Features of economic accessibility of food supply of the population

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Abstract. This study is devoted to the analysis of the economic accessibility of food supply to the population. The authors consider the main conditions for access to products, such as their appearance on the market and economic accessibility. The problems of food security and economic accessibility are discussed in the context of the Russian agro-industrial complex. A difficult situation in the industry is revealed, associated with the debt burden of agricultural producers, limited opportunities for modernization and low availability of certain products. To overcome the problems, it is proposed to develop comprehensive strategies, including stimulating agriculture, improving lending, developing cooperation and applying advanced agricultural technologies. This study is of practical importance for the formation of policies aimed at ensuring the economic availability of food and improving the quality of life of the population.

1 Introduction

The issues of providing the population with food throughout the development of civilization have been in the focus of special attention of scientists and economists and states in general. It is known that socio-economic stability in the country is largely determined by the level and quality of life of the population, the degree of satisfaction of the population's needs. The variety of human needs is based on physiological needs: food, shelter, sleep, rest, comfortable living conditions and health. One of the dominant needs is the need for food (it is the basis for the emergence of other physiological needs). In all epochs of human history, food shortages have led to mass deaths. Even in London in the 17th and 18th centuries, the mortality rate in years of high grain prices was 8% higher than in years of low prices. Therefore, food security of the population, both of an individual region and of the country as a whole, is an important strategic objective. Its availability, quality and accessibility determine the level of satisfaction of one of the most important human needs, which largely form the public mood and quality of life of the population.
Food security, however, is not solely reliant on domestic production. It also entails ensuring the stability and efficiency of the entire food supply chain, from production and distribution to consumption. Factors such as climate change, environmental degradation, political instability, trade policies, and global economic fluctuations can all impact food availability and accessibility.

Moreover, food security is not only about having enough food; it is equally about ensuring access to nutritious and safe food for all members of society. Addressing malnutrition and hunger, particularly among vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, and low-income individuals, is paramount in achieving comprehensive food security.

This research aims to delve into the concept of food security and its economic accessibility for the population. By analyzing the fundamental conditions that enable or hinder access to food, we seek to gain insights into the dynamics of food provision and its implications for socio-economic development.

In the subsequent sections of this article, we will examine the definition and essence of food security, explore the significance of economic accessibility, and assess the structure and elements of the food security system in the context of Russia. Additionally, we will review existing policies and strategies aimed at ensuring food security and discuss potential areas of improvement and further research to overcome the challenges posed by this critical issue. By doing so, we aspire to contribute to the ongoing dialogue on bolstering food security and fostering sustainable development for our nation and its citizens.

2 Food supply: economic aspect

Considering food provision of the population as a set of economic relations in society, arising in the process of providing all members of society with food in accordance with the norms of quantity and quality, the state should guarantee the availability, stability and efficiency of food use. Food provision of the region's population is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon that simultaneously combines economic, social and political aspects.

To characterize the financial and economic state of the object (territory, industry, etc.), the studies of a number of scientists often use various terms such as: "self-sufficiency", "economic security", "provisioning". Often in the scientific literature, the concept of food security is identified with the concept of food security. "Food security" means "... all types of food supplies: own production, supplies from other regions, import of foodstuffs", while "... self-sufficiency implies the maintenance of a certain level of provision of the population with basic foodstuffs solely at the expense of own production.

"Food self-sufficiency of the region can be considered as a process of sustainable satisfaction of the population with food products within the framework of scientifically substantiated medical standards, based on a more efficient use of resources of food potential of the region, as well as ensuring its realization at affordable prices for the population." Also food security is the process of sustainable satisfaction of the population with food within the framework of scientifically based medical standards, taking into account its age and sex groups and effective demand on the basis of more efficient use of resources of the food subcomplex and the use of a competitive system of wholesale and retail trade in food products that meets its interests, able to optimize the distribution of regional and imported food products in large cities, industrial centres, and other industrial centres.
According to A. I. Altukhov, the concept of "food supply" is formulated as follows, it is "...an organizational and economic system that allows at a given time stage to materialize the potential of food security on the basis of the organization of a commodity distribution network engaged in the promotion of domestic and imported food from the producer to the consumer, as well as organizational and economic relations that are formed between the participants in this process".

Food provision of the population includes:

1. Physical availability of foodstuffs - continuous supply of foodstuffs to their final consumers in the volume and assortment corresponding to effective demand;

2. Economic availability of foodstuffs - the level of consumer demand of the population under the existing consumption structure, price system, income level, social payments and benefits, which ensures the possibility for the population to purchase basic types of foodstuffs in accordance with the recommended nutritional norms.

The content of the concept of "food provision of the population" includes:

- First, the urgent need for a systematic approach to the implementation of the principle of food provision of the population is that it will allow to ensure the structural balance of food products, as well as to overcome the deformation of the consumption structure and thus avoid negative manifestations at the level of human biological development.

- Secondly, the system approach to the production and reproduction of food sets creates the basis for scientifically sound management of physiological needs of different population groups in the region, taking into account their effective demand.

