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SPECIFIC FEATURES OF AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT, THE INVESTMENT CLIMATE, AND FACTORS INFLUENCING THE USE OF INVESTMENTS IN AGRICULTURE

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Annotation: The article examines the specific characteristics of investments in agriculture, focusing on the distinctive nature of agricultural production, the investment climate, and the factors influencing the efficiency of investment utilization. It emphasizes that agricultural investments differ from those in other sectors due to their dependence on natural and climatic conditions, long production cycles, and high risks associated with biological processes. The study also analyzes the investment environment in Uzbekistan, highlighting key institutional, financial, and infrastructural factors that affect the attraction and effective use of capital in the agricultural sector. Moreover, the article discusses the importance of improving the investment climate through supportive government policies, innovation, and sustainable financing mechanisms. The findings suggest that optimizing the structure of agricultural investments and ensuring their targeted use can significantly enhance productivity, food security, and rural development.

Keywords: Agricultural investment, investment climate, investment efficiency, agribusiness, sustainable development, Uzbekistan, rural economy, investment factors.

Introduction

Agriculture is one of the main strategic sectors of a country's economy, playing a vital role not only in ensuring food security for the population but also in creating a raw material base for industry. The primary function of this sector is to meet the population's needs with high-quality and sufficient quantities of food products. From this perspective, agriculture determines not only the development of the agrarian sector but also the overall stability of the national economy.

More than half of the population's demand for consumer goods is met through agricultural products, which clearly demonstrates the priority and importance of this sector. In particular, grain, meat, milk, vegetables, and fruits are the main food products essential for human health and life activity. Therefore, the development of agriculture occupies a central place in the national food security concept.

In addition, agriculture serves as a key supplier of raw materials for the processing industry. For example, cotton fiber is used in the textile industry, grain is processed into flour and bakery products, and milk and meat are used to produce a wide range of food items necessary for the food industry. Consequently, there is strong integration between agriculture and industry, and their harmonious development significantly enhances the efficiency of the national economy.

Literature Review and Methodology

A large portion of agricultural products, including fruits and vegetables obtained from horticulture, serves as an important raw material for industry. While a certain part of the

horticultural harvest is intended for direct consumption by the population, a significant share is directed to the processing industry. For instance, grapes are used to produce wine, juice, and raisins; apples, peaches, cherries, pomegranates, and other fruits are processed into jam, juice, canned goods, and compotes. Various vegetables are used to produce canned foods, pickles, dried products, and semi-finished goods that meet both domestic and export market needs.

At the same time, horticultural products have particular significance in terms of export potential. Pomegranates, grapes, cherries, dried fruits, and nuts grown in Uzbekistan are in high demand not only in the domestic market but also internationally. This necessitates further development of the processing industry, the introduction of modern technologies, and the expansion of packaging production.

Moreover, the development of horticulture increases demand for industrial goods. Modern horticulture requires mineral fertilizers, greenhouse equipment, irrigation systems, cooling chambers, special transportation, and packaging machinery to achieve high yields. Therefore, the horticultural sector creates additional opportunities for the growth of many branches of industry.

According to statistical data, processing horticultural products increases their economic efficiency by two to three times. For example, while the price of raw grapes is relatively low, the value of wine, juice, or raisins produced from them is several times higher. This clearly demonstrates the economic importance of integration between agriculture and industry.

Every sector of the national economy makes use of production tools, manufactures various products, and requires adequately skilled workers. Similarly, agriculture possesses its own distinctive features, which must be taken into account in entrepreneurial activity.

Land as the main production tool. In agriculture, land serves as the primary and irreplaceable means of production. Unlike other production resources, land does not wear out through use but retains its productive properties. Agricultural land varies by fertility and location, which gives rise to differential rent I: land plots located closer to product markets provide their owners with additional profit.

Diverse natural conditions. Agricultural production is carried out under various soil and climatic conditions. Therefore, mechanization, chemicalization, land reclamation, crop selection, and animal breeding must consider these environmental features to ensure productivity and sustainability.

Dependence on natural and climatic factors. Agricultural outcomes are directly influenced by soil and climate conditions, unlike industrial production, where such dependency is absent. Natural and climatic conditions not only affect the territorial distribution and specialization of agriculture but also play a decisive role in the development of horticulture. The growth, yield, and quality of fruit trees are closely tied to climate. Each fruit species has its own biological requirements and can be successfully cultivated only under suitable climatic conditions. For instance, grape cultivation thrives in warm and sunny regions, while apples and pears yield higher-quality fruit in cooler mountainous areas.

Seasonality is especially pronounced in horticulture. The vegetation cycle, flowering, fruiting, ripening, and harvesting periods strictly follow seasonal patterns. For example, a sudden cold or rainy period during spring flowering can negatively affect pollination and reduce yield. Similarly, summer drought can cause fruit deformation, cracking, or shrinkage. Therefore, maintaining the

stability and quality of horticultural production requires efficient irrigation systems, modern agrotechnical measures, and advanced protective technologies.

Additionally, there is a significant difference between the production cycle and working time in horticulture. While planting and maintenance are carried out intensively in spring and autumn, the harvest is mainly gathered in summer and autumn. During the period between these stages, the labor intensity of gardeners decreases, although fruit growth and ripening continue naturally. Hence, seasonality affects not only labor organization but also the operation of processing industries. For instance, perishable fruits such as cherries, peaches, and sour cherries are harvested in large quantities within a short period and delivered to processing plants, creating peak seasonal loads. In other periods, however, production facilities may remain underutilized.

As a result, the high dependence of horticulture on natural and climatic conditions and its seasonal nature directly affect economic efficiency. Therefore, rational use of climatic resources, the introduction of intensive horticultural technologies, the development of storage and processing infrastructure, and the formation of cluster systems ensuring year-round market supply are essential. Such an approach not only improves the quality of horticultural products but also strengthens the country's food security and export potential.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the agricultural sector — particularly horticulture — plays a vital role in ensuring food security, supporting industrial growth, and driving export potential. The interdependence between horticulture and industry demonstrates the strategic importance of agricultural investment for sustainable economic development. Processing agricultural products significantly increases their economic value and creates additional employment and income opportunities.

However, the sector's high dependence on natural and climatic conditions, as well as its pronounced seasonality, presents challenges that require effective management. The introduction of modern technologies, efficient irrigation systems, climate-resilient crop varieties, and advanced storage and processing infrastructure is essential to overcome these limitations.

Developing an integrated cluster-based system that ensures continuous production, processing, and distribution throughout the year will enhance both domestic food supply and export performance. Thus, rational investment in horticulture not only improves productivity and product quality but also contributes to the long-term stability and competitiveness of the national economy.

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