the highest comfort for and the lowest stress on the animals. The robot adapts itself individually to each cow. This increases the milk yield, improves the cow's health and raises the milk quality."

The Mlone robot was first presented in 2012 at the EuroTier exhibition, Germany. There are now installed in Russia 25 Mlone robots (62 boxes). Some of their features principally differ from counterparts supplied by other manufacturers. The Mlone milking centre is a multi-box system able to grow along with the cattle stock and can handle as many milking boxes as necessary.

The robot as such is just a part of the milking centre comprised of the cooling system, pre-milking waiting area, selection zone, calving department, operations room and the manager station.

The Mlone robot integrates with different types of cowsheds and can be installed in old buildings. The equipment is delivered in assembled form and is ready for operation with very little adjustment.

Careful milking is one of the Mlone robot's advantages. During milking, in order to treat the animal's nipples, the teat cups are put on the udder only once. This reduces the stress experienced by the animal. On rival equipment, this procedure is performed three times.

At the seminar, it was pointed out that the robots assure strict maintenance of the entire milking process. This makes it possible to produce high quality milk in terms of bacterial seminarian and somatic cell content.

The foreign expert demonstrated how the Mlone robot operates. Once the cow enters the box, the robot scans it and delivers the fodder calculated expressly for this animal. Then the robot starts to put on the teat cups. Thanks to the 3D Realtime chamber, the robot sees the cup and with pin-point precision connects it, in a single step, to the nipple. As soon as the milking is finished, the robot carefully disconnects the cups and sends the animal off to the herd. The robot minutely watches all the processes, knows the cow's entire history and tracks sick animals. It milks 21 hours per day. Three hours are needed for washing and cleaning the laser sensor. One robot can serve 50 to 70 cows a day.

"The Mlone milking centre creates comfortable conditions not only for cows," says Alexander Zuyev, head of the EkoNiva-Farm sales department. "This is a new level of work management. By installing robots on animal farms, we create a modern work station with comfortable operating conditions that inevitably attract young specialists."

By Anna BORDUNOVA

Gaining momentum

The largest 72 stall milking parlour, Carousel, from GEA Farm Technologies, will be commissioned this year at a livestock facility of the Sibirskaya Niva farming enterprise in Borkovo village, Novosibirsk oblast.

The 2,500 head livestock facility at Borkovo village started to operations in 2012.

By now, two cowsheds for 500 and 400 head of cattle have been put into operation and a smaller Herringbone milking parlour was installed along with some other facilities. Thus, the facility produces 13 tonnes of milk per day.

Sergey Lyakhov, head of the enterprise, said that the yields will grow here soon.

This year, a 72 stall milking parlour will be installed on the farm. The site and installation equipment have already been prepared.

"This milking parlour will be the largest among other such equipment on the farms of EkoNiva-APK," says Alexander Zuyev, head of the EkoNiva-Farm animal husbandry equipment sales department. "This will enable us to produce more milk."

Producing more milk is job number one for Sibirskaya Niva. Last year it started to turn out a range of its own dairy products under the Academy of Dairy Sciences brand. It sells around 70 tonnes of milk, sour cream, curds and yoghurt per day.

The plans call for completing all construction work on the Borkovo facility in 2016. The total project cost is around 450 million rubles.

By Anna BORDUNOVA

Pedigree certification

Last year the Zashchitnoye farming enterprise, Kursk oblast, became a stud farm.

The livestock facility of EkoNivaAgro LLC in Shchuchye village has become a stud farm for production of Simmental horned cattle (dairy and beef variety).

"The breeding stock of this pedigree variety was brought from Germany in 2006," says Valery Serebrennikov, head of the EkoNiva-APK Holding pedigree department. "These premium class animals of European selection show themselves to advantage in our conditions. All of our Simmental cows are thoroughbreds. Each year we note the growth of dairy production, reaching 6,910 kg in 305 days. The fat and albumen content in the milk is respectively 4.19% and 3.38%."

Each year the farm is improving the pedigree features of the stock, taking into account the specifics of each animal through crossbreeding by semen of highly productive sires from the best pedigree stations of Germany and Austria.

The near-term plans of the company include further certification of pedigree reproducers of Schweiz (at Kaluzhskaya Niva), red-speckled (EkoNivaAgro), Simmental, and Hereford (Sibirskaya Niva) breeds of cattle. If the certification succeeds, this year they will become stud farms.

By Yulia SALKOVA

Reproduction in the spotlight

Every day EkoNiva produces 415 tonnes of milk. More than 290 tonnes comes from the EkoNivaAgro division, Voronezh oblast. Of course, the growth of dairy production would be impossible without adequate livestock reproduction. Let us see how this process is organised at EkoNivaAgro.

