ESTIMATION OF EXPORT POTENTIAL OF AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES ON THE NICHE CROP MARKET OF UKRAINE

Annotation: The purpose of the article is to reveal the importance, relevance, dynamics and prospects of development of niche products of Ukraine. As expanding the range of niche crops is a trend of development of the agricultural world market, therefore, the study shows the general status, trends and forecasts of the development of the Ukrainian market of niche crops

Key words: niche crops, market, export, Ukrainian

Niche crops attract far less attention from agrarians than traditional most common cereals and oilseeds, such as wheat, corn, sunflower and soybeans. However, their economic potential, including their export potential, is no less significant for the development of agribusiness, and in terms of profitability of growing some of these crops may significantly exceed its most common species and areas.

In 2018, in Ukraine, farmers cultivated individual niche crops on tens of thousands of hectares. First of all, the mustard with a sowing area of 57.9 thousand hectares, as well as sorghum on 43.1 thousand hectares, beans on 39.8 thousand hectares and flax (oilseed) on 32.1 thousand hectares was quite widespread. Separate niches of leguminous crops such as chickpeas, cotyledons, china, beans, and lentils were sown on the total area of 79.7 thousand hectares. The distribution of the main niche crops in the acreage structure is shown in Figure 1.

Fig. 1. The structure of acreage of the main niche agro-cultures in all categories of farms, Ukraine, 2018 [5]
Thus, according to expert estimates, as a whole, the acreage under the main niche crops in 2018 reached about 252.6 thousand hectares, or almost 1% in the structure of all acreage [1].

As part of our study, it will also be advisable to consider the dynamics of areas under major niche crops in Ukraine for the period 2016-2018 (Fig. 2).

![Fig. 2. Dynamics of acreage under the main niche crops in Ukraine for the period 2016-2018, thousand hectares [5]](image)

In general, for any agrarian, the transition to niche crops is to some extent a risk that is directly linked to the need for new production technology and problems with finding high-quality seed. However, when studying and following the technology of growing niche crops, it is possible to obtain a sufficiently high level of profitability of 50% or more, and low competition in the market due to the small number of their producers is a guarantee for the sale of products at favorable prices.

Niche crops have been of economic interest to agribusiness in recent years, primarily because of high export prices for products that ensure their level in the domestic agricultural market. At the end of the eight months of 2018, sorghum is the leading exporter of niche crops. During the specified period, the volume of export of this crop amounted to 105.6 thousand tons. The next one in the ranking of export of niche crops is flax seeds, for 8 months of 2018 the volume of export has decreased 8 thousand tons. Completes the top three leaders in export among niche crops of lentils, for the same period, the volume of exports of this crop is 4.8 thousand tons [3].

Considerable interest may be the analysis of the major world markets for the sale of domestic flax seeds. The geography of its exports is more diversified. About 4,805.1 tones were exported to European countries in 8 months of this year. The largest buyers are countries such as Bulgaria - 580.7 tones, Serbia - 505.5 tones, Romania - 402.1 tones, Spain - 358.1 tones, Slovakia - 158.8 tones, Hungary - 132 tones, Austria - 109.5 tons, Italy - 108.1 tons and others.
Among Asian countries that imported almost 2612.9 tones of flax seeds from Ukraine, Vietnam - 1124.7 tones and Bangladesh - 840.9 tones separately should be allocated. Azerbaijan - 13 tones and the Republic of Belarus - 2 tones. African countries imported about 615 tones of flax seeds. Its main markets for domestic exporters are Egypt, Algeria and South Africa [2].

The development of new technologies for growing niche crops increases competitiveness and serves as a driver for small businesses. The process of introducing the cultivation of niche crops is hampered by a lack of quality seed material, the lack of effective plant protection products and producers' uncertainty about marketing. Although none of the niche crops can replace traditional oilseeds or cereals, the gradual expansion of their production will diversify the sources of income of small businesses. Niche crops can also be a solution to crop rotation problems and the depletion of soils that occur due to their saturation with several major crops.

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