

REVIEW

for a dissertation

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on the topic: "**STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF COMPETITIVENESS OF PRODUCERS OF AGRO-FOOD PRODUCTS**",

applied for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

specialty 073 – Management

Relevance of the topic of the dissertation research. General changes in the philosophy of management are reflected in the introduction of the paradigm of sustainable development, which is concretized in the so-called global goals, embodying a joint call to action, where the vector is the fight against poverty, protecting the planet, ensuring peace and prosperity for all people in the world. One of the key goals of sustainable development is to ensure food security and eliminate all forms of hunger. The exacerbation of the global hunger problem in connection with the full-scale war in Ukraine, significantly actualizes the task of expanding Ukraine's participation in the global agri-food value chain with an understanding of the sectors with the most significant potential, which is the primary tool in terms of gaining strategic advantages and ensuring development in a multi-level structure of economic entities.

For most industrial goods, Ukraine takes the place of a raw material appendage; that is, specialization in the export of low-level products is deepening with parallel processes of growth of knowledge-intensive commodity groups with high added value in imports. Given the above, the priority strategic task of developing the agri-food sector is the acquisition of sustainable competitive advantages of domestic agricultural raw materials and product processing. In turn, the implementation of the outlined strategy actualizes the development of mechanisms and tools for increasing the level of competitiveness of agri-food enterprises based on the formation of adequate responses to the challenges of the external environment, substantiation of theoretical foundations, methodological support, and practical recommendations for the implementation of mechanisms, tools, and measures to ensure the desired level of competitiveness of agri-food sector

entities. That is precisely the purpose of the work under review, which indicates the undoubted relevance of the study.

The main result of the study is its scientific novelty. The study's primary results are substantiated and deepen the understanding of the theoretical, methodological, and applied foundations of managing the competitiveness of agri-food enterprises, which is specified in the following provisions.

The starting point, which determined the direction of further research, was the improvement of the definition of the vector of the strategic mission of the agri-food sector, which was carried out based on a study of the transformation of the introductory provisions of understanding the place of business entities in social relations. Attention is focused on the mutual influence of the meso- and micro-levels on the rooting of environmental and humanistic ethics, which is implemented at the level of individual enterprises through ESG principles. This idea was developed in formulating the author's vision of approaches to managing the competitiveness of agri-food structures with the addition of the principles of innovation and digitalization.

The paper presents an algorithm for strategic management of the competitiveness of the agri-food sector, which has a significant potential for application because stages determined by methods structure it. The nature of the external environment, the defining feature of which was rapid change, led to the proof of the optimal use of the methodology of control by weak signals given the strategic imperatives of development, and not exclusively adaptation to the solution of tactical problems.

The role of the financial mechanism in implementing decisions of any planning horizon is undeniable. Therefore, the architectural composition of the financial mechanism for increasing the competitiveness of economic entities in the agri-food sector, which is considered from the perspective of financial-organizational and financial-economic blocks, is of considerable interest. The implementation of the strategic mission, formulated in the first section of the study, determined the strategic guidelines in financing – inclusive provision of agri-food enterprises with financial resources on the principles of blended financing to achieve sustainable development goals. It is proposed to expand the practice of

implementing leasing relations by introducing business options for prolonged purchase (replacement) of the leased object based on applying a preferential credit and financial mechanism between the lessor and the lessee.

The mechanism for increasing the competitiveness of the agri-food sector presented by the author combines elements of forecasting with aspects of the application of management practices that have shown their effectiveness; that is, it is based on the principles of benchmarking as a process of evaluation, comparison, and adaptation. The general system for assessing the competitiveness of the agri-food sector has received an interesting architectural composition due to the inclusion of a qualitative criterion for balancing the actions of business entities and public authorities to create competitive advantages.

The degree of validity and reliability of scientific provisions, conclusions, and recommendations formulated in the dissertation.

The work submitted for review is characterized by a clear and internally consistent structure, in which there is a direction of research from abstract concepts to specific mechanisms for their implementation in agri-food management.

