

FORESTRY

Sea Buckthorn To Be Cultivated and Sold For Its Medicinal, Nutritional and Erosion-Preventing Properties

Statistics show that there are 300 cooperatives in Armenia today marketing a variety of products valued at more than 11 million roubles.

The appearance of sea buckthorn (Hippophae rhamnoides L.) in Armenia is a consequence of a lowering of the water level in Lake Sevan. When the level of the lake began to drop and its waters receded, exposing the bottom, experts began to consider what should be planted to save the newly-exposed land from erosion. One thing was clear - that a plant with a strong root system was needed. Sea buckthorn was the plant best suited to these conditions. Roughly 1,000 ha in the area of Lake Sevan's basin have been covered by this plant.

However, having resolved one problem, another problem arose: several years after the first plantings when sea buckthorn began to produce berries, the woods around Lake Sevan were inundated with berry-pickers who broke branches, uprooted bushes, and trampled the earth in their heedless effort to pick the berries. The result was pitiful.

All this justifiably worried both experts and the public. It was necessary to properly organize the berry-picking and processing. At the initiative of the Armenian State Forestry Committee, the Dzhrnezh Cooperative was created in a former fruit wine factory which had been closed down due to financial losses.