

ISSUES OF INCREASING EXPORT POTENTIAL WHILE IMPROVING THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWING INDUSTRY

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Abstract

This article examines the economic essence and role of the fruit and vegetable sector in the national economy, its achievements and challenges, and the sector's future development. It also highlights factors influencing the fruit and vegetable sector and its export potential.

Key words

economy, regional economy, agricultural economy, fruit and vegetable industry, fruit and vegetable industry, export, export potential

A number of studies are being conducted by major scientific centers and institutions in the world to sustainably provide the population with fruit and vegetable products. In particular, in the agricultural development strategies of many countries, special attention is paid to scientific research aimed at introducing new approaches and mechanisms for the rapid development of fruit and vegetable growing and viticulture, diversifying the composition of agricultural production, and introducing innovative and resource-saving technologies. Also, seed production work is being carried out to create environmentally friendly, adaptable to adverse conditions, and high-yielding varieties for processing and export, improving the system for preparing agricultural products, providing financial resources for the production of fruit and vegetable products, and developing approaches aimed at diversifying exports.

Consistent reforms have been implemented in our country to sustainably develop the fruit and vegetable sector, as a result of which the production potential and export opportunities of the sector have significantly increased. However, despite the systematic implementation of work in this area, "... the lack of systematic establishment of effective market mechanisms in the development of fruit and vegetable growing and viticulture, and the lack of a scientific approach, lead to the underutilization of the existing potential of the sector. According to calculations, there is a possibility of obtaining 7 times more income from grapes, 6

times more from cherries, and 5 times more from walnuts than from cotton raw materials grown on 1 hectare of land."

Despite the considerable advancements observed in the fruit and vegetable sector of the Fergana region, the research also highlights a number of persistent structural and operational challenges that could hinder sustainable long-term development if not properly addressed. One of the primary constraints is the limited access to quality agricultural inputs, particularly certified seedlings, disease-resistant varieties, and modern agricultural machinery. A significant proportion of smallholder farmers continue to rely on outdated tools and planting materials, which restricts productivity and increases vulnerability to pests and climate variability. Moreover, access to affordable credit and financial services remains limited, especially for small and medium-sized agricultural enterprises. The lack of tailored financial instruments prevents many farmers from investing in advanced technologies and expanding their operations. Another major concern is the high rate of post-harvest losses, often resulting from inadequate cold chain logistics, storage facilities, and transport infrastructure. While export volumes have increased, the efficiency of the supply chain must be improved to maintain product quality and reduce wastage. To address these challenges, state policy must focus on fostering public-private partnerships, which can mobilize investment in rural infrastructure, promote innovation, and improve agricultural extension services. Strengthening market access mechanisms, including e-commerce platforms and export support agencies, is also crucial for connecting farmers with buyers at both domestic and international levels. In parallel, environmental sustainability should be at the center of development strategies. Water scarcity and soil degradation, exacerbated by climate change, necessitate the adoption of water-saving technologies, such as drip irrigation and sensor-based irrigation systems, as well as the promotion of organic and climate-resilient farming practices. Environmental education for farmers and incentives for sustainable land management will be important components of this transition.

Therefore, priority is given to important tasks aimed at the sustainable development of the sector, such as "creating a favorable agribusiness environment and value added chain, reducing state participation in the sector, increasing investment attractiveness, efficient use of land and water resources, and adopting interstate and international standards in the agricultural and food industry." After all, one of the urgent tasks of the sector is to develop new and promising market segments in order to increase the export potential of agricultural products, improve logistics infrastructure, and ensure competitiveness in the world market through the production of products that meet international standards.

In recent years, the share of organic fruit and vegetable products in the world market has shown a steady growth trend. This is primarily due to the growth of incomes, increased demand for environmentally friendly products, and the expansion of ideas about a healthy lifestyle. In particular, in countries with high per capita income, trade in organic products reaches an average of 10 percent of the total market volume. Organic production is still a relatively new area of activity for the agro-industrial complex of Uzbekistan, and one of the important tasks in this direction is the introduction of a regulatory framework, a certification system and technologies that meet international standards. The main factors shaping the demand for fruit and vegetable products are: regional consumption traditions; seasonality of production; price fluctuations; promotion of a healthy lifestyle and marketing policies.

In recent years, the production of flexible packaging, which protects products during storage and transportation and extends their shelf life, has been growing significantly. At the same time, there are some problems with storage in an airless environment, which are characterized by:

- deterioration of the appearance and taste of products as a result of mechanical deformation;
- rapid spoilage of products due to the growth and reproduction of anaerobic microbes in an airless environment.

Therefore, many developed countries are switching to environmentally friendly, modern-designed packaging and abandoning outdated types of containers.

The main export markets for fruit and vegetable products are Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkey. According to data, by the end of 2023, more than 19.2 million tons of 132 types of fruit and vegetable products produced in the republic will be exported to 69 foreign countries in pure or processed form (more than 1.4 million tons worth about \$ 1.2 billion), which shows how important the issue is.

The main trends in global and national markets are the growth of the share of organic products, the development of pre-sales processing and additional services, as well as infrastructural factors affecting the structure of supply and demand. All factors together provide the fruit and vegetable market with the necessary conditions for strategic development and guarantee the stable production and distribution of competitive products in domestic and foreign markets.

In conclusion, it can be said that the modern fruit and vegetable market is a strategic sector of the economy, the sustainable development of which is ensured by the introduction of innovative technologies, modernization of logistics and

processing infrastructure, and deepening integration with international markets. In this process, a scientifically based system of agromarketing, increased competitive environment, and active implementation of public-private partnerships are the main guarantees of increasing economic efficiency and expanding export potential.

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