CURRENT ISSUES ON CERTIFICATION OF FRUIT AND PRODUCTS IN THE UKRAINE-EU CONTEXT

Ukraine is just beginning to introduce European Standards (EN) that will meet the requirements of legislation in accordance with Annex III of the Association Agreement [1]. The absence of European Certificates of Conformity from domestic manufacturers, as well as the ability to test in the laboratories of Member States (Test Report), which determine compliance with European harmonized requirements, is a problem that hinders the entry of Ukrainian products into the EU market. It should be noted that, in accordance with the terms of the Association Agreement with the EU, there is a mechanism for the gradual introduction of new rules and standards over a period of two to five years, depending on the type of product. Therefore, the issue of reforming the national standardization system to bring it closer to EU rules and principles in the market for fruit and vegetables and the effectiveness of their use in relation to its competitiveness is of particular relevance. The purpose of the study is to determine the technological risks of processing fruit and vegetable products in accordance with international standards to increase the export potential of Ukrainian processing enterprises in accordance with EU requirements.

To achieve this goal it is necessary to solve the following tasks: 1) analyze the export potential of fruit and vegetable products of Ukraine in the EU markets; 2) identify technological aspects in the context of certification reform issues.

The gradual liberalization of the trade regime in terms of reducing tariff restrictions has led to an increase in attention to non-tariff trade regulation measures, among which technical norms and standards occupy a leading position. The report of the Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting "EU Autonomous Trade Preferences Impact on Ukrainian Exports" [2] emphasizes that the trade preferences granted to the EU by Ukraine did not have a significant expected effect on exports of Ukrainian goods to Europe. Quotas statistics show that they have benefited fully from exporters of honey, grape and apple juice, as well as canned tomatoes. Heads of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine explain that Ukrainian producers are not ready to enter the EU...
markets. First of all, there are significant differences in the standardization and technical regulations of Ukraine and the EU.

Commodity structure of foreign trade in January-May 2019 [3] shows that the products for processing of fruit and vegetable raw materials have a small export indicator, but the largest indicator corresponds to raw materials, namely: tomatoes, fresh or chilled; Onions, shallots, garlic, leeks and other onions, fresh or chilled: Cucumbers, gherkins, fresh or chilled; Leguminous vegetables, shelled or unshelled, fresh or chilled; Vegetables (uncooked or cooked by steaming or boiling), frozen; Vegetables preserved for temporary storage (for example, sulfur dioxide, in brine, in sulfur water or in any other solution providing their temporary preservation), but unsuitable in that form for direct use in food; Grapes, fresh or dried; peaches, including nectarines. On the basis of the conducted research it is established that the main differences of standardization and certification procedures between domestic and world practice are: 1) In Ukraine, standardization and certification is mandatory for almost all products, but at the same time due to outdated standards they do not provide quality and guarantee of safety. Mandatory standards force the production and sale of products that comply with state standards; 2) In the EU countries, there are two categories of technical requirements for products, not for individual products.

The authors identified the main aspects of technological risk control in the context of certification reform issues. The first is the implementation of the agricultural product safety standard, called EurepGAP (EuroRetailer Produce Working Group), the European Working Group on Retail Product and GAP (Good Agricultural Practice). This system of quality control and product safety aims to certify, not the final product, but the production technology itself. To improve the quality of the finished product, the processing plant must have its own fruit and vegetable raw material base, which is controlled by modern facilities and highly skilled specialists. Second, post-harvest processing equipment is subject to mandatory certification. During certification, they check security, compatibility, interchangeability, energy and resource conservation.

Consequently, Ukraine has made the transition to an international system of technical regulation, which reduces transaction costs, promotes trade development and accelerates economic growth. For Ukrainian fruit and vegetable companies, changes to standards in line with EU requirements will facilitate the export of finished fruit and vegetable products instead of raw materials and semi-finished products to European markets.

References: