

I.K.: Yes, this is exactly the way the North is developed abroad: everything is brought in from the "mainland." But our northern zones, including Yakutia, are incomparably more densely populated. There are quite a few poorly accessible settlements, with which there are no permanent transportation links. How do we provide these links? On the other hand, summer in Yakutia, although short, is sufficiently warm. In the region of Mirnyi the temperature can go up to 30°C. The first hothouse vegetables ripen in early June, almost like in Moscow...

O.Z.: Our hothouse tomatoes and pickles are indeed "golden" - so unprofitable is their production! Our production group's "Novyi" State Farm produces 4.3 million rubles worth of output, on which it annually incurs losses of 4.5 million rubles. This amount is written off from our profits. Such is the price of a "subsistence economy." No, the food problem must be solved differently.

I.K.: On the whole, is a spirit of change somehow being felt at the enterprise?

O.Z.: Some progress has been made. For example, some people have heightened their interest in social work. Discussions of the most important matters have become commonplace. Whereas before everything was done secretly, now there is more openness; orders, announcements and decisions affecting people are posted on a notice-board. In a recently conducted survey we asked a collective to assess the work of executives. Many of them gave an impartial assessment.