

TIMBER AND WOODWORKING

Preparations for Winter at the Felling Sites: Report by First Deputy Minister

Once again, summer is giving way to winter, or more precisely, to preparing for it. With the transition to a market-type economy, managers will have much greater opportunities for economic manoeuvre and for competent, efficient and commercial utilization of timber. First, however, it must be harvested and extracted from the felling areas. The fourth quarter of this year and the first quarter of next is the most suitable period in which to do this. How will the workers of the sector cope with the cold weather which is just around the corner? Our correspondent met with N.S. Lyashchuk, First Deputy Minister of the USSR Timber Industry. Here are some of his comments on the evolving situation.

"Many years of experience show that during the periods October-December and January-March less than 70 percent of the annual felling assignment is normally extracted. An example of the opposite kind, however, is afforded by the "Omsklesprom" Association. There, up to 80-85 percent of the planned yearly volume is brought to the lower landings in sub-zero weather. During the remaining months, being sure that the plan will be fulfilled, they are able to concentrate their efforts on solving essential administrative problems.

What is it that is helping the Omsk people? Above all else the prompt and qualitative preparation for winter. They concentrate on the essentials: the forest lands are selected in good time; reserves of machinery, spare parts and gasoline are assembled; skilled workers are trained; seasonal roads put through, etc. Only on such a basis is it possible to work productively and make full use of available machinery.