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RURAL DEVELOPMENT AS A BASIS FOR FOOD SECURITY IN UKRAINE

Food security is one of the key goals of the state agricultural and economic policy. It forms a vector of movement towards the optimal state of the food system of any country. In this sense, food security monitoring is a continuous process. But mostly, in order to realize this goal, the development priorities and mechanisms for implementing the agricultural policy must be corrected. Each country has its own experience in implementing agricultural policy and creating a national food security system.

The food security problems of Ukraine in the conditions of the war and the post-war period of reconstruction, as well as the connection between the prospects for the development of rural areas and the increase in the level of food security, are considered. Based on the most common approaches to defining food security and the basic aspects of the modern concept of food security, taking into account the social and economic problems of rural areas of Ukraine as obstacles to strengthening the country's food security, proposals for their prevention and overcoming have been developed. The concept of Economic Ukrainian Centrism was introduced.

Keywords: food security, innovation, post-war reconstruction of Ukraine, rural development, economic Ukrainian Centrism.

JEL Classification: E27, J43, L51, O13, Q18, R23.

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РОЗВИТОК СІЛЬСЬКИХ ТЕРИТОРІЙ ЯК ОСНОВА ПРОДОВОЛЬЧОЇ БЕЗПЕКИ УКРАЇНИ

Продовольча безпека – одна з ключових цілей державної аграрної та економічної політики. Вона формує вектор руху до оптимального стану продовольчої системи будь-якої країни. У цьому сенсі моніторинг продовольчої безпеки є безперервним процесом. Але здебільшого для втілення цієї мети слід скоригувати корекція пріоритети розвитку та механізмів реалізації аграрної політики. Кожна країна має свій власний досвід реалізації аграрної політики та створення національної системи продовольчої безпеки.

Розглянуто проблеми продовольчої безпеки України в умовах війни та післявоєнний період відбудови, а також зв'язок перспективи розвитку сільських територій з підвищенням рівня продовольчої безпеки. На основі найпоширеніших підходів до визначення продовольчої безпеки та базових аспектах сучасної концепції продовольчої безпеки, з огляду на соціально-економічні проблеми сільської місцевості України як переешкоди для зміцнення продовольчої безпеки країни, вироблено пропозиції щодо їх профілактування та подолання. Введено поняття "економічний україноцентризм".

Ключові слова: продовольча безпека, інновації, післявоєнна відбудова України, розвиток сільських територій, економічний україноцентризм.



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Introduction

Food security (FS) is an important component of social and economic development and a key component of the country's economic and national security. It is worth noting that the development of reproductive processes in agricultural production occurs only when the FS conditions are created, including mechanisms for combating economic threats. This is due to the fact that the food problem at the current stage of human development has a global scale.

FS implementation requires a comprehensive strategy and systemic state regulation. Refining the concept of food security is one of the most urgent tasks both in the world and in Ukraine, which is acutely experiencing the social and economic consequences of the war. Despite the fact that the FS problem in the world community is given a lot of attention, it not only remains unsolved, but also significantly worsened under the conditions of globalization, so it needs further comprehensive research.

The research of domestic and foreign scientists is devoted to the peculiarities of FS providing. O. Shevchenko describes the FS genesis in state acts, in particular, the national security strategy of Ukraine in different periods of Ukrainian independence (Shevchenko, 2021, pp. 110–117). E. Starychenko defines food security as a state favorable to ensuring food security in the economic, social and ecological spheres, during which the physical, social and economic availability of food products is guaranteed for every person (Starychenko, 2018, pp. 42–48). Famous Ukrainian scientists P. Sabluka and V. Yurchyshyn made a significant contribution to the actualization and scientific development of the topic of PB. Foreign scientists K. Araujo, U. Beck, O. Badian, J. Desir, D. Gwishiani, V. Aykroyd, J. Drese, E. Ekholm, D. Mahendra, A. Sen, S. Osmani, T. Schultz, Schengen Fen.

