

Regional Aspects of a Food Security Problem

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Abstract-This paper deals with the problem of providing regional food security. It is characterized by integrated approach since it accumulates the key factors of agro-industrial and economic modernization, up-to-date state and trends in the development of agricultural and food production, food market, food availability for the population and its purchasing capacity. The authors came to the conclusion that at present regional food security in the Russian Federation cannot be achieved without systematic regulation by the federal authorities. The results of the research are important for the development of the concept of food security in the regions of Russia, they allow to determine the tasks of the Governments of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation to ensure it, can be used as an information and analytical guide in the preparation of development recommendations (programs).

Keywords-regional food security, food self-sufficiency, Russia's food security doctrine, regional development irregularity, assessment of regional food security

I. INTRODUCTION

In the modern society the growth of food security is among the most important directions in the implementation of economic development of any state. Food security is a strategy element of national security which involves the formation of physical and economic food availability and the ability of a national food system to develop under the conditions of extended reproduction for stable community vital activity [1].

At present, the problems of food availability are paid great attention to in all world countries including the developed ones. So, ten and a half various programs of food assistance are presently in progress in the USA and 35-40 billion budget dollars are annually transmitted for this purpose. The so-called food census of population is regularly conducted in the country. On this base the risk groups are revealed, addressed state programs are developed for those who are really in need and for food market control. Similar programs are adopted in EC countries. Thus, there is a package of laws in Germany which reform the system of social aid and the assistance for unemployed [2].

II. UPDATING OF THE CONCEPT "REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY"

A number of scientists consider it incorrect to use the notion of "food security" in relation to the regions because of the unity of the domestic food market and the absence of

barriers to the food supply between the regions. Thus, D.F. Vermeil believes that it is more correct to talk not about food security of regions, but about regional features of ensuring Russia's food security. For this purpose, he suggests to dividing all regions of Russia into two groups: importing and exporting food. In its turn, each of these groups has a number of subgroups, depending on the specific nature of the natural and economic conditions and the regional specialization of agricultural production [3].

We believe that for Russia, it is sufficient to single out three categories of regions:

- agricultural - with a distinct predominance of agricultural products in the regional gross product and favorable conditions for farming;

- industrial-agrarian - with equal opportunities for industrial and agricultural production; with average conditions for agriculture;

- industrial – regions where agricultural production is either absent or poorly developed [4].

The proposed classification of regions is sufficient to ensure a differentiated approach to assessing the level of regional food security and to determine correctly the tasks facing the regions.

The other point of view on this issue is diametrically opposed to the first one. So, A.I. Lylov believes that "with regard to the regions, it is necessary to consider the state of food security in the same way as in relation to a single country" [5]. This opinion is shared by A.I. Kostyaev, who defines regional food security as "the ability of the production, storage, processing, wholesale and retail trade system to provide stably throughout the year all the categories of the population with food products in the amounts that meet scientifically based medical standards" [6].

According to the authors, regional food security is formed and operates on the basis of the same objective laws as the food security of the country and the world as a whole.

The tasks to be undertaken at the regional level are determined by the existing and potential opportunities of the region for the production of agricultural products and food, as well as its ability to achieve self-sufficiency and reduce import dependence on food supply.

However, with the development of processing of agricultural products in transportable and long-term storage

products, their importance in territorial redistribution and the formation of stocks, and, consequently, in ensuring the food security of the whole country, increases. In this case, we can talk about creating a system of regional division of labor in the production of agricultural products and foodstuffs on an all-Russian scale. Thus, it can be concluded that the self-sufficiency of the regions directly depends on the self-sufficiency of the country as a whole and vice versa.

Difficulties in the formation of such a system in the Russian Federation are determined by the considerable size and extremely high uneven regional development in our country. Nowadays, only 14 of the 83 constituent entities of the Russian Federation are net food producers, the rest are to its net consumers.

In addition, in many regions of Siberia and the Far East, a situation has developed that it is more economically profitable to buy food products, for example, in China or the Central Asian republics than to transport them from the European part of the Russian Federation. To solve this problem without making changes in the tax legislation and pricing principles for transport services is almost impossible. On the other hand, for some net food producers close to the Black Sea ports of Russia (the Krasnodar and Stavropol Territories, the Rostov Region) are much more profitable to export their grain abroad than to sell it on the domestic market, especially in the context of government purchases.

