

Sweet taste of healthy berries

Unprecedented crop of cranberries being gathered this year for Poleskie Zhuraviny

By Yuri Chernyakevich

Polesie is enjoying a bumper crop of cranberries: no less than 500 tonnes (compared to 300 tonnes last year). The orchard was planted in Soviet times, in 1985, using American saplings known for heavy cropping. The experiment was a success, with the Pinsk cranberry plantation now one of the largest in Europe, occupying almost 85 hectares.

The enterprise has accumulated wide experience of cranberry cultivation and boasts two powerful pumping stations, as well as two ponds — allowing its own system of irrigation. In 2000, it gained Belgian refrigeration warehouses, with three rooms able to store about 500 tonnes of berries, allowing harvests to be kept fresh throughout the year, until the following crop. Eight varieties of cranberry are being grown in the fields near Pinsk: 'Stevens', 'McFarlin', 'Sirls', 'Ben-lir', 'Early Ripening Black', 'Pilgrim', 'Crowly' and 'Hoves'. Each hectare yields 30 tonnes at most, which is a very satisfactory result.

In fact, cranberries are quite a 'wonder food', being known to boost the body's immune system



Cranberry harvest in top gear

and general health. Fresh or frozen, the berries are a fantastic addition to anyone's diet. Demand is ever rising, bringing exports to Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Po-

land, Kazakhstan, Germany, the UK and elsewhere.

Director Vasily Lyagusky tells us that the enterprise is now cultivating blueberries: also known

for their miraculous properties in boosting the human immune system. Last year, about 30 tonnes were gathered, being sold in Belarus and in neighbouring

countries. Mr. Lyagusky notes that, next year, the enterprise intends to expand its blueberry plantations, in order to gather an even greater crop.

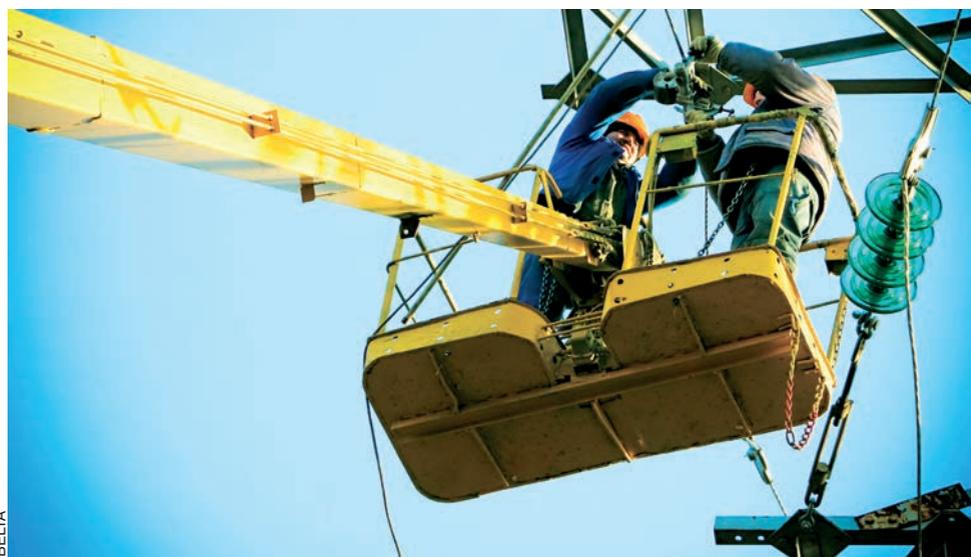
New isolated wires designed for all weather problems

Energy workers lay new electric cables able to sustain heavy snows

By Vasily Matvievsky

The Xavier snow storm of this March is already a part of Belarus' history. Never before has the country experienced such a snow and wind disaster. However, any experience is useful, especially on the eve of the new cold season, and our energy workers have done everything possible to minimise the problems caused by a similar aggressive cyclone.

"This snowstorm troubled the country in March, but even before this, in December 2012, we had already experienced serious problems with power failures in the regions of Gomel and Mogilev. Dozens of towns and villages remained without electricity as a result of strong wind and heavy snow. We held several meetings with the heads of the regional energy systems to define a series of scenarios that would enable us to counteract any climatic accidents," explains Valery Porshnev, Belenergo's Deputy Chief Engineer. "Our last experience demonstrated that we only can solve a



New electric cables will sustain even heavy snowfall

natural cataclysm by uniting the efforts of all services. The co-ordinated work of local authorities and energy and road workers is actually an efficient 'recipe' to counteract snowdrifts and to start up electricity. This year, a new technical method is to be applied — isolated wires designed to lay electric lines in forests. These remain safe even in case of heavy snow, strong winds or fallen branches. Accordingly, electricity failure is less likely."

Around 11,500 km of Belarusian electricity lines,

a large figure, pass through forests. With this in mind, a programme has been adopted to implement a stage-by-stage renewal. So far, 2,000 km, or 18 percent of the total now uses the modern isolated lines. Simultaneously, lanes are being cleared and dead trees are being cut jointly with the Forestry Ministry specialists.

Energy workers are optimistic about the country's readiness for this autumn-winter season. "This year, we've been preparing in a different way as the new

rules have been applied. Statements of readiness were received by October 1st (earlier, this was done by October 15th). In addition, these documents were issued only after the decision of the Emergency Ministry's Department for Supervision of Industrial Safety, to avoid emergency situations," notes Belenergo's Head of the State Energy Supervision Department, Dmitry Losenkov. "As a result, our readiness for consumers' and supplying resources exceeded 99 percent by early October."

Bridge from 'Lego' is good corner stone

By Svetlana Markovets

Challenging path from scientific idea to actual manufacture

Igor Kuzmenko, an Associate Professor of the Belarusian-Russian University (BRU), with a PhD in Technical Sciences, has been long working on CBEED technology (composite bearing element of building designs). By combining metal and concrete, he strengthens each, creating a real life version of 'Lego'.

Mr. Kuzmenko tells us, "The idea has already been patented in Belarus and Russia, as joint work with Prof. Vladimir Fridkin, of the Moscow State University of Railway Engineering (MIIT), alongside BRU post-graduates and undergraduates."

To announce their brainchild, the authors 'bombarded' scientific and popular editions worldwide. However, it has only found practical application after almost ten years, being used first to construct a small pedestrian bridge over the River Dubrovenka, in Mogilev.

Igor continues, "What is the advantage of our technologies? Firstly, the method is economic; secondly, it's

simple. It could be used to build many Belarusian enterprises, following various designs. Thirdly, building time is reduced, as is maintenance. You can even build at any time of year."

Clearly, CBEED technology has a bright future. Mostostroi is now planning to use the innovation, being impressed by the alliance of Mogilev and Moscow scientists and Minsk experts. The technology has been used to build the 'modular' overpass at Minsk-Northern train station, to public approval. It's also now being used for an iron-concrete overpass bridge, over Poleskaya Street, in Gomel.

"The Republic can export not only bricks, cement and gravel, but 'in demand' technologies," explains Mr. Kuzmenko. "Moreover, its high degree of hermeticity allows CBEED to be used even in the nuclear industry — for example, for housings storing radioactive materials."

Sadly, it's rare to see such fruitful co-operation between scientists and manufacturing, with inventions finding practical and commercial application. It's a path the state is keen to encourage, to the benefit of the nation.