The aim of the article is to determine the theoretical and institutional features of food security in Ukraine under martial law, as well as transformations of public administration and approaches to ensuring food security and the need to strengthen state regulation of the development of the basic level of food security in rural areas. The research is based on the hypothesis that the driver of strengthening food security is the state regulation of the development of rural areas, which should take place under a complex and systematic approach. The hypothesis was tested using the methods of comparative analysis, generalization and synthesis.

The Ukrainian and foreign scientists' researches on the FS issues, as well as the regulatory framework and other decisions of public management and administration bodies became the theoretical and methodological basis for writing the article, the research of which was carried out using the monographic method. The methods of theoretical generalization, analysis, and synthesis were used to systematize the obtained data. Abstract-logical, hypothetical and the method of structural, functional analysis were used to develop proposals for planning state regulation of the development of rural areas and agrarian policy in general.

The theoretical significance and novelty of the article is in the introduction of the of Economic Ukrainian Centrism concept in Ukraine's foreign economic activity, as well as a list of proposals of a specific nature regarding Ukraine's food security and the development of rural areas.

Thanks to consideration of the peculiarities of food security as a component of Ukraine's national security and the level of the quality of life of the population and the country's place in global economic policy, arguments are provided that the social and economic problems of the base area of food security as rural areas, are an obstacle to strengthening food security of Ukraine, the author's proposals are presented on overcoming them.

1. Peculiarities of food security as a component of national security of Ukraine during martial law

The FS formation takes place through the creation of economic mechanisms that take into account economic interests and contribute to the development of the agricultural food sector. Although the food security situation in Ukraine is largely independent in many food parameters, before the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation, it had a number of problems, the most important of which are technical assistance in the agricultural sector, investment projects implemented in the agro-industrial sector, priority areas of grain farming, vegetable growing and animal husbandry, aging of production capacities of processing enterprises and purchase of necessary means of production.

According to O. Chechel, food security is a state that is characterized by the protection of the food interests of people, society and the country from external and internal threats and that guarantees a correctly measured impact of factors in the presence of environmental protection. This state predicts the current situation, which contributes to the functioning of human life, the development of the economy and industry, the control of crisis phenomena and the provision of sufficient quantities of high-quality products to all population groups.

According to the definition of the World Food Program, it is a system that clearly works to ensure all segments of the country's FS through its own production of products in accordance with physiological norms, as well as the import of products that the country cannot produce (Chechel, 2014).

In the last decade, the three main approaches to defining food security, presented in the *Table*, have been the most common.

Proponents of the first are economists from countries with developed market economies. According to it, food security guarantees are implemented through imports or self-sufficiency, so there is not much difference between these options.

Table

Approaches to determining food security

Approach	Main categories	Essence
First	Consumption	Providing citizens with safe access to the amount of food necessary for a healthy active life
Second	Stock of food; solvency of the population; the balance of domestic production and imports	The state's ability to provide the necessary quantity and range of food products
Third	The number of products on the national food market and their availability to the population	It is used to determine the provision of physical and economic availability of food

Source: created by the author, based on Kulakovska, 2020.

According to the second approach, the FS provision is aimed at the implementation of important directions, in particular:

- Conformity of the food supply to a sufficient level to ensure quality nutrition;
- ensuring a sufficient level of solvency of the population;
- reducing dependence on imports while preserving the main interests of domestic producers.

The third approach is used to determine the provision of physical and economic availability of food.