The situation is aggravated by a significant differentiation in the levels of social and economic development of the subjects of the Russian Federation. The difference between the maximum and minimum regional per capita income in Russia, despite a noticeable decrease compared to the end of the twentieth century when it was 45, is still 25 times, which is a serious threat to the stability and integrity of not only food security, but also of the country on the whole. In the "big six" of the economic geography of modern Russia (Moscow, St. Petersburg, Moscow and Tyumen regions, Khanty-Mansiysk and Yamalo-Nenets national districts), the population has formed a practically European type of consumption, including food consumption, which is provided mainly through imported food products. At the same time, in the poorest regions of Russia, such as the Republic of Ingushetia, the Republic of Tuva, the Republic of Altai, the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania, and a number of others, the vast majority of the population has to live in conditions of subsistence farming, which implies the unreliability and volatility of their food supply in case of any natural disasters - especially taking into account undeveloped logistical mechanisms in these regions [7].

III. FUNCTIONS AND GOALS OF THE STATE FOR PROVIDING REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY

The Doctrine clearly defines the tasks facing the state authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation.

State policy on ensuring food security of the regions, management and coordination of activities in the sphere of food resources on the instructions of the regional executive authorities are carried out by the relevant executive authorities - usually the regional ministries (departments) of agriculture and food resources. As their main tasks, the Doctrine defines: "coordination of activities in the field of ensuring food security based on the implementation of the food policy; monitoring of the state of food security and maintaining stability in the region's wholesale food market; development of cooperation in the food sphere with other regions of Russia, countries of near and far abroad" [8].

Thus, the very delineation of tasks to ensure food security between the federal authorities and bodies of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation creates a two-pronged approach to determining food security at the federal and regional levels.

Turning to the classification of Russian regions proposed above, for agrarian and industrial-agrarian regions food security can be defined as the state of the economy of this subject of the Federation, which achieves sufficient (by medical standards) food supply (at the expense of its own production) with the corresponding level of food availability and a low degree of potential danger to food supply in case of complication of the situation in the country.

For example, the law of the region Ryazan (which can be attributed to the industrial and agrarian regions) "On Food Security and the Protection of the Market in the Ryazan Region" provides the following definition of the region's food security: "the state of the economy in which the region's independence on food supply is ensured and the physical and economic accessibility of food for the entire population in the amount necessary for an active and healthy life of a person" [9].

For industrial regions, self-sufficiency of food products at the expense of its own production is impossible, therefore for them the concept of regional food security can be formulated as a state of the economy, in which sufficient food supply (by medical standards) is provided at the expense of the region funds (purchase, exchange of products and services for food) with an adequate level of food availability and a low degree of food supply vulnerability in case of a complication of food situation in the country, as well as disturbances in the global food trade [10].

At the same time, it should be noted that from the position of the federal level, ensuring these parameters is not enough to achieve food security, since the central authorities are additionally faced with the tasks of forming insurance, inviolable, mobilization and other food supplies and the regions should take part in it. This problem should be solved at the federal level by stimulating agricultural production, as well as accumulating funds for the purchase of food [11].

Thus, most of the subjects of the Russian Federation have come to the realization that it is necessary to pay special attention to the problems of regional food security issues, and, consequently, to the development of appropriate regional legislation. His analysis allows us to conclude that, despite the diversity of social and economic conditions in the subjects of the Russian Federation, it is possible to identify the common features of the basic goals and principles of the activities to ensure food security in the region. As a key goal, most regions determine:

- the formation and development of a food security system that ensures the availability of food products in the volume and range sufficient to meet the needs of the population in the amount recommended by the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences;

- creating conditions under which real money income and the system of social protection of the population will allow it to consume food products in volumes and assortments recommended by the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences.

With all the diversity of experience that the subjects of the Russian Federation have already accumulated in the sphere of ensuring food security, we can also highlight some common elements of the activities of the regional authorities to fulfill the tasks formulated in the Doctrine:

- development and control over the implementation of regional legislation in the sphere of production and distribution of food products;

- use age of the program-target approach as a basic organizational and financial tool for solving the set tasks for ensuring food security.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The authors consider that the basic principles of regional authorities' activity relative to ensuring food security may be defined as follows:

- ensuring an equitable competitive environment for access to regional food markets for enterprises of all organizational and legal forms and individual entrepreneurs;

- prevention of reduction of the achieved level of ensuring food security;

- accessibility of information on the state of regional food markets.

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