EkoNivaAgro has 7 modern dairy plants and 11 milk production farms. The total livestock is 30,000 head. Over 13,000 are milk production cows of Holstein (average productivity 30 litres of milk per milch cow), Simmental (25 litres), and red-speckled (24 litres)

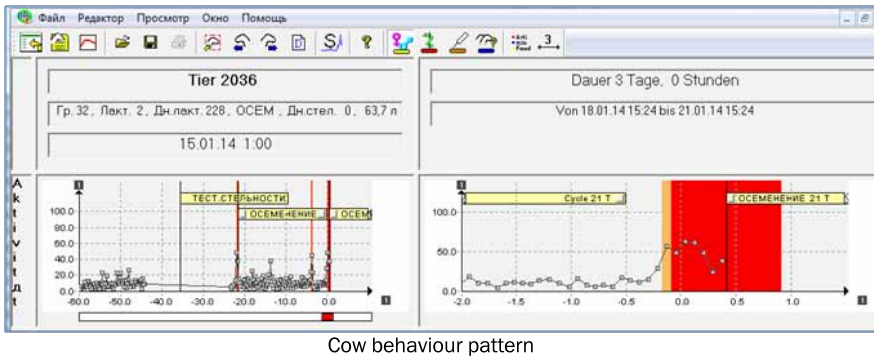
Sergey Fateyev, chief veterinarian of EkoNivaAgro-Pravoberezhye LLC

breeds. On average, the operating period at the enterprise is 122 working days at an 85% calf yield.

Recognising heat signs in heifers. The traditionally used method is observation by the herd operators, artificial insemination technicians and veterinarians. But the major role is now played by the DairyPlan livestock management software and electronic identification system (rescounters). The cows in heat are detected by analysing their behaviour and activities. The data thus obtained are converted into reports on and charts about each animal. The system detects over 98% of animals in heat.

Insemination. The insemination technique is exclusively recto-cervical.

Svetlana Vaulina, artificial insemination technician, Zaluzhnoye livestock facility



Cow behaviour pattern

All the veterinarians perform artificial insemination of cows and heifers.

Herd management. DairyPlan software facilitates keeping a complete inventory of all the herd data, from weight dynamics, productivity and activity to planning specific events. In conditions of industrial production this is difficult to do manually. A Pregnancy Rate index is used for analysing the results obtained. It discloses the causes of reduction in the number of inseminated animals versus the potential ones, all of which makes it possible to promptly correct the situation.

Veterinarian measures. In designing dairy production facilities, it should be borne in mind how much time will be spent on a single insemination and other veterinary measures. Due consideration must be given to the remoteness of the place where the animal is kept from the artificial insemination station. At the EkoNivaAgro dairy facilities, this distance is minimal. The artificial insemination station, selection gates, milking machine and veterinary zone make up a single technological circuit. All the artificial insemination stations are fitted with computers having access to the livestock management software supplying information on animals and controlling the selection gates. In the remote operation mode, for instance while making the rounds of groups of animals and in dealing with heifers, the specialists use the DP-mobile application installed in the tablet computer or mobile phone.

Heat synchronisation is performed using the Presinch software. This activates the use of prostaglandin on day 36-42 and 50-57 after calving. The cows attaining heat after the 50th day of lactation are inseminated and removed from the programme. The un-inseminated cows after the day 61-68 day of lactation as well as unpregnant cows (as per test) enter the Ovsinch: GnRH programme. Seven days thereafter, prostaglandin is applied to them. The animals not reaching heat are inseminated forcibly pursuant to the protocol. According to the data we obtained, the use of forced insemination is justifiable and only slightly inferior to insemination in natural heat. The effectiveness of forced insemination depends rather on retention of the cows' flesh condition and fatness in the post-calving period as well as on compliance with the synchronisation protocol.

The pregnancy is determined rectally by direct palpation or using the ultra-sound investigation system. The investigation period is 36 days after insemination. The earlier the absence of pregnancy is discovered, the sooner the cow will get a new insemination, and the higher the reproduction results generally obtained.

Sergey FATEYEV, chief veterinarian of Pravoberezhnoye farm, EkoNivaAgro LLC

Zaluzhnoye livestock facility

Warriors of the invisible front

Out of 170 EkoNiva-Chernozemye employees, 40% work at the servicing department. This is a team of real professionals, ready to respond to the first call. In 2013 alone, the EkoNiva-Chernozemye servicing department responded to and did the job required by 6,000 requests from the region's farms. However, the efforts of the "servicing people" often remain unnoticed. Expressly for our newspaper, they came into the spotlight to tell about their work.

