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# Green Belarus News & Events in Belarus

## CRESTED LARK DECLARED BIRD OF THE YEAR 2017 IN BELARUS

**Crested lark has been declared the Bird of the Year 2017 in Belarus, APB BirdLife Belarus non-government organization posted on its website.**

The Bird of the Year 2017 will be featured on posters in the subway and, by tradition, graffitied on the wall of one of the houses in Minsk. The National Bank of Belarus and the Belpochta mail service are planning to release coins and postage stamps depicting the bird of the year. Cities and towns will organize tours "In search of the Bird of the Year". Flower beds and parks where crested lark dwells will have signs "Attention! The Bird of the Year!" Little Belarusians will have an opportunity to take part in the drawing contest of posters "Let's save crested lark!". A nationwide contest Bird Art will be organized in Belarus on 5 June, the World Environment Day.

"The Bird of the Year campaign has something

for everyone. It will include creative contests, educational event, and nature conservation activities. Each of these events is important in its own way. Only together we can help crested lark survive and eventually increase its populations to a safe level," coordinator of the APB Bird of the Year campaign Karina Solovei said.



The bird is on the Red Book List of Endangered Species in Belarus. Crested Lark is one of the four species of lark that live in the country: Eurasian skylark, woodlark, and horned lark that come to Belarus to winter from the north.

APB BirdLife Belarus launched the Bird of the Year national campaign in 2000. Its main goal is to raise public awareness of the beauty of nature and the birds living around us, the need for their conservation. Events are held throughout the year to provide an opportunity to a large number of people to participate in creative competitions and in environmental activities.

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## BELARUS' FIRST REFERENCE ENERGY-EFFECTIVE HOUSE IN DECEMBER

**Belarus' first energy-effective house with a reference design will be commissioned in December 2016, BELTA learned from Viktor Akushko, First Deputy Director of the Energy Effectiveness Department of the State Standardization Committee of Belarus, on 9 November.**

According to the source, a project is being implemented with assistance of the European Union and the UNDP to build three houses in Belarus that will provide a reference point with regard to energy effectiveness. The houses are located in Grodno, Minsk, and Mogilev. The house in Mogilev is supposed to be commissioned in December 2016.

As part of the project as much as \$4.5 million will be spent to assimilate new technologies into these houses and educate their residents. Belarusian construction companies are building these houses at their own expense.

Each house will use its own way of saving energy,

specified Viktor Akushko. Plans have been made to secure the minimum energy consumption possible — about 30kWh per m2 at most. To compare, conventional houses use up to 200kWh per m2.

Belarusian construction materials are used to build these houses. It is engineering solutions that will achieve a considerable economic effect, underlined the First Deputy Director of the Energy Effectiveness Department of the State Standardization Committee of Belarus.



Vitaly Kretsky, Head of the Department for Organizational and Legal Work and Interaction with Mass Media in the State Standardization Committee of Belarus, remarked that residents will have to pay only for the construction work. "The new technologies will be provided to the residents free of charge," said the official. He went on saying that once they move in, the residents will be instructed in operating the new equipment. International Energy Saving Day is marked on 11 November.

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# PLANS TO BUILD LARGE WASTE RECYCLING PLANT IN MINSK OBLAST

Plans have been made to build a large waste recycling plant at the border of Smolevichi District and Borisov District. The enterprise will utilize a complete production cycle, BelTA learned from Nikolai Svirsky, Head of the Beautification and Secondary Material Resources Department of the state enterprise Minsk Oblast Utilities.

As much as €65 million in foreign direct investments will be spent on building the waste recycling plant. The enterprise will be built by a German company, which representatives are already busy carrying out the initial work. In particular, work is in progress to allocate a land plot as large as 4-5ha to build the enterprise. The turn-key project will be implemented within 18-24 months. The preparation of all the necessary documents will begin in January 2017.

