

## **REVIEW**

official opponent for the dissertation

**Qin Guohe** on the topic:

**"Strategic Management of Competitiveness of  
Producers of Agro-Food Products",**

submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the field of knowledge

**07 "Management and Administration"**

specialty **073 "Management"**

### **Relevance of the topic of the dissertation**

The agri-food industry is an essential component of the national economy, as providing the population with high-quality and affordable agricultural products is becoming an urgent task in the context of a full-scale war and changes in consumer demand, which are associated with taste preferences, requirements for environmental friendliness of products, thereby creating demand for new agricultural products and requiring a strategic approach to their production. The modern agri-food market has become more globalized, creating opportunities and challenges for producing enterprises as they compete domestically and internationally. Under these conditions, successful strategic management makes it possible to increase their competitiveness, ensuring their efficiency and sustainability in conditions of uncertainty and instability in the external environment.

Changes in trends in the food industry are influenced by demographic, sociocultural, and economic factors, which encourage enterprises that produce agricultural products to develop and implement effective strategies to meet consumer needs and maintain competitiveness in the market, therefore, research in the field of strategic management of competitiveness of agricultural producers is relevant for society, the economy, and the agri-food industry. Guohe Qin's dissertation aims to determine the methodological foundations for assessing the competitiveness of economic entities in the agro-industry and developing strategies for increasing the competitiveness of agri-food enterprises considering the above.

The dissertation is an integral part of the scientific topics of scientific research of Petro Vasylenko Kharkiv National Technical University of Agriculture on the topic "Mechanisms for increasing competitiveness, development of economic and production-technological potential of agro-industrial production facilities" (state number 0116U003477, 2016-2020) and "Management systems for competitive promotion of agricultural products in the context of globalization of agricultural markets" (state. Directory. 0119U001387, 2019-2021).

### **The degree of validity of scientific provisions, conclusions and recommendations formulated in the dissertation, their reliability**

The content of the dissertation corresponds to its topic and testifies to the achievement of the formulated goal and the solution to the research tasks set by the applicant. The validity of the scientific research begins with a clear statement of the goals and objectives of the dissertation, which are related to the disclosure of methods and tools. It approaches the strategic management of increasing the competitiveness of economic entities in the agri-food industry and the development of mechanisms and tools for increasing their competitiveness.

All scientific provisions have a sufficient level of validity due to:

- study and critical analysis of a large number of scientific works of leading domestic and foreign scientists on the problems of increasing the competitiveness of domestic agriculture;
- systematization of significant amounts of statistical information and factual material based on electronic information resources;
- The applicant uses several regulatory documents.

The publication uses a set of approaches and methods to implement the conceptual unity of the study, among them general scientific (*dialectical, analysis, synthesis, scientific abstraction, combination of historical and logical, theoretical generalization*); unique (*statistical, methods of constructing linear regression, variation series of distribution, method of integral indicators, method of modeling, graphic*).

Clear conclusions are drawn for each section of the dissertation and the work as a whole.

In the **introduction**, the relevance of the topic of the dissertation is substantiated, the purpose and objectives of the research are formulated, the object and subject of the research are defined, and the general methodology, scientific novelty, and practical significance of the results obtained are disclosed.

In the **first section**, based on the works of domestic and foreign scientists, strategic management as a concept of an integral approach to competitive activity is analyzed, and the author's vision of the algorithm of strategic management of competitiveness is formulated (p. 1.1); the components and factors of formation of the competitiveness of industries are determined agri-food sector (p. 1.2); It is determined that strategic management in the category-food sector is based on the introduction of principles of responding to weak signals through the creation of an effective system for collecting and processing information, which creates a methodological basis for its implementation (p. 1.3).

In the **second section**, the influence of environmental factors on the formation of competitiveness is investigated (2.1); the competitiveness of agri-food sectors is assessed on the materials of the agri-food sector of the Kharkiv region (p. 2.2) it is shown that to stimulate innovative development in the agricultural food sector, it is necessary to increase investment flows. However, this process should be accompanied by an increase in responsibility for the results of the implementation of agricultural innovations on the part of investors and producers (p. 2.3).

The **third section** forms the financial and economic mechanism for ensuring competitiveness (p. 3.1); the main ways to increase the competitiveness of agri-food enterprises are identified (3.2); the directions of state support for competitive agricultural production are presented (p. 3.3).

The **conclusions** summarize the main results of the study, as well as formulate its main results.

Practical significance and implementation of the research results

The practical significance of the work is associated with the possibility of using conclusions and recommendations at the state and regional levels in the activities of agri-food producers. The proposed individual practical recommendations are implemented in the activities at enterprises, which confirms the practical significance of the work.

The reliability of the main provisions of the dissertation is confirmed by certificates on the implementation of the research results: SE DG "Elitne" of the Yuriev Institute of Plant Production of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (certificate No. 18/05 dated 18.05.2023) and AGRO-NOVA LLC of the Zolochiv district of the Kharkiv region (certificate No. 38 dated 22.05.2023). The author's theoretical and methodological provisions and developments are used in the educational program of DBTU. (certificate No. 02-047 dated 09.05.2023).