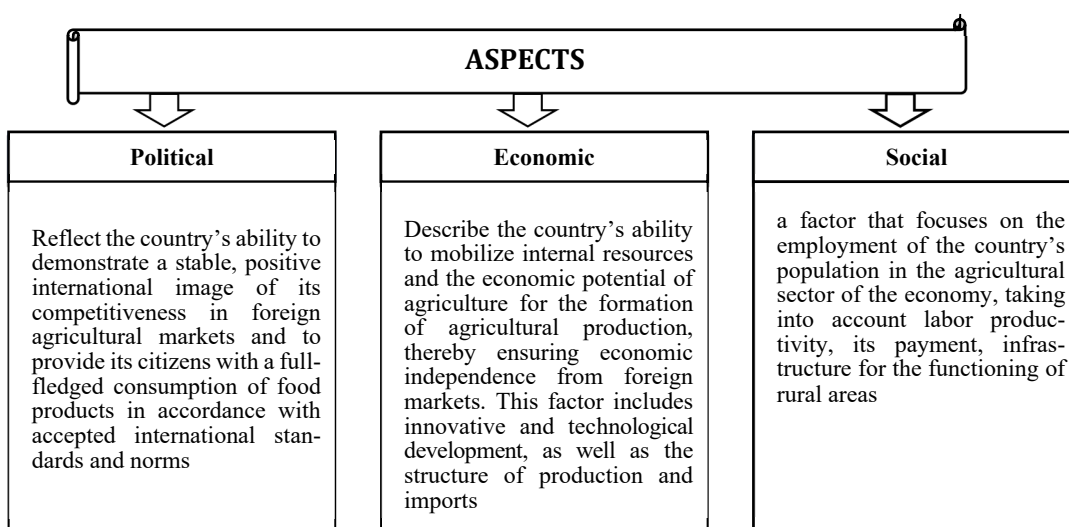
These three currently main conceptual approaches to the definition of food security do not have a separate provision for the development of rural areas as a basis for food security, if we do not take into account the views on the import of food products, which constitutes 100% of the national market.

At the same time, the level of the country's FS depends on a complex of factors: the availability of own resources, the use of available alternative resources, the level of resource consumption, etc. All this constitutes the three main aspects of the modern concept of food security, which are presented in the *Figure*.

Therefore, food security has not only consumption considerations (taking into account physiological norms), but also production and social aspects.

Ukraine is an agrarian country, so the agricultural sector is important not only in the context of providing the population with food products, but also in guaranteeing its employment and strengthening the country's export potential.

It is important to consider that the demand for food products is only increasing due to the significant increase in the number of people around the world, the climate crisis, the economic impact of COVID-19 and the existing wars. The livelihoods of millions of people in various parts of the world are at risk.



Main aspects of the modern concept of food security

Source: constructed by the author, based on Chechel, 2014.

Russia's war against Ukraine has only worsened the situation by bringing the global food crisis closer: it is causing huge losses in the agricultural and industrial sector, reducing soil fertility and reducing the number of livestock and birds. The enemy purposefully destroys objects of specialized and critically important infrastructure, destroys logistics chains. According to Corteva Agriscience™, the agricultural division of DowDuPont and the analytical agency The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), in 2022, the state of food security in Ukraine has significantly worsened. The country took 71st place among 113 countries (in 2021 – 58th place). There is every reason to predict that this indicator will worsen in 2023.

At the same time, during the war, the country's budget for 2023 is primarily focused on ensuring defense capability. Thus, more than 40% of budget funds are allocated to the needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, personnel training, medical care, social support of veterans and their family members, combat veterans, procurement of weapons, military equipment, means and equipment, modernization and repair (Law of Ukraine "About the State Budget of Ukraine for 2023", 2022).

In order to ensure the rational functioning of the economy in extremely difficult conditions, significant changes have been made to the current legislation and new legal documents have been adopted, according to A. Lysenko, "the simplified procedure for implementing land relations and certain regulatory procedures has been settled, tax benefits have been established, and a mechanism for operational transfer from combat zones of production capacities, the effectiveness of credit mechanisms was ensured, and a system of state guarantees was formed for agricultural producers" (Lysenko, 2022, pp. 71–81).

