



Arrived in Kyiv afternoon of the 12th. Took overnight train to Uzhhorod - about 16 hours. Trip is not too bad, can sleep relatively well except this train takes a secondary route through the mountains and the track is not so good - maybe tops out at 35mph! But who cares? You still arrive at 8:45am.

The big event at the children's home this week is VBS camp sponsored by the Dutch philanthropy, Dorcas, which includes 8-12 year olds from the home and boys and girls from the immediate surrounding region that would otherwise have no such opportunity. Adrea, Katko, Jr.'s wife leads a group in the "Owl's Castle". More on this later....



Photo Tour of the Farm: Fruits and Vegetables



Grapes are mostly Concord variety. Greenhouses and grain storage in the background. Older apple and plum trees line the drive.





The old "Johnny Appleseed" type trees from years ago still produce great quantities of very good apples but they are nearly impossible to manage. You can try to thin them out and open them up to sunlight but they are still so tall it is difficult to pick the apples and most end up on the ground. The newer dwarf style trees are shorter and more compact and can be pruned and harvested from the ground level usually. The new, new trees are almost like row crops and support unbelievable amounts of fruit. The new apple trees at the home have not lived up to expectations yet but the plums are literally falling over from the weight of the fruit. It is just coming ripe and if one falls off as you gently pull it is soft and very sweet - really good!cannot walk past without trying one, or two. The bulk should be fully ripe in about a week, I think.

(L) Old tree full of apples

(below) New trees and plum trees loaded with small sweet plums - Damson, maybe?





Potatoes, carrots, and late peppers are grown outside in the fields. Tomatoes and cucumbers are always grown in the tunnel greenhouses where they can be string tied. Radishes, cabbages, and strawberries are often started late winter to get a jump on the season. The just prepared bed had cabbages beforehand. Peppers and tomatoes are mid-term - if I recall right, in March there were strawberries where the peppers and tomatoes are now. They sometimes get 5 crops from one greenhouse. Early on, pipes along the rows carry hot water from a wood-fired boiler to heat the soil and a second layer of plastic provides extra insulation.. All are drip irrigated.