The future waste recycling plant is supposed to recycle 250,000 tonnes of solid municipal waste per annum. In line with the investment contract Minsk Oblast will supply raw materials to be processed such as automobile tires and scrap plastic that will be used to make granules, bits and pieces. These products will be exported to be used as raw materials for some other manufacturing process. Apart from that, the waste recycling plant will use waste to produce biogas and consequently electricity and heat energy. According to Nikolai Svirsky, electricity will be transferred into the regional power grid. Negotiations are underway to sell heat energy

to the Belarusian car factory BelGee. As an alternative the possibility of building greenhouses to grow vegetables is under consideration.

The Zhodino city landfill for stockpiling solid municipal waste also takes some of the waste from Borisov District and Smolevichi District. The company that will implement the investment project to build the waste recycling plant expects that the Zhodino city landfill will be shut down within ten years. Representatives of the investors have come up with a preliminary logistics scheme for delivering waste to the future waste recycling plant. As for how much waste the new facility will be able to get, Borisov District will send about 100,000 tonnes of solid municipal waste per annum, the city of Zhodino

will supply 60,000-70,000 tonnes, and Smolevichi District will deliver about 45,000 tonnes. The new enterprise may also take some of the waste from the China-Belarus industrial park Great Stone. The Head of the Beautification and Secondary Material Resources Department of the state enterprise Minsk Oblast Utilities specified that waste transshipping stations will be set up in Berezina District, Krupki District, and Logoisk District as part of the logistics chain. The waste recycling plant will use its own trucks to reach the transshipping stations to take away waste.

A government program on collecting and processing secondary raw materials was adopted in Belarus in 2009. Waste recycling plants are being built and separate waste collection practices are encouraged. The measures will allow increasing the extraction of secondary resources from municipal waste.



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## NASB HUMAN GENETICS LABORATORY: OVER 100,000 TESTS SINCE 2009

The human genetics laboratory have conducted more than 100,000 DNA tests to the tune of over \$1 million, Valentina Lemesh, the director of the Genetics and Cytology Institute at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, told reporters during the third international scientific conference The 21st Century Genetics and Biotechnology: Problems, Achievements, Prospects on 23 November.

The human genetics laboratory operates at



the National Center for Genome Biotechnology of the Genetics and Cytology Institute. The laboratory started providing the DNA testing service in 2009. Scientists identify genetic predisposition to dangerous pathologies (cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, osteoporosis, preterm birth), and also genetic predisposition to sporting achievements.

"The service is in high demand. The further the science advances, the higher the public awareness is. People are fully aware of the importance of genetic testing," Valentina Lemesh noted.

According to her, the genetic predisposition to recurrent pregnancy loss enjoys the highest demand. "Analysis is carried out across a set of genes. Following this test a treatment is prescribed," Valentina Lemesh said.

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## SCIENTISTS FROM FIVE COUNTRIES TO ATTEND INTERNATIONAL GENETICS CONFERENCE IN MINSK

The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NASB) will play host to the third international scientific conference 21st Century Genetics and Biotechnology: Problems, Achievements, Prospects from 23 to 25 November, BelTA learned from the NASB press service.

Scientists from Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and the United Kingdom (Scotland) will present their most recent



achievements in genetics and biotechnology. All in all, the forum will bring together over 200 researchers. The program of the conference includes sections Molecular Genetics, Genomics and Bioinformatics; Human Genetics, Medical and Sports Genetics; Genetics, Selective Breeding and Biotechnology.

The forum will provide an opportunity for the scientists to exchange best practices and join their research capacities to solve key problems of genetics and selective breeding.

The Eleventh Congress of the Belarusian Society of Geneticists and Breeders will be held as part of the conference in Minsk.

The congress and the conference will mark the 115th anniversary of the birth of Academician Anton Zhebrak, a pioneer of genetics research in Belarus.

The Belarusian Society of Geneticists and Breeders was established in 1966. Today it is a big organization uniting 269 scientists from 12 research institutions, breeding centers and educational establishments of Belarus.