The main regulatory and legal documents that ensure the development of the economy of Ukraine and the solution of security problems in the conditions of martial law are:

- Law of Ukraine No. 2120-IX of March 15, 2022 "On Amendments to the Tax Code of Ukraine and other legislative acts of Ukraine regarding the effect of norms during the period of martial law";
- Law of Ukraine No. 2145-IX of March 24, 2022 "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding the Creation of Conditions for Ensuring Food Security in Martial Law";
- Law of Ukraine No. 2246-IX dated May 12, 2022 "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine Regarding Uninterrupted Production and Supply of Agricultural Products During Martial Law";
- Law of Ukraine No. 2247-IX dated May 12, 2022 "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding the Peculiarities of Regulating Land Relations in Martial Law";
- Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 723 dated 14.07.2021 "Some issues of providing state guarantees on a portfolio basis" (edition dated 25.10.2022).

In order to reduce the negative impact of the war on the state of food supply, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine by order dated 04/29/2022 approved the "Plan of measures to ensure food security in conditions of martial law" (Order of the CMU "Plan of measures to ensure food security in conditions of martial law"), which provides for the implementation important tasks in three areas:

- administration of the state food security system;
- providing the population of territorial communities with food products;
- regulation of foreign economic activity.

Relevant ministries, the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, military administrations regularly monitor information on the formation of the main food balance, control the level of trade allocations. The state also regulates the volume of exports of agricultural products, monitors and ensures the import needs of agricultural enterprises, accumulates information on the export of agricultural products, the number of organizations that need financing for the restoration and construction of production facilities. These measures are aimed at fulfilling important tasks related to meeting food needs, on the basis of providing agricultural enterprises with opportunities for further work. A comprehensive approach ensures the security of Ukraine and its citizens during the war.

Sustainable food security in conditions of martial law, occupation of part of the territory of Ukraine, the conduct of the Armed Forces and other structures of the liberation war is possible if the necessary measures are taken at different levels – state, regional and local. The stability of state administration at the regional level in the conditions of martial law depends on the quality of strategic planning, which, according to I. Dynnyk, "must

be based on the peculiarities of territorial communities, their inter-relationships and capabilities, which acquires special relevance in the realities of relocation of industry, businesses, labor resources" (Dyynyk, 2023, pp. 4–18).

FS is a dynamic concept that requires constant monitoring and adaptation to changes in the economy.

2. Food security is an important life quality aspect of the population and the country's place in global economic policy

The problem of FS population has always been the subject of close attention of the world community, especially in 1974, when the UN General Assembly supported the program "International commitments to ensure global food security", which was developed by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Later, on the initiative of the United Nations, the Rome Declaration on World Food Security was adopted. The growing interest in food issues has intensified the vital needs of individual countries, as well as the economic problems caused by the activities of large transnational corporations (TNCs) around the world. TNCs set only high prices, regulated the production of food products and established the production of low-quality food products using chemical ingredients that are dangerous for human life.

International normative documents take into account the FS country in several aspects. The Rome Declaration on Global Food Security contains provisions that focus on the "multifaceted nature of food security" and establish the state's obligation to ensure food security. The document emphasizes that each country has its own experience in implementing agricultural policy and creating a national FS system. It should be noted that the food independence of the country has become the goal in itself of the internal policy of the national economies of the majority of countries on the planet. But, as world experience shows, no country in the world can do without food imports.

To find out how well a country deals with domestic food security problems, including comparison with the rest of the world, it is recommended to use the Global Food Security Index (GFSI), which tracks the main problems of economic availability, physical availability and food quality of 113 countries. According to this index, Ukraine ranked 63rd in 2018, 76th in 2019, 54th in 2020, 58th in 2021, and 71st in 2022 (Global Food Security Index, 2022). The current financial and economic problems that arose after the start of hostilities in our country worsened the situation in the Ukrainian agro-industrial complex and reduced investment attractiveness in this sector. Until 2022, the share of national food production in our country was constantly increasing, and, accordingly, the share of products exported abroad.