To realize the principle of food self-sufficiency in the region, the following measures should be considered:

- To conduct a detailed analysis of the state of the agro-industrial complex of the region and objectively assess the current situation;

- Justify the use of certain organizational and legal forms of management in the agro-industrial complex of the region;

- Substantiate the leading criteria of food self-sufficiency and their resource support;

- To develop the Concept of corporate forms and methods of management of the agro-industrial complex of the region;

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Fig. 1. The content of the concept of "food provision of the population"
To adopt a number of legislative and regulatory acts at the regional level. The phased implementation of these measures will help improve the quality of life of the population as a whole.

In January 2020, our country updated the Doctrine of Food Security of the Russian Federation, which develops the provisions of the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation approved by Presidential Decree No. 683 of 31 December 2015 "On Food Security", takes into account the provisions of the Economic Security Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030 approved by Presidential Decree No. 208 of 13 May 2017, and other strategic planning documents. The Doctrine defines the national interests of the state in the field of food security, food security indicators, as well as risks and threats to food security. The document establishes the main tasks of ensuring food security, among which one of the main ones is timely forecasting, identification and prevention of internal and external threats to food security.

Given the influence of regional specifics on food security, the issue of assessing its level in certain areas of the country is of increased interest in solving this task. This is due to the fundamental differences between socio-economic conditions, production and technological resources, food production in general and the need for it on the territory of Russia. The concept of "regional food security" is rather conventional, as it is more often used at the national level. Regional food security is understood as the state of the socio-economic system that provides guaranteed physical and economic access to high-quality food. At the same time, regional food security is based on the combination of local and imported products in the regional market, the level of food production and the absence of barriers to interregional trade.

To solve the problems of timely forecasting, identification and prevention of internal and external threats to food security, it is important to analyse the state of food security in the region. Determining the level of food security in the region includes several main areas: assessment of the level of agricultural development, food security of the region by main types of food, the level of physical and economic accessibility of food for the population of the region, as well as the profitability of food production. Each of which involves the use of a system of indicators that characterise the sustainability of the food system.

3 Results and discussion

In this scientific article, important aspects related to the economic security of the population with food were considered. The author analyzed and defined the concept of food security, and also revealed its essence. He also identified the main conditions or requirements that ensure the population's access to food: the emergence of products and their economic accessibility.

The study of the concept, essence and structure of the food supply of the population is extremely important, especially in the context of modern challenges and changes in the global economy and food system.

From this article, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Definition of food security: The author pays attention to the definition of the concept of food security of the population, which is an important step towards ensuring a uniform understanding of this term and its key aspects.
- The essence of food security: The study reveals the essence of food security, perhaps highlighting its role in meeting the basic needs of the population and ensuring their health and well-being.
Basic conditions for food availability: The author highlights two key conditions that ensure the population's access to food: the availability of products on the market and economic accessibility. This indicates the need for a stable production base and the level of income of the population.

The importance of accessibility. The focus on product affordability highlights the importance of price management, job affordability, and social support to ensure that people can pay enough.

Practical significance: this analysis can be important for the development of effective measures and policies aimed at improving the food supply of the population, especially in the context of economic changes, crises and population growth.

In general, this article is relevant for economists, food security professionals and government agencies involved in the development of appropriate strategies and activities to ensure the availability of food to the population. However, in order to gain a fuller understanding and application of the results of this study, it is necessary to take into account its methodology, background data and the context in which the analysis and conclusions were made.

4 Conclusion

Despite the positive trends in the sector, the situation in the agro-industrial complex of the republic remains difficult. The debt burden of agricultural producers remains high, a significant share of agricultural production is still concentrated in small farms and is characterised by low marketability, the system of cooperation is underdeveloped, and the opportunities for technical and technological modernisation of the sector are limited.

If we consider the directions of the sector separately, the situation is as follows. Animal husbandry in the republic provides almost 70.0 per cent of gross agricultural output. In livestock farming, the meat and dairy direction prevails. In the structure of livestock and poultry production for slaughter in live weight in agricultural organizations, cattle for slaughter in live weight (20.9%) and pigs for slaughter (73.4%) occupy the largest share. In crop production, grain crops (wheat, oats, barley, rye, buckwheat) occupy a significant share.

However, despite certain achievements, the provision of meat and meat products, milk and dairy products, vegetables, eggs and egg products is at a low level. This indicates the need for additional efforts and investments to improve production processes, improve resource efficiency and develop new technologies in the industry.

To overcome these problems and ensure the sustainable development of the agro-industrial complex of the republic, it is necessary to develop comprehensive strategies and long-term programs. They should include measures to stimulate agriculture, improve credit and financing conditions, develop modern infrastructure, educate and improve the skills of agricultural workers, as well as encourage cooperation and the use of advanced agricultural technologies.

In addition, it is important to intensify the dialogue between government bodies, researchers and business representatives in order to form a unified strategy for the development of the agro-industrial sector. Only through joint efforts and interaction of all interested parties, it is possible to achieve sustainable progress in the field of food security, improve the quality of life of the rural population and ensure the stable development of the economy of the republic.
References


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