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Tobacco Fermentation Plant Begins Operation

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TOBACCO FERMENTATION PLANT BEGINS OPERATION -- Sofia, Vecherni Novini, 28 Sep 51

On the eve of the bright holiday of freedom, 9 September, Bulgarian construction workers handed over another valuable plant to the national economy, the "Vasil Demirevski" Fermentation Plant.

Heretofore, the fermentation of tobacco in Bulgaria has only been induced in a natural way through so called "seasonal fermentation". Tobacco was left in the warehouses of the Tobacco Monopoly for a period of 4 to 5 months, and sometimes even a year, in order to ferment.

The out-of-season fermentation is an altogether new method for processing tobacco. This method was first tried in the Soviet Union where artificial fermentation was studied and successfully applied for the first time by professor Smirnov at the Krasnodar Tobacco Institute.

Thanks to the rich experience of Soviet specialists, this new way of inducing fermentation in tobacco is being introduced in Bulgaria according to plan. Very soon several fermentation plants will be put in operation in Bulgaria; they will help eliminate the lengthy processes of natural fermentation by storage in warehouses and will simplify and reduce costs in processing Bulgarian high-grade tobacco.

The advantages of the out-of-season, artificial, or so-called plant fermentation of tobacco are the following: in the

first place, the time necessary for the fermentation of tobacco is greatly reduced. By the new method, tobacco ferments for 8 to 10 days instead of 4 to 5 months or even a year. This reduction of the time of fermentation has a large number of advantages. In the first place, the necessity for warehouses to preserve tobacco is minimized. While before an area of one square meter in a warehouse could be used to store 80 kilograms of naturally fermenting tobacco, at present the same space can be used to store 200 kilograms of tobacco, which permits the storage of two and a half times more tobacco in existing warehouses. By plant fermentation of tobacco the cigarette factories can be continuously supplied with fermented tobacco, which renders unnecessary the storage of old crop tobacco at factories, and this old tobacco can be exported abroad. This also prevents tying up large operational funds. Plant fermentation totally eliminates the molding of tobacco, which is unavoidable in natural fermentation and which causes damages of millions of leva to the national economy each year. The introduction of plant fermentation also eliminates the seasonal aspect of tobacco processing. The tobacco crop will at present be bought much earlier than in the past. In addition, by radically changing the fermentation process, plant fermentation will render unnecessary the processing of tobacco at warehouses, and there will gradually be only one single processing of tobacco in the villages. This will help the state to realize economies of 20 to 30 leva per kilogram of tobacco. In general, plant fermentation of tobacco is cheaper for the state than seasonal fermentation. Plant fermentation considerably improves the color, aroma, and quality of tobacco.

The out-of-season plant fermentation of tobacco was applied for the first time in Bulgaria in May 1950 at the Plovdiv Fermentation Plant. The results of the first experience were very satisfactory. Since then the technological processing of tobacco for export or cigarette manufacturing has been put on a scientific basis in Bulgaria.

The construction of the new "Vasil Demirevski" Fermentation Plant was launched in the beginning of the second quarter of the current year. It was completed with work carried on at bolshevik tempo. On 1 Oct 51, the first batches of tobacco will be loaded in its fermentation chambers. The new fermentation plant is Bulgarian made. All its machines have been built by Bulgarian machine-building plants, such as the "G. Kirkov" Plant, the "Spartak" State Industrial Enterprise, and others.

The fermentation chambers of the plant are situated on the first floor. Their walls are made of wood and are well insulated. On all premises of the plant, equipment for central heating of the air and for ventilation has been installed, which purifies the air, keeps a constant temperature and a constant degree of humidity on the premises, and creates the necessary atmospheric conditions for the fermentation process. On the second floor are situated the plant's laboratories, which are able at any given moment to determine how far fermentation has progressed, and on the third floor are the premises for storing the fermented tobacco.

The tobacco which is to undergo plant fermentation is distributed in advance into lots according to ripeness, moisture

content and other qualities. The tobacco is then placed on special shelves in the chambers, each of which can hold 16 tons of tobacco, and is left to ferment by keeping the necessary constant temperature, atmospheric humidity and other conditions.

With the construction of additional fermentation plants the very basis of Bulgarian tobacco production is changing. It becomes independent of climatic conditions.

Thanks to the great care of Party and government and the application of rich Soviet experience, the most important article of Bulgarian export tobacco -- will be produced in a better way, more quickly and more profitably.

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