

Family farming in youth assessments

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Abstract—The article presents the first stage results of a sociological study on the attitude to family farming of young people conducted at the Ural State Agrarian University. The object of the research is the student youth of the Agrarian University, family farming enterprises. The subject of the study was the culture, motives and problems of farmers' labor. A comprehensive research strategy was chosen as a research methodology, which includes quantitative and qualitative methods of sociological research: the research used a written survey (questioning) of an expert youth group. Work was done with focus groups. Objective: to identify problems and development prospects of family farming as a special social group.

Keywords—family farming, agrarian sociology, questioning, assessment, focus group, problems of family farming, farming traditions, farming work digitization.

I. INTRODUCTION

The development problem of agrarian economy on the basis of ecologization and natural potential preservation of agriculture remains a key task of the agro-industrial complex of Russia. One of the ways to increase the production efficiency of safe organic food is a consistent state policy aimed at supporting peasant (farming) enterprises and digitization of the industry.

In the context of economic sanctions and import substitution of agricultural products, sociological studies of the problems and prospects for the development of small forms of agricultural production, which include farming enterprises, become relevant. The transition to a highly productive and environmentally friendly agricultural enterprise and aquaculture, the development and implementation of systems for the rational use of means of chemical and biological protection of agricultural plants and animals, the storage and efficient processing of agricultural products, the creation of safe and high-quality, including functional, food products are identified as one of the priorities and prospects of the scientific and technological development of the Russian Federation in the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of December 1, 2016 No. 642 “On the strategy for scientific and technological development of the Russian Federation”.

The need for research on farming as a special social group is determined, firstly, by the problem significance of the formation of small forms of management in the agrosphere under the conditions of a changing economic paradigm. Secondly, the farming study as a special social group is determined by the need to find out the actual role of

farming in the agricultural production and social processes of the village, to determine the factors on which its successful development depends.

The academic novelty of a sociological study of the attitude of young people to farming and farm labour conducted in the Ural State Agrarian University in the fall of 2018 is determined by the fact that farming as a relatively new social group of our society is not sufficiently studied in scientific literature and requires cross-disciplinary analysis from philosophers and sociologists. The conditions for effective formation and development of this group, culture, motives, values and problems of farming and everyday life, the potential and factors for the development of this social group of society are not sufficiently studied.

The object of the research is the student youth of the Agrarian University, family farming enterprises.

The subject of the study was the culture, motives and problems of farmers' labor.

The goal of the research: выявление problems identification and prospects for the development of family farming as a special social group.

II. BACKGROUND PAPER

The problems study of family farming as a special social group is based on the theoretical heritage of N.I. Vavilov, N.D. Kondratev, P.P. Maslov, N.P. Makarov, I.T. Pososhkov, P.A. Stolypin, M.I. Tugan-Baranovskiy, A.V. Chayanov, A.N. Chelintsev, A.N. Engelhardt, and many others.

Particularly important for the study was the idea of A. V. Chayanov that the family-labor peasant economy is the main socio-economic, organizational and legal form for the development of agricultural organizations in Russia. “A. V. Chayanov regarded family-labor peasant farming as a special socio-economic and cultural way of life. The family-labor peasant economy is essentially natural economy. Its goal is to meet the needs of the members of the peasant family and not to maximize the profit. The needs of family members and their number determine the volume of agricultural production”. [1, P. 79].

A significant contribution to the multistructure sector study of Russian economy, including peasant (farming) enterprises, was made by G.A. Baklazhenko, V.F. Bashmachnikov, I.N. Buzdalov, B. A. Voronin, S.I. Gryadov, K.V. Kopach, V.I. Kudryashov, E.G. Lysenko, V.D. Martynov, V.V. Miloserdov, A.A. Mikhalev, A.A. Nikonov, V.N. Ozherelev, A.V. Petrikov, G.I. Petukhov,

B.I. Poshkus, L. A. Pustuev, V.D. Rudnev, S.V. Saveliev, E.V. Serova, V.A. Tikhonova, N. N. Tyutereva, V.Ya. Uzun, O.V. Tsukanov, I.P. Shalyapina, G.I. Shmelev and others.

B. A. Voronin, L. A. Pustuev develop the concept of a peasant (farm) economy in relation to modern agro-economics. In accordance with the Federal Law of June 11, 2003 No. 74-FZ "On peasant farm" [2] B. A. Voronin defines the concept of peasant economy as "an association of citizens related by kinship and (or) property having common property and jointly carrying out production and other economic activities (production, processing, storage, transportation and sale of agricultural products), based on their personal contribution" [3, P. 14].

The problems of legal regulation of the organization and activity of peasant farms are reflected in the works of B. A. Voronin, Ya. V. Voronina, S.V. Savelieva, N. N. Tyutereva, O. V. Tsukanova, and others. Brazilian researchers [4] analyzed the contribution of the state policy of their country to strengthening family farming and improving food security.

