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**WTO AGREEMENT ON AGRICULTURE AND PECULIARITIES
OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS**

Abstract: The article presents the stages of formation and development of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture, its structure and content of the main sections. It has been established that agriculture is one of the strategic and vulnerable sectors of the economy of any state, the development of which determines the level of national economic and food security. It is determined that the adopted document establishes a system of rules and obligations of countries in relation to agricultural policy measures related to the regulation of market access, domestic support, and export competition. The current trends in the development of the agri-food sector of Belarus in terms of agricultural production, food security, foreign trade are justified. The features of the implementation of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture in the conditions of the republic, taking into account external and internal factors of industry competitiveness, are highlighted. At the country level, directions for the development of agricultural trade policy, improvement of support measures that do not fall under obligations to limit in accordance with international requirements of the World Trade Organization, and ensure competitive advantages in foreign agricultural markets are proposed. It was noted that promising areas and criteria for the effective functioning of the agri-food sector should take into account national priorities, provide measures and mechanisms for the development of competitive and environmentally friendly production of agricultural products, expand market infrastructure, create favorable organizational and economic conditions for the functioning of the industry, and form its scientific and innovative potential. The issues disclosed in the article are of interest in developing a set of measures to increase the efficiency of foreign trade in the context of expanding the country's participation in international and regional trade and economic integration, justifying mechanisms for improving agricultural regulation, and developing a system for promoting agri-food products on the domestic and foreign markets.

Keywords: agriculture, the World Trade Organization, agricultural products, import access to the market, non-tariff measures, tariff quotas, special protective system, domestic support, yellow box measures, green box measures, minimum criteria, export subsidies, export competition, special and differential mode.

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**СОГЛАШЕНИЕ ВТО ПО СЕЛЬСКОМУ ХОЗЯЙСТВУ И ОСОБЕННОСТИ ЕГО ВЫПОЛНЕНИЯ
В УСЛОВИЯХ РЕСПУБЛИКИ БЕЛАРУСЬ**

Аннотация: В статье представлены этапы становления и развития Соглашения ВТО по сельскому хозяйству, его структура и содержание основных разделов. Установлено, что сельское хозяйство является одной из стратегических и уязвимых отраслей экономики любого государства, развитие которого определяет уровень национальной экономической и продовольственной безопасности. Определено, что принятый документ устанавливает систему

правил и обязательств стран в отношении мер сельскохозяйственной политики, касающихся регулирования доступа на рынок, внутренней поддержки, экспортной конкуренции. Обоснованы современные тенденции развития агропродовольственной сферы Беларуси в части сельскохозяйственного производства, продовольственной безопасности, внешней торговли. Выделены особенности выполнения Соглашения ВТО по сельскому хозяйству в условиях республики, учитывающие внешние и внутренние факторы конкурентоспособности отрасли. На уровне страны предложены направления развития сельскохозяйственной торговой политики, совершенствования мер поддержки, не попадающих под обязательства по ограничению в соответствии с международными требованиями Всемирной торговой организации, обеспечения конкурентных преимуществ на зарубежных аграрных рынках. Отмечено, что перспективные направления и критерии эффективного функционирования агропродовольственной сферы должны учитывать национальные приоритеты, предусматривать меры и механизмы развития конкурентоспособного и экологически безопасного производства сельскохозяйственной продукции, расширения рыночной инфраструктуры, создания благоприятных организационно-экономических условий функционирования отрасли, формирования ее научно-инновационного потенциала. Раскрытые в статье вопросы представляют интерес при выработке комплекса мер по повышению эффективности внешней торговли в условиях расширения участия страны в международной и региональной торгово-экономической интеграции, совершенствовании механизмов регулирования сельского хозяйства, развития системы продвижения агропродовольственных товаров на внутренний и внешний рынки.

