

Prefabricated Hothouses Fail to Withstand the Cold

On the counter there are potatoes, onions and beets, all brought in or preserved from last summer. Right next to them, however, are bunches of spring onions, this in the middle of the winter, at Nefteyugansk...

"Our onions are locally grown," explained A. Stesenko, Deputy General Director of the "Yuganskneftegaz" Association. "We have our own auxiliary truck farm, the "Nefteyuganskii" State Farm."

...In the rays of the dying spring light, the huge bays of the hothouses looked neglected and deserted. There was no sign of heat in the hothouse and the feeble amount of heat in the heating pipes struggled to warm up the vast rooms, each measuring 1500 square metres in area. Then again, it would be difficult to maintain the proper temperature, with the gaping chinks which are scattered here and there in the glassed-in walls.

In the opinion of the administration of the State Farm there were already mistakes in the original plans, which were drawn up by the Voronezh-based Design Institute "Gipromteplitsa". The huge areas, the metal frame... Somewhere in the temperate zone these hothouses might be quite good, but they were clearly never going to be adaptable to the northern regions of the Tyumen' Oblast. The cold has caused the frame to shift, as anyone with a knowledge of physics would have known and there are problems with the supports for the dome.

All logic notwithstanding, the specialists from "Yuganskneftestroi" and the workers employed by the State Farm preferred "not to notice" the