

Grow Cucumbers, Tomatoes, Radishes—

Yakutians Cultivate Fields

By YURI SEMENOV
Novosti Press Agency

The northern peoples of the Soviet Union whose occupations long ago involved livestock breeding, reindeer raising, and hunting, considered it a sin to turn over the soil. Today, unafraid of God's punishment, the Yakutians, Chukchis, and Evens cultivate their fields with modern machinery.

Yakutia, which lies in Eastern Siberia, is the northernmost autonomous republic in the Soviet Union. Despite the great expenditures of labor, wastelands, and money necessary to reclaim these cold and Yakutia produces a substantial proportion of its vegetable requirement.

The earliest harvests of vegetables in the Far North are produced in the greenhouses of the Yakutian agricultural research institute.

"We produce from 35 to 55 pounds of cucumbers per square yard," said Maria Petrova, a Yakutian who began working as an agronomist a few years ago after graduating from an agricultural institute. "It is not



MARIA PETROVA, an agronomist from the Agricultural Research Institute of Yakutia.

— Photo by V. YAKOVLEV, APN, 1975

easy to get in a good harvest on our scanty northern land.

"A lot of labor and money has to be invested in agrotechnical measures, top dressing, and watering. Literally, every fruit is kept under surveillance."

About one acre of land here is covered with polyethylene. All soil preparation and planting processes are mechanized. During the season from March to September, greenhouses produce up to 65 tons of cucumbers, tomatoes, onions and radishes.

The institute's experience has been spread throughout Yakutia. Greenhouses on the republic's specialized farms cover more than 37 acres.

"We hope that Yakutia will be in a position to meet its requirements in vegetable and other crops fully in a short time," says Nikolai Shchadrinov, the Yakutian Minister of Agriculture."

"During the last five years, the cultivated area grew by more than 1.8 times and output grew by 2.2 times. We are greatly aided by the scientists of the Siberian Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences and Moscow. We are also training specialists from among the local residents on a growing scale."

Northern farming is extending its potentials. In the experimental garden of the agricultural research institute, creeping apple trees are yielding giant fruits. The harvest giant fruits. The harvest received from one such tree is 22 pounds and more.

The institute's agronomists have achieved remarkable results: The cherry tree and other fruit and berry plants, characteristic of the warmer European part of the USSR, have begun to bear fruit there.