

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

The Workers' Supply Departments Now Have A Competitor

Noyabr'sk is a city of oil men with a population of about 100,000 and is situated in the swampy taiga. Vegetables and fruits are imported here and stocks usually don't last from the fall to May. The fruits of the new harvest can be expected no sooner than July-August.

The oil men, geologists and builders have to go nearly two months with no vitamins. The green onions and cucumbers from the local hothouse provide some, it is true, but that is just a drop in the bucket.

Over many years, they have become reconciled to this state of affairs, and have thought that things couldn't be otherwise: it's the North, after all. But this spring, cucumbers have appeared in shops already by mid-March. Their price has gradually gone from nine to two rubles per kilo. Cabbage has been imported sooner than is usual and at the end of April consumers were offered prime radish at 2 rubles per large bunch, and dock, dill and parsley for 1 ruble. Prices for greens were high, of course, especially at first, but still in line with local wages. Watermelons at 5 rubles 50 kopecks per kilo, sweet pepper at 4 rubles 50 kopecks, and mazzard cherries at 3 rubles have shown up lately at the city wholesale outlet. Tomatoes have gone down sharply in price to 4 rubles 50 kopecks. Prices are now changing quickly overall and fruits and vegetables are getting cheaper.

"The members of the recently created 'Leto' co-op have helped to improve the supply of early vegetables and fruits to the townspeople", says the director of the trade section of the Noyabr'sk executive committee, A. Egozova.