

PULP AND PAPER

Chronic Shortage of Boxboard Adds to Consumer Goods Woes in the USSR

To enable the Soviet market to be flooded at the earliest possible date with foodstuffs and other consumer goods, the 27th Congress of the CPSU, the first Congress of People's Deputies and the first session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted a resolution calling for priority development of group 'B' enterprises at the cost of a modest decrease in the growth of 'A' products.

Unfortunately, there is currently a chronic shortage of boxboard in the country, which presents a problem with respect to packaging. For example, this year there is not enough boxboard for the packaging of tea, long-stem macaroni, confectionery, medicinal preparations and other consumer goods produced by some 80 ministries and departments.

Also, with a view to reducing to the fullest extent possible spoilage of products due to inadequate packaging, the government allocated substantial amounts of foreign currency to provide for purchases of imported automatic packaging lines for tea, confectionery, macaroni, vermicelli, sugar and other foods. Additionally, enterprises of the defence ministries were tasked with the manufacture of similar lines. Furthermore, although a decree of the CC CPSU and USSR Council of Ministers dated November 22, 1987 quantified the volumes of output of products in the packaged form and the supply of packaging materials, including boxboard, needed for these purposes, and called for an early increase in boxboard production volumes, in point of fact this has not been done.