

# The Terentyevs' family business

**279 various specialization farm enterprises work in Gomel region. "Terentyev & Sons" farming enterprise is different from others. Fish farming and rural tourism has been developed here for eleven years.**

There are 17 reservoirs on the 12 hectares of drained area near the river Sved (a confluent to the river Berezina) where Vladimir Lvovich, his wife and three sons have created conditions for fish farming, ponds for hatchlings, spawning as well as stock and finishing ponds. Utility rooms have been built on the area of 250 square meters. As soon as warm season comes, camping site comes into holiday-makers' service at the river bank. People fish, cook fish-soup, enjoy the nature. Not only regular tents but also tents with fresh hay are offered to spend the night at the bank of the river.

Vladimir Lvovich has been doing his best for some long years to reach his dream to have agro-ecological tourism. He worked as a driver for more than 30 years and when agricultural private enterprise became to be arisen in the republic, being an inveterate fisherman, Vladimir Lvovich made a decision to start doing that he had been living all his years with. To conduct his business professionally he studied on the beekeeping and fish-breeding course at learning and practice centre in Kiev Agricultural Academy (there were no such institutions in Belarus at that time), and as a result has got a diploma. A lot was allocated to the family in 1994. To tell the truth, so

much work had been done before the bog could be used for fish-breeding. More than 70 million rubles (approx. 35 thousand dollars) has been invested in business. He ticked and has still been paying his debts.

His wish to follow scientific approach made him conduct a treaty with Belarusian scientific research centre for making design estimates to arrange the plot.

Lack of finances has made it impossible to finish it yet. Nevertheless, scientists have done their best taking into consideration the situation – they marked on the project plan pond places and earthwork needed to be done. Equipment such as bulldozers, excavators had to be leased to fulfil the plan. It goes without saying that Vladimir Lvovich's family didn't have it. But Terentyev is a very active, ready-witted man who is not used to giving up. He asked Svetlogorsk executive committee for help. He thought if the local authority was not able to help with money then they could contribute to farming at least. The issue was brought up on the executive committee meeting. The issue was sorted out positively and necessary equipment was given. Bog reclamation was done, some ground was brought, ponds were excavated and a bit later the farmer mounted water pumps. The plot became suitable for fish-breeding. Fish was brought from different regions of the Republic of Belarus. Carps, sazan, silver carps, crucian carps, grass carps live in the excavated ponds.

There are all kinds of fresh water fish and its elite sorts such as bream, pike, except perhaps zander. Finances were not grudging to spend on obtaining so much fish.

As water analyses show, tells Vladimir Lvovich, it is possible to breed noble fish such as salmon, sturgeon as well as trout and starlet. But the farmer is in need of money to fulfil his plans and other creative ideas.



Unfortunately, the income got from tourism and other projects, particularly, plant growing (on the 4 hectares the family breeds vegetables sold locally) is not enough to cover current cost and to repay debts. It is expected to sell carp wholesale only in two years. To improve financial situation the farmer started breeding geese last year and black chokeberry was planted in spring. Of course, to realize more significant projects it is necessary to get a credit. But a bank doesn't take fish as collateral.

However, perhaps, Terentyev's business revives with beach season coming. Tents appear on the river bank and fires are burnt. Water boils up in mess kit and fish soup is cooked. Tourists come with their families, colleagues escaping town noise and fuss. Everything required has been prepared for visits: fishing rods, firewood and bedding.

Everything is offered for acceptable price. For example, overnight stay in a tent (bedding is included) costs 12 thousand rubles, a fishing-rod with tackle is 3 thousand rubles.

Last summer town fishing competition was held on Terentyev's property. More than once Vladimir Lvovich's farming has been visited by foreign guests: the English, the Italian, the Japanese and the Israeli. Representatives of the Foggy Albion chose to stay overnight in tents and sleep on hay. Having spent some time at the farming they were very grateful for pleasure got from the nature and peculiar feelings.

The Italians, to the point, not only had rest but also discussed co-operation opportunities and investing in Terentyev's business. The Italians and the Israeli granted moderateloans, moreover, humanitarian aid as well.



Vladimir Lvovich Terentyev and his son Lev