Aleksey Bocharov, technical director (has been working for the company since its establishment in 2002):

"The main principle of our work is prompt servicing response. No matter how intense the season is, we come to our customers' rescue in 48 hours at the very latest. Ours is a close-knit team of skilled engineers. In addition, working for us are enthusiastic professionals prepared to travel and ready for work stress. They know the needs of each customer and how to fulfil them."

Alexander Khoroshilov, head of servicing department (working since 2008):

"At the height of the season, it's absolutely important to meet the deadline. The farmers have no time to wait or to bring their equipment to our workshop. Therefore we pay much attention to equipping our urgent servicing aid vehicles with the required hardware. We've got 45 such vehicles. Arriving on the scene in such a wheeled 'workshop', the engineers can make any repair right on the field.

We've also got a 'hot line' operating round the clock. To bring the servicing closer to where it is needed, we've opened an extra maintenance centre in the south of the Voronezh oblast. Our principal division works actively in Liskinsky district. The biggest servicing facility is under construction on the M4 Don highway, and an extra centre is due to be established in the east."

Alexander Zhdanov, 4th category engineer of the servicing department (has been working for the company since 2010):

"Surprising as it may seem, our profession can be compared to that of an ambulance doctor. People turn to us in a critical situation. Troubleshooting often starts already over the phone on the way to the farm. You calm the man down, encourage him, learn the details of the problem and then take a decision. Once a tractor or combine runs across the field again, you feel your life and work are not in vain. Different situations occur, but we often hear words of gratitude from the operators given that idle time impacts on their earnings.

Servicing department, an unfailing source of original, often funny, anecdotes and professional records.

- A unique occurrence on a farm in Voronezh oblast. While working on the field, 28 press-wheels of the Rapid seeder all got punctured at once! By straw, of all unlikely objects! The farm engineer turned with this particular breakage to the EkoNiva-Chernozemye servicing department. Even the impeccable Swedish quality couldn't cope with Russian straw. It's hard as nails!
- The yearly total mileage of the servicing vehicles equals 30 trips around the globe

Despite the rather tough specifics of work, 6 girls are employed in the servicing department. Two of them are warranty managers. They are the ones who put the equipment under warranty and lead any legal battles with manufacturing plants.

Another four girls are coordinating dispatchers. They are the first to receive applications by day and night. And they are the ones who, with the skill of a psychoanalyst, take in the customers' negative emotions and claims."

Anastasia Merkulova, 3rd category warranty manager (works since 2008):

"In our work, the customers' interests are above all else. We know perfectly well that it is not always easy to get servicing or obtain a part replacement under warranty. Sometimes I have to be so insistent in dealing with the manufacturers' representatives that I'm surprised at myself! Even in fighting for my own interests, I do not press so hard!

At the company the servicing department is considered to be the most close-knit pool. Though extremely busy, its workers find time for picnics in the open air or leisure time at the paint-ball club. It happens, though not very often."

By Yulia SALKOVA

Focus on us!

Reincarnation!
Master class from EkoNiva-Tekhnika at the culinary contest!

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

Citizen of Russia Stefan Duerr learns to play the gusli, a very Russian instrument

An acrobatic sketch!
Talented ladies work for EkoNiva-Sibir

Let's have a jaunt, dish! I've been waiting for this so long!
The cows of Sibirskaya Niva won't miss a chance to hobnob with the boss of the farm

The maternal instinct.
With love and tenderness for all!

Please, send you photos marked FOCUS ON US! to:
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+7 (4712) 39-26-60

Announcements

27-30 May. Federal practical field training in JCB agricultural equipment
Venue: Saransk
Organisers: JCB Company

2-7 June. Russia's third open championship on ploughing
Venue: Suzdal, Vladimir oblast
Organisers: Vladimir Oblast Administration, Kverneland Group CIS LLC

6 June. Fashion-Farmer 2014, timed to coincide with the 20th anniversary of EkoNiva
Venue: Liskinsky district, Voronezh oblast
Organisers: EkoNiva

9-12 June. EkoNiva customer trip to Vaederstad facility in Sweden
Venue: Vaederstad facility, Sweden
Organisers: Vaederstad

17-19 June. Field Day 2014 in Germany
Venue: Bernburg-Strenzfeld, Germany
Organisers: German Agricultural Society DLG

24 June. "New crops and plants. New genetics of winter wheat" Field Day in Kursk oblast
Venue: Zashchitnoye village, Shchigrovsky district, Kursk oblast
Organisers: EkoNiva-Semena LLC