As for other indicators of food security, the year 2022 also indicates the need for a sharp increase in the state's interest in this socio-economic direction. In terms of food availability, Ukraine scored 48.1 points out of 100 and ranked 93rd in the world. According to the indicator, the weakest factors in the country are the political situation and social barriers, supply chain infrastructure, the level of agricultural scientific research, as well as food availability strategies. The worst indicator of Ukrainian food security – sustainability and adaptability (43.5 points out of 100 and 94th place in the global ranking) – reflects serious problems with access to water resources and their management, as well as shortcomings in the risk management system. The only indicator that shows the best situation is the factor of food quality and safety, according to which Ukraine received 71.3 points out of 100, or 52nd place in the world ranking (Global Food Security Index, 2022).

The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) considers Ukraine as a country that plays an important role in ensuring global food security. For example, in the record year 2018, Ukraine was on the 1st place in the world among the producers of sunflower seeds and sunflower oil, and was also included in the TOP-10 of the world food market for such important product groups as: rapeseed and honey (3rd place), corn, barley (4th place), wheat (5th place), soybean (7th place) (Agrobusiness of Ukraine, 2018).

3. Social and economic problems of the basic area of food security, rural areas of Ukraine as an obstacle to strengthening food security of Ukraine and proposals for overcoming them

The difficulties of self-management for the majority of peasants on their own land from the beginning of obtaining ownership rights to it, legislative assistance to agricultural holdings and grain traders have led farmers to the category of the population with the lowest incomes, and rural areas to the category of so-called depressed areas that have lost internal social and economic security and are characterized not only by lagging behind in social and economic development, but also by the formation of a situation that poses a danger to social relations and the economic system of the state. According to official statistics, from 1959 to 2022, the rural population of Ukraine decreased quantitatively by 9.7 million people – from 22.4 to 12.7 million. At such a fast pace, in 30 years, the rural population will decrease to 8 million people, which does not meet the needs of the population density for rural areas. From 1959 to 2021, the birth rate in rural families in Ukraine decreased by 5 times (Demographic and social statistics / Population and migration, 2022). Until now, agricultural holdings do not always see the need for the development of social infrastructure, although it increases the attractiveness of the territory, contributes to the improvement of the quality of

human potential, slows down the erosion of the working population and the destruction of settlements (Regarding the problems of the development of social infrastructure of rural settlements, 2013).

They note three main criteria for the depression of the territory: decline in production, low income per capita and high unemployment during at least the last 5 years in a row. Currently, a certain unique eclectic situation is revealed, in particular, given the high level of production that has been maintained for several decades, there is a low level of income per capita and a high level of unemployment.

As a result of these processes, there remains a high threat of decline in production potential and complete degradation of the social infrastructure of the village. Those actions and measures of the state, which have recently been carried out in relation to rural areas, do not implement expanded reproduction, which is actually capable of ensuring food security.

In order to ensure sustainable food security of Ukraine in the conditions of martial law and after the war, it is necessary to add the development of rural areas as a strategic aspect of Ukraine's food security and take a number of measures.

First of all, it is worth supplementing the Ukrainian legislation in the area of food security with separate provisions on the development of rural areas as a base for the production of agricultural raw materials, as well as marking this task as a social and economic priority.

Secondly, the development of rural areas is impossible without the reconstruction and development of rural infrastructure, but such measures must be carried out on the basis of socio-economic justification. It is important to develop infrastructure that ensures processing of raw materials on site, storage and transportation of food products. To do this, it is necessary to build new roads, warehouses and logistics centers, provide the necessary equipment and transport, as well as the objects of the social infrastructure of rural areas, necessary for the productive life of people who form the basis of the labor resources of the agricultural and industrial complex.