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The supplement was established in 2013 as an informational and educational resource that can be freely accessed by all users interested in ecology and environmental problems.

It is a digest of the most important news and events.

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# ORGANIC FOOD LAW EXPECTED TO COME INTO FORCE IN BELARUS IN 2017

**A law on organic food may come into force in Belarus in 2017, BelTA learned from Belarusian Agriculture and Food Minister Leonid Zayats on 15 November.**

The law may start working in November 2017, said the Belarusian Agriculture and Food Minister.

The official explained that plans had been made to determine the term "organic food". "We have to decide what organic food is. We should decide whether the term applies to meat products or agricultural products and we should extend state support to the relevant producers," said Leonid Zayats.



According to the official, organic food is highly appreciated and sells well all over the world. Speaking about prospects of enforcing the law, the Agriculture and Food Minister noted

that the law will be applicable to a limited amount of food products. "We need to grow about 10 million tonnes of cereals in order to feed the nation. This is why the bulk of arable farming has to be ecologically intensive. It should not harm the environment while making quality products without relying heavily on toxic chemicals, pesticides, nitrates and so on," said Leonid Zayats.

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# BELARUSIAN EXPERIENCE OF DEVELOPING NUCLEAR SAFETY REGULATORY INFRASTRUCTURE PRESENTED IN MOSCOW

**The Belarusian experience of developing the nuclear safety regulatory infrastructure was presented during the eleventh international forum and dialogue Nuclear Energy, Ecology, Safety 2016, which took place in Moscow on 22-23 November, the event's organizers told BelTA.**

During the panel session on using nuclear energy safely Sergei Drobot, First Deputy Head of the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Department of the Belarusian Emergency Ministry (Gosatomnadzor), presented Belarus' experience of forming the regulatory infrastructure of the nuclear energy industry. In his words, hard work is in progress in Belarus to implement programs on developing communications inside agencies and training personnel for regulatory bodies. An effective system to inform the general public about progress in implementing the national nuclear program has been established, in particular, about the construction of the Belarusian nuclear power plant. In October 2016 IAEA representatives visited Belarus to assess the nuclear and radiation safety regulatory infrastructure. The experts noted the openness of the nuclear industry safety watchdog and the high level of the adopted standards.

The international forum and dialogue Nuclear Energy, Ecology, Safety represents a traditional venue where Russian and foreign experts, representatives of the nuclear industry and the general public can meet and discuss important matters concerning nuclear energy use. This year's forum focused on environmental protection, safety, and economic effectiveness of the nuclear energy industry. Apart from that, the forum participants discussed nuclear energy industry regulation, the decommissioning of nuclear energy installations, approaches to rehabilitating the territories. They also shared their experience of interaction with the general public and interested parties during discussions about

safety considerations in the course of implementation of nuclear projects.

During the plenary session Alexei Likhachev, Director General of the Russian state nuclear industry corporation Rosatom, noted that for the last ten years the nuclear industry has been particularly open and interested in establishing a dialogue with the general public. "We've managed to overcome the mistrust and fear generated in the period when the general public had little to no access to nuclear projects. Today we work together with the general public to reach for new heights. We are ready to invite foreign experts for environmental and public assessments," said the executive. As an example the Rosatom head mentioned the international environmental expert evaluation of the reactors under construction at the Leningrad nuclear power plant. Belarusian experts took part in the expert evaluation among other parties. Rosatom will continue inviting experts from foreign countries particularly in the countries about to embark upon developing a nuclear energy industry of their own.

The forum was organized by the public advisory board of the Russian state nuclear industry corporation Rosatom with assistance of the Federal Environmental, Industrial and Nuclear Supervision Service of Russia (Rostechnadzor) and the V.I. Vernadsky Non-Governmental Environmental Foundation. The event gathered over 400 people, including Rosatom and Rostechnadzor specialists, representatives of public organizations, the IAEA, the World Nuclear Association, and foreign experts, including from Iran, India, Germany, Belgium, Sweden, Belarus, and Hungary.



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