The scientific and theoretical basis of the work was made up of the work of domestic and foreign economists, the subject of which was the theoretical and practical foundations of the problems of increasing the competitiveness of agriculture, agri-food market, the attraction of investments within the framework of programs for the modernization of economic components of social processes.

The normative and legal basis of the study is the Constitution of Ukraine, international legal acts, laws of Ukraine, acts of the President of Ukraine and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, and by-laws that regulate economic relations. The information base of the study was made up of statistical materials published by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine and its territorial bodies.

The author's achievements are presented in 8 scientific papers with a total volume of 2.4 (printed pages): 4 articles and four abstracts of conference materials are published in scientific journals.

In general, the dissertation research is comprehensive and holistic; within its framework, the goal formulated by the author is fully achieved based on solving the

tasks. The questions the author has set for himself have been resolved, as evidenced by the conclusions, both at the end of each chapter and in general.

Connection of the work with scientific programs, plans, and topics. The work was carried out by the research plan of Petro Vasylenko Kharkiv National Technical University of Agriculture on the topic: "Mechanisms for increasing competitiveness, development of the economic and production-technological potential of agro-industrial production facilities", "Management systems for the competitive promotion of agricultural products in the context of globalization of agricultural markets". The author's power in their development includes the formulation of the algorithm mixed financial support for participants in agri-food value chains, improvement of methodological approaches to the organization of leasing financial relations in the agri-food sector, clarification of a set of drivers for increasing the competitiveness of agri-food chain entities, as well as the development of a set of marketing factors that determine the competitiveness of enterprises in the agri-food sector.

Structure and content of the work. The dissertation includes an introduction, three chapters, conclusions, and annexes. The total volume of the dissertation is 207 pages, of which 176 are the main text. The work contains 25 tables, 27 figures, and 1 appendix. The list of references includes 201 titles.

The importance of the results obtained for science and practice. The practical significance of the results of the study is confirmed by the fact of their successful application by enterprises of the agricultural sector, including SE DG "Elitne" of the Yuriev Institute of Plant Production of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, LLC "AGRO-NOVA" of the Zolochiv district of the Kharkiv region.

The scientific achievements of the postgraduate student are covered in 8 scientific papers with a total volume of 2.4 (printed pages): 4 articles and four abstracts of conference materials have been published in domestic scientific journals.

Discussion provisions and comments on the dissertation.

Dissertation research, like any work related to scientific research on a topical topic, contains debatable provisions that require additional explanations and clarifications. Among these, we highlight the following points:

1. In modern scientific literature, there is a de facto unity of views on the growing importance of human capital in achieving the competitiveness of market supply entities. This opinion is expressed by the author of the work under review. At the same time, the issues of ways to increase human capital in agri-food production still need to be studied, the specifics of which are associated with the significant role of regional localization. Therefore, there is a need to outline specific mechanisms for achieving optimal parameters for developing human potential within the personnel management framework.

2. The consistency of the author's hypotheses and conclusions is manifested in the consistent development of ideas. Thus, the cross-cutting thesis is the thesis of the need to form conditions for rooting the philosophy of sustainable development, which has several practical manifestations. The formation of motivational impulses is a consequence of the pressure of the external environment at the global level. During the review, the question arose about the role of state regulation institutions in this process, the answers to which have yet to be found systematically in the work.

3. There is such a peculiarity in the author's style of presentation of the material when the key conclusions regarding a particular aspect of the study are reflected in different parts of the work while not being generalized into a structured concept.

4. More attention should be paid to assessing the impact of the full-scale war in Ukraine on the state of the agri-food sector. The limited statistical information needs to be more evident. However, without awareness of the current situation, it is possible to formulate practical proposals for a strategy for increasing competitiveness in the post-war period. The author formulates the general vectors of movement, but how to adhere to them under specific pressure and martial law restrictions remains an unresolved question.

