

# Investments come to the region

## 8th Gomel Economic Forum gathers record number of 24 participating states

By Valentina Lapshina

Capital from 39 countries is already present in the Gomel Region's real sector of the economy, while 75 percent of manufactures are exported. Trade is conducted with 110 countries, covering almost every continent. Meanwhile, about half of the major projects currently being realised in the Gomel Region are connected with previous forums.

Lithuanian Glera Market is investing over \$6m in the construction of large trade sites in the region's district centres and, after a long, hard search, a German investor has been found for an ecological facility to process used tyres. Hungarian Tandako plans to build a cheese making plant in the region, daily processing 120 tonnes of milk, with the company planning to inject funds into developing ingredients. Representatives of an Iranian company have signed an agreement to build a plant mining rocks and developing deposits in the Lelchitsy District, including further processing. They have studied the situation in Belarus from various angles for



Gomel's forum characterised by diverse representation, efficiency and contacts made

the past year, eventually deciding that business conditions are quite favourable.

For several years, a delegation from Poland's Lubusz Voivodship has been participating in the

forum. Their close contacts have already resulted in 25 companies using Polish capital operating in various fields within the Gomel Region. Italian businessmen have also been attending the event and

have shown eagerness to set up a facility to bottle wine, among other projects.

Belarus' south-eastern region has much to offer its Russian partners, with some joint projects al-

ready realised. These include the production of fuel briquettes, and of composite materials made from thermoplastic polymers, and the production of packaging made from cardboard protected against forgery and fake (for Russian folk crafts). During the forum, several agreements were signed, all aiming to drive forward foreign economic activity. One envisages the establishment of a joint facility to sell dairy products from the Gomel Region to Russia.

The Russian delegation was the largest and most diverse at the Gomel fair, with partnerships and capital investments discussed. Vladimir Balakin, a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Deputy Director of the Institute for High Energy Physics (Protvino, Moscow Region), was intrigued to learn that Gomel has a large medical institution specialising in the treatment of cancer. He shared information on his own institute's development, which uses ray therapy to battle the disease. His suggestion of joint efforts aroused eager interest among Gomel partners.

# Extensive verification of milk strategy yielding evident results

Not long ago, a delegation from Russian milk processing enterprises visited Brest's Savushkin Product JSC. Interestingly, their visit coincided with another 'whirl' in the milk industry, which occurs in the relations of our two states from time to time. Meanwhile, almost 50 Russians noted that their observations convinced them that no difficulties should exist between Belarusian and Russian milk producers. The friendly atmosphere was really sincere.

By Mikhail Fedoseev

Some time ago, Russia's Milk Union addressed the Director of Savushkin Product JSC, Alexander Savchits, with a request to organise an excursion for the directors of Russia's 40 largest milk firms. He agreed easily, taking on the obligations of guide. "We have no secrets from our Russian colleagues, as we are not afraid of competition," he stressed to journalists. "On the contrary, we advocate stronger relations, to promote the milk industries of our country and Russia further."

Mr. Savchits took his guests to the workshops of the head concern in Brest, enabling them to observe a full cycle of industrial milk processing — from milk delivery to the packaging of dairy goods. The Russians were pleased with what they saw and were especially interested in the laboratories, where milk and dairy goods



Savushkin Product strictly researching food's influence on health

are tested for quality. Local robots are able to conduct about 200 tests hourly, without error, and sometimes downgrade milk categorised by farmers as high grade, if they detect certain defects. "Subjective assessments are inconsistent," stresses Mr. Savchits, discussing the advantages of the laboratory. Naturally, similar strict and unbiased controls are imposed on processed dairy goods. 45 in-house standards operate at the company, each excluding human influence on the quality of dairy products. The guests saw this with their own eyes. On entering the production facility, a special gate machine disinfected their palms; even after washing your hands, you are only allowed in after being disinfected.

Naturally, creating tasty and healthy milk starts not at the factory but at dairy farms. Here, the first quality tests are conducted. With this in mind, Savushkin Product — which processes almost half

of all milk produced in the Brest Region — is introducing European agrarian methods: allowing cattle to wander freely and computer milking technologies. Moreover, the company is financing the modernisation of farms.

The company is eager to continue enhancing the prestige of its trademark, across all parameters. At present, it's the only Belarusian company in the milk industry to research how its products influence health, being convinced that any declaration must be confirmed by scientific studies. Since 2007, the company has closely liaised with the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus' Physiology Institute, which has recommended Savushkin Product's foods as part of a balanced diet, able to help prevent cardio-vascular and neurologic diseases. Staff also assert that dairy products are good for the elderly and those engaged into hard physical and mental labour.

After touring the company's workshops, Mr. Savchits eagerly tells us about the advantages of Brest milk and opens the floor to questions. One guest asks how the company, which now rivals others in highly developed Western Europe and the USA, came to be established in the Brest Region. Mr. Savchits tells us that, from 2005-2010, about \$90m was invested into its modernisation. Previously, 90 percent of the company's equipment was obsolete; now, it's an 'automated' plant, daily processing milk from 105 farms across the Brest Region. New equipment installed allows production of a modern range of goods. Some time ago, Savushkin Product's market researchers visited Western European states to learn from their experience, since much of the new range has never before been produced in Belarus or Russia. Many years of work by the plant's dedicated personnel are yielding results.

## Useful waste

By Tatiana Kigrinova

**Waste recycling plant, costing Baranovichi budget \$3m and occupying one hectare at the city's boundary, launches operation to process communal waste**

Precious raw materials, including aluminium, copper, titanium, platinum, gold, polypropylene, polystyrene, bitumen, asphalt, paper, cardboard and rubber can be extracted from... a city dump site. It's a true 'Klondike' for those able to process household and industrial waste.

At present, the enterprise in Baranovichi employs over 80 workers, sorting cardboard, paper, tin cans, glass, textile, polyethylene bottles, ferrous and non-ferrous metals. Each is then pressed and sent separately to processing enterprises. Until now, the city has managed to extract only 10 percent of recyclable materials from waste, despite recycling bins being used and a travelling purchase centre operating. Now, the figure will rise to 40 percent.

"From now on, we shall leave 70,000 tonnes less waste for our children and grandchildren each year, as this is the productive capacity of the factory. The city enterprises and the public annually produce about the same amount of waste. Our descendants will be grateful," asserts Victor Dichkovsky, the Chairman of Baranovichi's City Executive Committee.

The concept of zero waste is extremely popular worldwide, with the US' San Francisco pursuing this policy; it aims to make the city completely wasteless by 2020. The Japanese founded the concept, realising that waste can be recycled usefully. Baranovichi has made the first step in this direction...