Thirdly, it is necessary to increase the state support of agricultural producers with a strengthening of its social orientation, as well as to strengthen control by state bodies in compliance with the requirements of environmental legislation. It is important to comprehensively provide farmers with the necessary investments, land resources, technological means and financial support from the state and local budgets. Land productivity, preservation and restoration of fertile soil properties require separate standards and control.

Fourthly, it is important to direct the efforts of the scientific community to the development of rural areas as a basis for food security, developing and implementing new technologies in all components of the agricultural sector.

The fifth point is that a separate state program should provide for a system of state incentives for the voluntary displacement of existing and the creation of new productions of the processing industry of agrarian products in rural areas, justifying the proximity to raw materials, which will reduce the logistical burden.

The sixth point is that increasing the productivity of Ukrainian production thanks to domestic raw materials will make it possible to find a solution to the problem of food security. To do this, through quotas and other protectionist measures, the balance of agricultural raw materials for the domestic market should be regulated in the interests of the national industry, and the share of raw materials in Ukrainian exports should be systematically reduced.

The seventh point is that it is considered expedient to build an integrated (hybrid) digital platform for Ukraine's food security, which can perform the functions of research and formation of demand on the food market, simplifying investment in production, and will also help the relevant state bodies to more effectively regulate Ukraine's foreign economic activity in the FS interests of Ukraine.

According to the research results of scientists N. Novikova and O. Dyachenko, digital platforms transform traditional business models into modern digital formats, which lead to significant changes in the social and economic development of society. They facilitate communication between participants in interactive ecosystems where value is created and contribute to innovation in economic activity and the social sphere. The world's leading large companies by market capitalization have adopted a platform-based hybrid business model focused on digital innovation. Digital platforms solve many problems that most companies face, for example, they process large amounts of data that can be used to build consumer profiles of users, research preferences and predict behavior, thus increasing their competitiveness in the market and creating conditions for development (Novikova, Dyachenko & Honcharenko, 2023, pp. 47–66).

The eighth point is the increase in the number of local products in the domestic market of Ukraine should be the result of import substitution coordinated by the state.

The ninth point is that Ukraine is integrated into the global market, so both the provision of its food security and the participation of our country in the formation of world food security should be carried out in cooperation with international partners, but on the basis of the key principle for our national foreign economic activity, economic Ukrainian Centrism as own independent logical strategy for achieving defined economic goals in relations with other countries on equal terms, from the point of view of realism and pragmatism in the interests of the Ukrainian economy and the Ukrainian people. Cooperation with international partners on the basis of economic Ukrainian Centrism should include the exchange of experience and technologies, financial and technical support, as well as joint projects.

Each of the listed points requires further scientific elaboration, discussion in the scientific community and additional scientific research with further detailed development and transformation into political documents.

Conclusions

Strengthening food security through state regulation of the development of rural areas is an important direction for Ukraine both during the war and during post-war reconstruction. The research confirmed the hypothesis that state regulation of the development of rural areas requires a comprehensive and systematic approach. Providing the population with safe and affordable food is a priority for the government and society. To achieve this aim, in addition to strengthening traditional food security measures, it is necessary to add the development of rural areas as a strategic aspect of Ukraine's food security: improve legislation on the development of rural areas, develop rural infrastructure, dramatically increase agricultural support programs, direct the efforts of the scientific community to the development of rural territories as the basis of food security, developing and implementing new technologies, a separate state program to shift the production of the processing industry of agricultural products to rural areas, regulate the balance of agricultural raw materials in the interests of national industry and export, ensure state coordination of import substitution, digitalization of food security, and work with international partners in these directions. All of the above should ensure a sufficient level of food security; increase the level of income from Ukrainian exports and the quality of life of the rural population.

The directions of further research in this issue should be the state regulation of the export of agricultural products from agricultural raw materials to processed products, the introduction of the latest advanced technologies for growing and processing agricultural products in accordance with EU standards, as well as uninterrupted and safe export of agricultural products.

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