

A scientist by the name of K. Bush who worked for the "Splava" Scientific Production Association once stated that it is better for 2,000,000 cubic metres of damaged spruce timber to be left to rot in the interests of soil improvement than to waste time hauling it out. As for birch, he regarded this species as a weed. Meanwhile, the Finns are paying us between 26 and 38 dollars for these pulpwoods. I maintain that it would be possible to reduce the imports of oil and coal into the republic and convert to heating with groups of boilers and wood-burning furnaces. Thus, while the grey alder yields on average 280 m³/ha, it would be possible to harvest no less than 1.7 million cubic metres of it annually for firewood. Today, the borders of fields, ditches and meadows are being overgrown with this species.

When tending the plantations you often come across manifest cases of injustice. The most one is paid for this kind of work is 15 roubles per hectare. This is a very low wage. The same can be said of tree plantings. For planting 700 young spruce in a day they are paying 5 roubles or about 100 roubles per month, even though Leningrad sociologists estimate that the work is worth at least 295 roubles. It is not surprising, therefore that the bulk of the trees are being planted by schoolboys and hunters, i.e. by untrained workers.

As for forest improvement measures, whereas in pre-war days about 220,000 hectares in the republic were drained and all the ditches were filled with running water, today the drainage sites of the sixties have long fallen into disuse. Now, they are frequently used as places to dump logging debris or as off-loading sites for log piles. Repairs to