

AGRICULTURE AND THE FOOD INDUSTRY

Dairy Industry Clings to Old Technology

In 1984, the Syktyvkar non-woven materials factory installed major facilities for the production of filter materials to be used for cleaning milk. This was the first time in the Soviet Union that an advanced technology for the manufacture of artificial cloth was to be used. Millions of roubles in gold were paid to foreign firms for the technology and the equipment. The assumption was that this money would return in the form of greater profitability. After all, scientists of the Estonian Scientific Research Institute of Animal Breeding and Veterinary Sciences had calculated that the State and collective farms of this country were losing 159 million roubles every year due to the poor quality of their milk. And the most important thing was that the consumers were suffering.

According to Candidate of Economic Sciences, G. Smetaniana, the new filters would enable farmers to deliver all of their milk as Class 1. And we, the people who pay for it, could then obtain excellent milk. The Syktyvkar experimental station, where Gennadii Fedorovich works, was the first to try out the filters. The results surpassed all expectations.

No less important is the fact that plant production can save on scarce materials - cotton wool, gauze and flannel.

But what, in fact, did happen?

Four years have passed since the country's first production shop went into operation. The shop was supposed to produce 76 million sleeve-type filters made of artificial cloth and intended for use with milking machines. Today, the shop is operating at 25 to 30 percent capacity. Why is it that there are so few people, and that includes people in the