The development problems of peasant farms in individual regions and countries are considered in the works of S. I. Gryadov, V. I. Kudryashov, L. A. Pustuev, A. B. Melnikov, P. V. Mihailushkin, V. V. Miloserdov, B. I. Poshkus, A.I. Sidorenko and others. The researchers identify the main directions and conceptual approaches to the development of small farms in rural areas in various regions of Russia, including peasant farms [5, P. 4-7]. Canadian scientists examined the social structure of a modern family farm using expert interviews of 36 farmers in Canada and identified the place of family farming in food policy [6]. A study of family farming in Cuba allowed us to identify factors that dictate the urgent need to develop family farming in this country based on agroecological practices [7]. The value of the work of researchers is to develop theoretical and practical recommendations for the optimal functioning of the peasant farms in modern conditions.

Separate aspects of farming as a social group are considered in modern agrarian sociology: the works of V. Artyomov, A.G. Antipiev, I.V. Bestuzheva-Lada, G.G. Diligensky, T.A. Zaslavskaya, A.G. Zdravomyslov, L.N. Kogan, N.I. Lapin, O.L. Leibovich, V. Patrushev, Z. Kalugina, M. Sidorova, V.N. Stegna, A.K. Uledov, Z.I. Fainburg, A.A. Khagurov and others. But the issues of farming are traditionally explored in the domestic agrarian sociology in the context of other problems of agricultural production and the rural population.

The Novosibirsk School of Sociologists, under the leadership of T.I. Zaslavskaya was engaged in the issues of migration of the rural population. V. Perevedentsev, L. Rybakovsky G. Morozova and others also worked in this direction.

Interesting is the problem of time budget and rural way of life. V. Patrushev, V. Artemov and others were engaged in collecting empiric material on this issue.

M.Sidorova, Z.Kalugina, V.Tapilina, M. Mozhina, T. Kuznetsova and others study the material welfare and living standards of the rural population.

The scientific work in the context of the study of social feeling and social mood of farmers is represented by of T. A. Zaslavskaya, Yu.A. Levada, G.V. Osipov, V.A. Yadov,

A.G. Antipiev, G.G. Diligensky, A.G. Zdravomyslov, L.N. Kogan, N.I. Lapin, O.L. Leibovich, V.N. Stegny, I.V. Bestuzhev-Lada, A.K. Uledov, Z.I. Fineburg and others. The study of continuity and traditions in family farming conducted at the University of Palmas (Brazil) [8], and the study of the environmental awareness of young people in universities in Yekaterinburg (Russia) [9] were important for us.

Thus, literature analysis shows that nowadays not enough attention is paid to the integrated study of farming as a special social group, including the assessment of family farming by various social groups.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

In order to study young people attitude to family farming, a comprehensive research strategy was chosen, including quantitative and qualitative methods of sociological research [10].

At the first stage, a quantitative research method was used: a written (questionnaire) survey of students of the Ural State Agrarian University.

The respondents choice was carried out using a multi-stage selection: university, specialty group, study groups. The group of respondents included students enrolled in specialties, training specialists for agriculture, as well as food production and processing, quality management, commodity research and food and non-food product expertise, technology and catering, accounting and auditing at enterprises of the agro-industrial complex. Selected specialties allow to consider surveyed students as representatives of an expert group within a youth audience.

According to their demographic profile, the respondents were as follows: men made up 70%; women - 30%. According to the age and educational programs, respondents were distributed as follows: 16-18 years old (students of the agricultural college) - 15, 8%; 19-23 years old (undergraduate students) - 58.3%; 24 - 30 years old (students enrolled in master's programs) - 25.9%.

At the second study stage a focus group method was used with undergraduate students of the Ural State Agrarian University, which was used to clarify the contradictory attitudes of young people towards family farming that were identified during the first stage of the study.

The main study goal was to test the hypothesis of contradictory trends in the attitude of young people towards family farming.

IV. RESULTS

The conducted study revealed a predominantly positive attitude towards family farming in the majority of the respondents from younger generation.

To the question: "How do you treat people who are engaged in family farming?" The answers were distributed as follows.

TABLE I. ATTITUDE TOWARDS FAMILY FARMING DEPENDING ON THE LEVEL OF EDUCATION (PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS)

№	Answer variants	College	Undergraduate	Master's program
1	Positively	50	57,1	92
2	Neutral	50	41,6	8
3	Negatively	0	1,2	0
4	Total	100,0	100,0	100,0

50% of surveyed college students (age group 16 - 18 years old) reported a positive attitude towards family farming; 50% of respondents treat family farming as neutral. None of the respondents from this age group stated that they had a negative attitude towards family farming.

57.7% of surveyed undergraduate students (age group 19–23 years old) reported that they were positive about family farming; 41.6% of respondents in this age group are neutral to family farming, and 1.2% of respondents stated their negative attitude towards family farming.

92% of master's program students (age group 24-30 years old) reported that they were positive about family farming; only 8% of surveyed in this age group are neutral to family farming, and one of the respondents in this age group did not declare their negative attitude to family farming.

The study made it possible to see the dependence of a positive attitude towards family farming on the level of education and the age of respondents: the older the respondents and the higher their education level, the greater their number indicates their positive attitude to family farming.

