

How to 'cream' off more from milk exports



At the time when ministers and producers rack their brains over how to maximise warehouse benefits, farmers are successfully selling their products on the foreign market. Production is in great demand, with milk being the strategic commodity.

By Andrey Kovalevich

We drink a lot of it, and we sell a lot of it. Last year, we produced 6.65 million tonnes of milk of which 3.6 million tonnes was exported, creating \$2.3bn of revenue. Russian and Kazakhstan citizens have long since fallen in love with our dairy products. About 95 percent of dairy production goes to these two countries, and currently, the situation is very much in our favour. Russian milk imports have grown twice during the last year. There are difficulties with manufacture of native milk in Kazakhstan as the environmental conditions are not appropriate, and it is difficult to form full-fledged fodder supplies for the cows there. As demand for foodstuffs, including dairy products will grow on the world market; why not use this as a chance to 'cream' off more from dairy exports?

The government is betting on an increase in the volume of output. The Deputy Prime Minister, Piotr Prokopovich, while speaking before the parliament, cited such statistics, "If today we had 2.5 million cows, as in 1992, and each cow gave five thousand litres of milk, we would receive an additional



Zdravushka-milk JSC production is exported

\$5bn in exports, and there would be no unbalance in the economy."

These conclusions are quite logical, but it is difficult to reach such indicators in the near future. To reach the earlier planned 10 million tonnes of milk in 2015 is, apparently, not possible. But then, perhaps, it is necessary to try to move the focus from quantity to quality. According to experts, in order to adequately react to changes of world conjuncture in the

future and to increase exports, manufacturers should have greater safety factors and think, not only about increase in output volumes, but also about the improvement of the quality of raw materials that directly influence an increase in profits. It means that by increasing the quality of the initial raw materials, then it is possible to count on a solid financial increase, including by an increase in exports.

The quality of milk de-

pends on many parameters, from commercial dairy farm equipment (it should be modern) pre-coolers, coolers, milk clearing filters, water and so on. The country has companies producing this equipment. However, it would be desirable to have more managers who can think about potential prospects. Natalia Kruglei, the Head of AgromirGroup says, "When following certain conditions, the cows initially give good milk, the task of

people is to not spoil it. For this purpose, it is important to follow the technological cycle of the production of raw milk, including clearing, cooling and storage so that we have a pure and qualitative raw material ready for the arrival of the milk tankers. But due to various reasons, many heads of households do not rack their brains on solving this problem, preferring to work in the old style."

"It is true that many di-

rectors and chairmen do not often have time to think about new equipment on the farm. Today they have a sowing campaign, tomorrow, the preparation of fodder, then harvesting. They worry about the current state of affairs, and see effective technologies as a whim. Some consider it as a superfluous expenditure of money. But there are situations where, by saving money, one can bring harm to an enterprise. After all, nobody today would buy a spade instead of tractor, because they would wish to maximise the return at a minimum cost," says Ms. Kruglei.

Everyone understands that, in order to increase milk yields, it is necessary to give cows more water. However, it should be pure water. Do all workers follow this rule? Probably not, because maybe somebody has decided that the necessary filters, used for purifying the water, are an unnecessary expense. There are also many heads who are simply too afraid to make decisions. These stereotypes of the Soviet period should be removed. Market forces show us that saving on little things today could bring big losses in the future. This is an unacceptable situation.

IT tasks now for tomorrow

Belarusian computer elite are rapidly growing significantly younger

By Vera Artemieva

Today, even senior citizens are able to use computers and smartphones, with middle-aged and younger people embracing the latest technologies with great eagerness. Belarus has gained some reputation as a creator of software — such as game and communication programmes for Android: 'Viber', 'Tanchiki' and 'Veselaya Ferma' (Funny Farm — translated into more than 20 languages). As the writers emphasise, with some patriotism, it's the result of good quality Belarusian education following an innovative international approach.

Of course, besides producing games, our specialists have created software to manage information and that with a social purpose, such as for controlling traffic flow. Our everyday lives are easier, thanks to the use of computer software quietly behind the scenes. Even the Constitution and Criminal Code are easily accessible, having been digitised and placed in a database.

Our programmers win prizes at international contests every year, including championships for programming. Sergey Maskevich, Minister for Education, notes that this international recognition of the Belarusian Programming School is confirmed by TopCoder Corporation's rating of Belarusian programmers among the top five worldwide.

Our computer elite, on average, are younger each year, creating software for the social and educational spheres, to suit our Belarusian society. A recent application for Android-smartphones provides video instructions for

laboratory work in physics, for Year 6 pupils: written by pupils of Plisa school, in the Smolevichi District. With their teacher, they have plans to create an online encyclopaedia dedicated to the

district and the school and a mobile supplement dedicated to Belarusian folklore.

Gymnasia pupil Alexander Smolik can remember 100,000 words from the Russian-Belarusian dictionary, about 50,000 words from the Belarusian-Russian dictionary, and about 100,000 words from the definition dictionary of Belarusian language: evidence of the popularisation of the Belarusian language. He is eager to put his talent to good use, which has inspired his creation of the 'Angel' application (helping find people) and 'AvtoDroid.by' (detering parking offences).

There is no doubt that Belarusian IT has huge potential, guiding our youngsters towards the domestic programming school. Sadly, at present, around 90 percent of the software created in Belarus is for foreign companies, which takes the profits abroad. The main task for tomorrow is not only to create but to provide service support.



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Specifying areas of co-operation

Vienna hosted a meeting between the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Austria, H.E., Mr. Valery Voronetsky, and President of the Federation of Austrian Industries and General Director of the Kapsch AG Group of Companies, Georg Kapsch

The meeting tackled areas of co-operation between the embassy and the association for the sake of further advancing Belarusian-Austrian economic relations, the use of Austrian technologies and equipment for modernising branches of Belarusian industry and creating new manufacture. Preparations for the Belarusian-Austrian Economic Forum in Minsk were also discussed, as well as the progress made in the implementation of the project to create the national road toll collection system in Belarus.