### **Novelty of scientific provisions, conclusions and recommendations formulated in the dissertation**

Among the provisions that should be defined as scientific novelty, the following should be singled out:

*Improved:*

- The algorithm of strategic management of competitiveness of the agri-food sector is presented as a system of stages that interact with each other based on the corrective function. This system provides a consistent process that enables the industry to realize its mission by responding effectively to environmental challenges. The management methodology takes into account weak signals when mobilizing internal potential, using the synergy of resources, locations, structures, and organizational components;

- a mechanism for increasing the competitiveness of agri-food industries, which is based on the use of segmentation tools that assess the needs of existing and potential consumers according to qualitative criteria, taking into account the analysis of the competitiveness of goods in terms of current and forecast indicators, introduces

a benchmarking methodology – an essential part of the process of assessing and comparing agri-food enterprises to adapt to changes in consumer taste preferences.

*In the dissertation, the following were further developed:*

- methodical approaches to structuring financial relations in the field of leasing in the agri-food complex, which, in addition to traditional forms of operational and financial leasing, include a business model of prolonged redemption (replacement) of the leased object based on the use of a preferential credit and financial mechanism between the lessor and the lessee;

- development of a system for assessing the competitiveness of the agri-food industry by considering the qualitative criterion for balancing the actions of economic entities and public authorities to create competitive advantages based on the institutionalization of adequate economic, organizational, political, legal, and social conditions to increase the potential for the use of production factors.

The results of Guohe Qin's dissertation are essential for the theory and practice of ensuring the effective functioning of the strategic management system of agri-food producers' competitiveness.

### **Completeness of the presentation of scientific provisions, materials, conclusions, and recommendations of the dissertation in published works.**

All the provisions of the dissertation, defended by the author, were fully presented in 8 scientific papers with a total volume of 2.4 (printed pages): in 4 articles in professional journals and four abstracts. They sufficiently reflect the main provisions of the dissertation research and elements of scientific novelty. The content of the abstract identically repeats the content of the main provisions of the dissertation.

### **Absence (presence) of violation of academic integrity**

A thorough study of the dissertation and the processing of scientific publications, which highlight the main results of Guohe Qin's dissertation, did not establish violations of academic integrity. A logical combination of scientific and

practical solutions to the tasks and the completeness of the research determines the work. The dissertation, abstract, and published works indicate that the main provisions that determine the scientific novelty obtained in the results of scientific research are formulated independently and reflect the author's contribution.

### **Discussion provisions and comments on the dissertation**

Positively assessing the overall high level, methodological depth, and necessary validity of most of the research results, some shortcomings should be noted:

1. Characterizing the choice of the research methodology, the author did not reasonably note all the necessary methods and approaches to achieve objective results of the analysis of the competitiveness of agricultural producers and needs to explain why this methodology was chosen, what its advantages and limitations in this context.

2. The model presented schematically in Section 1.3 for assessing the efficiency of functioning of industries by links of the reproductive process requires a complete theoretical explanation of the content of its main elements.

3. Determining the orientation towards the inclusive provision of all participants in the agri-food value chain with financial resources based on the implementation of the components of the sustainable development paradigm by a strategic guideline, it is necessary to take into account the impact on the stimulation of the multiplier effect from the drivers of investment and innovation nature of the factor of accessibility of agricultural producers to financial resources in conditions of uncertainty.

4. Analyzing the financial component of the state support for agri-food enterprises, it is advisable to pay attention to the regional component in the financing structure of agri-food sectors.

5. The author needed to consider the impact of globalization processes on increasing the competitiveness of agri-food sectors sufficiently. The consequences of this influence are complex and ambiguous.

6. It is expedient to assess the competitiveness of the agri-food sector's sectors by product competitiveness, systematizing these indicators according to sure signs of factors influencing the formation of competitiveness.

However, the comments provided only partially affect the overall high level and positive assessment of Guohe Qin's dissertation.

### **Compliance of the dissertation with the established requirements**

Guohe Qin's dissertation work was done at the proper professional level; its content fully reveals the topic and corresponds to the profile of the specialty 073 "Management". The conclusions and main results of the study are specific, sufficiently reasoned, and represent the subject of defense.

The dissertation is drawn up by the requirements of the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine: "On approval of requirements for the design of a dissertation", "Procedure for awarding a degree" Doctor of Philosophy and cancellation of the decision of the one-time specialized academic council of a higher education institution, scientific institution on awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy", approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated January 12, 2022 No. 44.

### **General conclusion**

Guohe Qin's dissertation on "**Strategic Management of Competitiveness of Producers of Agro-Food Products**" is a qualifying scientific work performed independently on a relevant topic. The dissertation is an independent, complete research, which sets out a set of new scientifically based results obtained personally by the author, which solve a crucial scientific task, which is to develop practical recommendations for the introduction of mechanisms, means, and measures to ensure the desired level of competitiveness of agri-food producers.

The topic of the dissertation corresponds to the specialty 073 – Management. The main results of the research are sufficiently reflected in the works published by the author.

Taking into account the relevance, scientific novelty, as well as importance and reliability of the scientific results obtained by the author, Guohe Qin's dissertation on the topic "**Strategic Management of Competitiveness of Producers of Agro-Food Products**" is a completed independent scientific study and meets the requirements of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, paragraphs of 12.01.2017 No. 40 "On approval of requirements for the design of a dissertation", "Procedure for awarding a degree" Doctor of Philosophy and cancellation of the decision of the one-time specialized academic council of a higher education institution, scientific institution on awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy", approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated January 12, 2022 No. 44, and its author deserves to be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the field of knowledge 07 "Management and Administration" in the specialty 073 Management.

**ОФІЦІЙНИЙ ОПОНЕНТ:**

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