The reasons for the neutral attitude to family farming in a significant part of the youth were identified when working with the focus group. The focus group participants gave the following (in order of importance) answers to the question: "How could you explain your neutral attitude towards family farming?":

- None of the relatives, friends and acquaintances do not engage in family farming.
- There is a lack of knowledge and practical experience in the family farming enterprise.
- Little is known about family farming.

Thus, the main reason for a neutral attitude towards family farming in about a third of the respondents is the lack of traditions of family farming and a lack of understanding of the value of this form of agricultural production.

The conducted study figured out a contradictory attitude of the interviewed youth of all age groups to family farming. The contradictory attitude towards family farming was manifested in the fact that, despite a positive and partially neutral assessment, the majority of respondents themselves under no circumstances want to engage in family farming.

The following answers were received to the question: "Are you going to to organize a family farming enterprise in the future?":

TABLE II. PLANS FOR ORGANIZING OWN FARMING ENTERPRISE, DEPENDING ON THE LEVEL OF EDUCATION (PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS)

№	Answer variants	College	Undergraduate	Master's program
1	Yes	0	1,7	20
2	No	30,8	51,7	52
3	cannot say	69,2	46,7	28
4	Total amount of answered people	100,0	100,0	100,0

Students of the age group of 16 - 18 years old (college students) do not plan at all to organize their own farming enterprise, first of all, of course, because of their young age. Of this group of students, 30.8% directly gave a negative answer to the question posed, and 69.2% of respondents found it difficult to answer.

Only 1.7% of students in the age group of 19-23 years old (undergraduate students) plan to organize a family farming enterprise in the future; 51.7% of respondents in this age group gave a negative answer to the question and 46.7% of respondents found it difficult to answer.

The answers of students of the age group of 24 to 30 years old (master's program students) were distributed as follows: 20% of the respondents plan to organize a family farm themselves in the future; 52% of respondents did not plan to answer, 28% found it difficult to answer.

Analysis of study results allowed to identify patterns in the answers of respondents. First, the overwhelming majority of respondents (78.2%) either do not plan to organize their own family farming enterprise, or find it difficult to answer. Secondly, the number of positive and negative answers to the question about the organization of their own farming enterprise grows with age and the increase of educational level. Third, about half of the respondents of all age groups gave a definitely negative response to the organization of their own family farming enterprise in the future. In our opinion, such a number of negative and uncertain answers to the question about the organization of own farming enterprise is related to the reasons already identified with the help of the focus group, as well as to a number of objective problems in the development of family farming in Russia.

The participants of the study were asked the question: "What problems of farming labour could you outline?"

The answers to this question by the age groups of the respondents were distributed as follows:

Respondents in the age group of 16–18 years old (college students) identified the prevalence of heavy physical labor as the most important problems of family farming — 17.9% of respondents; weak state support for family farming - 15.9% of respondents; high competition - 15.4% of the total number of participants.

The respondents of the age group of 19-23 years old (undergraduate students) considered the lack of innovative technologies to be the most important problems of family farming - 93.3% of respondents; the prevalence of heavy physical labor - 71.4% of respondents; high competition - 69.2% of respondents.

Respondents in the age group of 24 to 30 years old (master's program students) saw the most significant objective problems in the development of family farming in difficulties in obtaining credit at preferential rate for organizing family farming — 40% of respondents; in the low profitability of the production of environmentally friendly

products in farms - 35% of respondents; insufficient development of social infrastructure in rural areas - 27.8% of respondents.

Analysis of obtained results in the course of the study allowed us to identify two groups of problems in the development of farming, according to young people's assessments. The solution of these problems will attract a significant number of young people to work in farms, including organizing their own family farming enterprises. The first group of problems is the loss of the traditions of family farming as a way of life and the related underestimation of farming labour and farming as a social community. The second group of problems is the small presence of innovative technologies, including digital ones, in family farming labour and everyday life and the inadequately developed social infrastructure in the countryside.

V. FINDINGS

Thus, the results analysis of the study shows a contradictory assessment of family farming by an expert group of young people - students of the agricultural university. Most of the representatives of the expert group, while positively assessing family farming and farming labour do not plan to organize their own family farming enterprise in the future. Such a controversial assessment by the farmer's expert group reflects the objective problems in the development of family farming in Russia. The first group of problems is the loss of the traditions of family farming as a way of life and the related underestimation of the value of farming labour and farming as a social community. The second group of problems is a small presence of innovative technologies, including digital ones, in family farming work and everyday life.

It seems that the educational and cultural space of the Agrarian University can be used as a testing ground for the selection of adequate solutions for the problems of family farming identified by young people.

The traditions revival of family farming will be facilitated by the organization of conferences and round tables with the participation of family farmers, exhibitions with environmentally friendly and organic products of farmers' labor, the organization of students' practical experience in advanced family farms; inviting farmers to meet with students, and maybe even for small special courses, participation of farmers as experts in the "First-time farmer" students' business projects competition.

The introduction of digital technologies in the educational process of an agricultural university will contribute to solving the second group of family farming problems: introducing the digital agriculture discipline into the undergraduate or master's program curriculum, using a digital farm in the educational process. Graduates of an agricultural university who will eventually introduce digital technologies into agricultural production, including family farms, must possess digital thinking and digital competencies that are being laid today.

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