26-27 June. Voronezh Field Day 2014
Venue: Novomarkovskoye farming enterprise, Kantemirovsky district, Voronezh oblast
Organisers: Voronezh Oblast Department of Agricultural Policy, Tsentr Company

27 June. Customer Day at the John Deere seeding and tilling equipment manufacturing facility in Orenburg
Venue: John Deere facility, Orenburg oblast
Organisers: John Deere

July. Opening a new servicing centre in Ryazan oblast timed to coincide with the 20th anniversary of EkoNiva
Venue: Ryazan oblast
Organisers: EkoNiva

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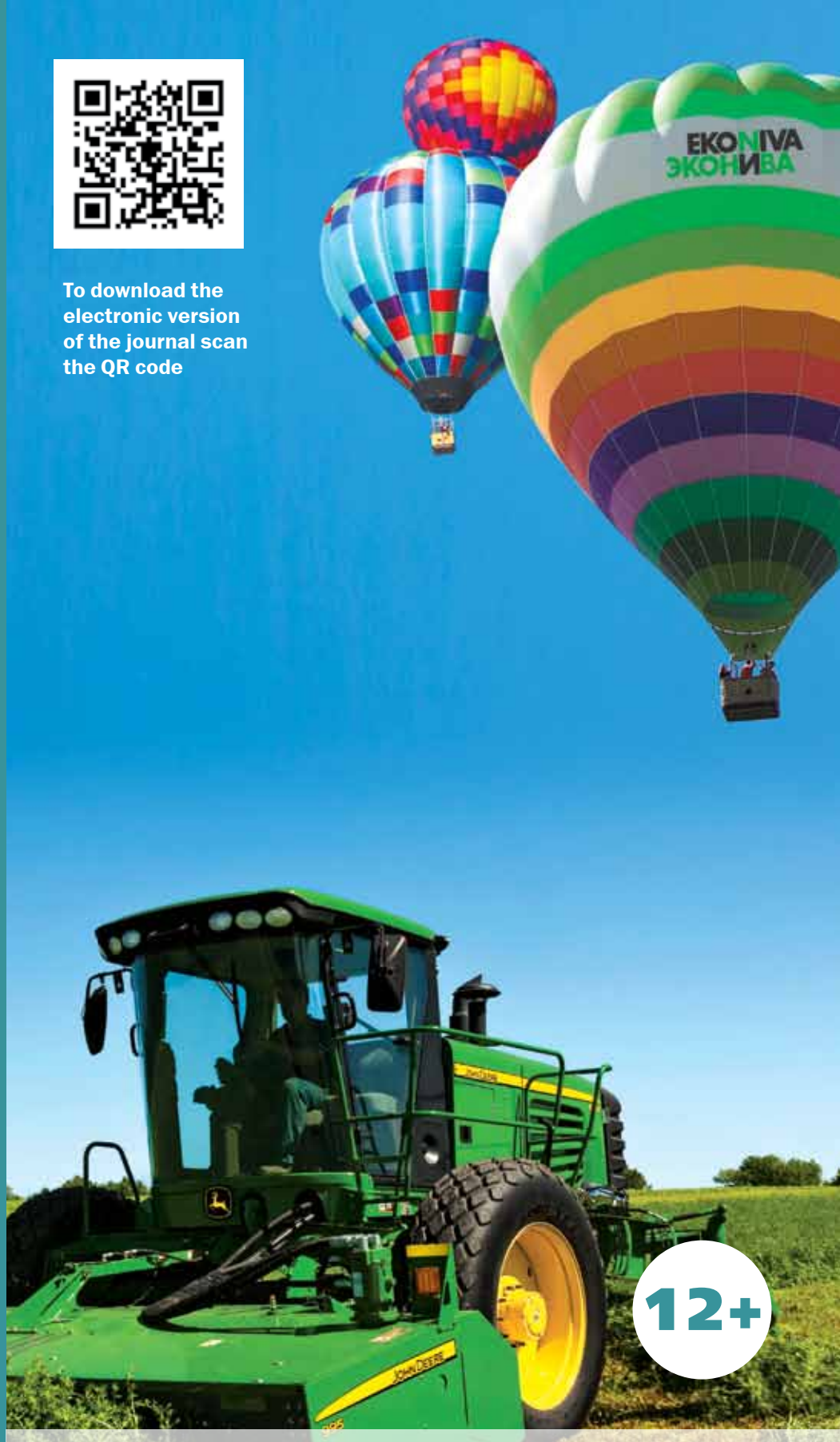

12+

6 June

EkoNiva cordially invites its friends and partners to the Fashion-Farmer 2014 exhibition, which is timed to coincide with the company's 20th anniversary (Liskinsky district, Voronezh oblast)

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