



THE CONCEPT, ESSENCE, AND FACTORS OF ENSURING FOOD SECURITY

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Annotation. This article analyzes the economic essence of the concept of food security, its role in the stability of the national economy, and factors related to the effectiveness of the supply chain. The study highlights changes in the global food market, price volatility, diversification of agricultural production, and the economic significance of the rational use of resources. Also, during the analysis, macroeconomic factors influencing food security were studied - such indicators as the investment climate, the state's agrarian policy, the level of dependence on imports, inflationary processes, and the development of logistics infrastructure. The article, using the example of the Uzbek economy, substantiates the priorities for ensuring the stability of the food market, mechanisms for supporting domestic production, and strategic tasks related to economic security.

Keywords: food security, economic stability, agrarian policy, supply chain, price volatility, import substitution, logistics infrastructure, efficient use of resources, agrarian economy, national economic security.

Introduction. In the world economy, as a result of global demographic growth, climate change, geopolitical crises, and structural shifts in the agricultural sector, the issue of ensuring food security is

acquiring strategic importance. Food security shows not only that the population is provided with full and quality food, but also that it has become an important component of sustainable development of the national economy, consistency of macroeconomic indicators, social well-being, and economic security. Therefore, today states are implementing comprehensive economic measures to maintain the balance of supply and demand in the domestic market, increase the efficiency of agricultural production, rational use of resources, and reduce dependence on imports.

For the economy of Uzbekistan, food security is also one of the priority strategic directions. Consistent reforms are being carried out in the country to modernize agriculture and the processing industry, effectively use water resources, introduce innovative technologies in the cultivation of products, and improve the agrologistics system. This contributes to increasing food production, ensuring price stability, and improving the living standards of the population.

Literature review. The issue of food security has been widely studied in international scientific literature, and the theoretical foundations of this area are primarily based on conceptual approaches developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). FAO defines food security as "everyone's physical and economic access to adequate, safe, and nutritionally complete food." FAO research from 2015-202 extensively covered four main components of food security - availability, accessibility, sustainability, and consumption quality - in connection with global climate risks, changes in market prices, and logistical challenges.

Scientists such as Forsyth (2019), Timmer (2004), Maxwell, and Slater (2003), who have studied the economic essence of food security,

emphasize that this concept is inextricably linked with macroeconomic stability, agricultural production efficiency, market infrastructure, and agricultural policy. In their opinion, ensuring food security directly depends on the efficiency of resource use of the economic system, the investment climate, technological modernization, and the level of state support.

Scientific research on food security in the conditions of Central Asia and Uzbekistan emphasizes the peculiarities of the local economy. In particular, U.M.Daminova [7], G.T.Yuldashev [8], G.N.Nigmatullayeva [8], M.Ch.Murodova [9] and other researchers have developed scientific foundations for such areas as diversification of the agricultural sector in Uzbekistan, efficient use of water resources, digitalization of agriculture, ensuring food price stability, and reducing import dependence. They emphasized that ensuring food security is closely linked to the capacity of the domestic market, competitive production volumes, the level of development of the logistics system, and the priorities of the state's agricultural policy.

Also, in the reports (2018-2023), prepared by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the OECD, food security is assessed as a strategic component of economic security. The reports recommend that countries support domestic production, introduce innovative technologies, and improve agrologistics infrastructure to manage risks such as resource shortages, production declines, price increases, and supply chain disruptions.

Analysis of the above-mentioned literature shows that the economic essence of the issue of food security is multifaceted and inextricably

linked with global market trends, economic policy, the use of natural resources, socio-economic stability, and technological development.

Main Part. Food security is one of the most important categories of the modern economy and is directly related to the economic stability of the country, the well-being of the population, and national security. This concept is determined not only by sufficient production of food products, but also by the fact that the population has free access to them both physically and economically. In the process of ensuring food security, the combination of such key components as availability, accessibility, sustainability, and consumer quality is of great importance. In particular, economic factors - price stability, real income, investment climate, supply chain efficiency, and sensitivity to external market risks - form the basis of the process.

Among the macroeconomic factors influencing food security, the efficiency of agricultural production occupies a special place. Sustainable development of agricultural production is closely related to the rational use of resources, technological modernization, diversification of crops, and the application of modern irrigation methods. The higher the competitiveness of agricultural production, the greater the possibilities of satisfying domestic demand, mitigating price fluctuations, and reducing dependence on imports. At the same time, the availability of a favorable environment for investors contributes to the development of the food industry, processing enterprises, logistics, and storage infrastructure. Lack of investment, on the contrary, leads to disruption of supply chains, price increases, and a decrease in market stability. Price stability is one of the most important indicators of food security, and high inflation reduces the real incomes of the population and limits access to

food products. Sharp price fluctuations are often associated with a high level of dependence on imports, increased transport and logistics costs, instability in global markets, and the impact of climate change. Therefore, countries strive to reduce price risks by supporting domestic production and forming strategic reserves.

Ensuring food security in the conditions of Uzbekistan is one of the priorities of state policy. Large-scale reforms are being carried out in our country to modernize agriculture, develop seed production based on the results of scientific research, digitalize agricultural processes, effectively use water resources, and introduce high-yielding varieties. In addition, to support domestic production, incentives are provided to farms and processing enterprises through subsidies, tax benefits, affordable loans, and government procurement. The development of the agrologistics system, the expansion of the network of refrigerated warehouses, and the construction of modern logistics centers ensure the continuity of the product supply chain.

Food quality control, the implementation of international standards, and the development of a healthy eating culture are also factors affecting overall economic stability. Because consumer safety, along with ensuring a healthy lifestyle for the population, also indirectly affects labor productivity and economic growth. At the same time, global threats - climate change, geopolitical conflicts, pandemics, restrictions on transport routes - require improvement of the strategy for ensuring food security.

Conclusion. Food security is one of the most important strategic directions of modern economic development, which plays a crucial role in improving the well-being of the population, sustainable development of

the national economy, and strengthening resilience to external threats. The study shows that ensuring food security is directly related not only to the development of the agricultural sector, but also to macroeconomic stability, favorable investment climate, price stability, supply chain efficiency, the level of dependence on imports, and the culture of resource use.

This process can be further strengthened by expanding domestic production in countries, introducing modern technologies, implementing research achievements, developing logistics infrastructure, and controlling the quality of food products. In the context of Uzbekistan, such reforms as the modernization of agriculture, the efficient use of water resources, digitalization, the development of the seed and processing industry are manifested as the main factors in ensuring the stability of food security.

At the same time, the intensification of global threats - climate change, geopolitical crises, and pandemics - requires the development of comprehensive economic measures to ensure the stability of the food system. Therefore, it is important to create strategic reserves, expand import-substituting production, improve market infrastructure, and increase investments based on public-private partnerships.

In general, scientifically based approaches to ensuring food security serve to increase the competitiveness of the national economy, expand access for the population to high-quality food products, maintain price stability, and contribute to the long-term sustainable development of the economic system.

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