Ключевые слова: сельское хозяйство, Всемирная торговая организация, сельскохозяйственная продукция, доступ импорта на рынок, нетарифные меры, тарифные квоты, специальная система защитных мер, внутренняя поддержка, меры «желтой корзины», меры «зеленой корзины», критерий минимума, экспортные субсидии, экспортная конкуренция, специальный и дифференцированный режим

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Introduction. The Republic of Belarus filed an application to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1993, negotiations began directly from 1997. In the period from 2006 to 2015, work was conducted informally. During 2015-2016, this process intensified. The country emphasized its readiness for a substantive dialogue with representatives of the Working Group and the priority of national interests in the negotiations. This was due to the fact that Belarus, as a member of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), has been de facto living under the WTO rules since 2012, which, like the obligations of the Russian Federation in this organization, formed the basis of the EAEU law. Moreover, as of January 1, 2019, the republic is the only member state of the Union that has not yet acceded to the WTO¹.

The theoretical and practical foundations of the development of international trade in the context of multilateral trade agreements and trade and economic integration are described in the works of domestic and foreign scientists. Among foreign researchers are K. Anderson, B. Bora, M. Bush, N. Chen, A. Kuwahara, S. Laird, E. Mansfield, D. Novy, G. Tarr, P. Walkenhorst, who conducted research on the quantification and international analysis of non-tariff measures, measuring the effects of distortion trade policy, as well as the impact of integration on improving the efficiency of industries [1-6]. Many directions in the development of the theory and practice of applying the standard conditions of the WTO, including in agriculture, were reflected in the studies of Russian scientists - V.S. Chekalin, O.V. Chic, I.I. Dumoulin, S.V. Kiselev, V.V. Maslova, A.G. Paptsov, A.F. Serkov, E.V. Serova, N.A. Shelamova, S.F. Sutyryna, V.I. Tarasov, O.Yu. Trofimenko, I.G. Ushachev, et al. [7-16]. This made it possible to significantly develop the theories, practices and rules of the WTO, substantiate tariff and non-tariff measures in modern international trade, price relations in the context of the transition to an export-oriented economy and integration into the EAEU, and evaluate the consequences of Russia's accession to the WTO on the agri-food vector.

Various aspects of the development of foreign trade policy in the agro-industrial complex of the Republic of Belarus within the framework of integration groups and the possibilities of joining the WTO were also considered by Belarusian scientists. So, in the writings of V.G. Gusakov, M.S. Baygot, V.I. Belsky, S.I. Mikhnevich, G.V. Turban the positive and negative consequences for the agro-industrial complex in connection with the entry of Belarus into the World Trade Organization are described in [17-24]; V.I. Belsky, A.M. Teterkina, E.S. Lychagina - scientific proposals on the formation of a negotiating position of the Republic of Belarus upon joining the WTO in the field of price support for agriculture [25]; I.A. Kazakevich - tools to support the agricultural sector of Belarus in the framework of the EAEU and the WTO [26]; V.S. Akhramovich - methodological approaches to assessing the export poten-

¹ The Republic of Armenia joined on February 5, 2003; the Republic of Kazakhstan on November 30, 2015; the Kyrgyz Republic on December 20, 1998, and the Russian Federation on August 22, 2012.

tial of the agri-food industry [27]. Along with this, A. P. Shpak, N. V. Kireyenka, L. N. Baygot, S. A. Kandratenka investigated the problems of ensuring the national food security of the Republic of Belarus under the WTO, the development of regional agribusiness, and increasing the efficiency of the system for promoting agricultural products and food products on the domestic and foreign markets [28-29].

At the same time, emphasizing the importance of these developments, it should be noted that they do not fully take into account the constantly developing trade and economic processes, new aspects of the negotiation process on Belarus joining the WTO. Therefore, research is urgent on further substantiating the essence of the country's position on Belarus's accession to the WTO and implementing the agreed agro-industrial policy of the EAEU, as well as on the practical development of economic mechanisms for adapting agriculture.

The purpose of the work is to substantiate the features of the application of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture in the conditions of the Republic of Belarus and to propose economic mechanisms for the adaptation of agribusiness sectors within the multilateral trading system.

Main part. The World Trade Organization is an international organization dedicated to the application and development of multilateral trade agreements for more open trade for the benefit of all members of the organization. Many of its agreements cover issues related to agricultural products. First of all, this is the Agreement on Agriculture (hereinafter - the Agreement)². A number of other WTO documents also establish rules that apply to agricultural products³.

Agriculture was considered a unique sector of the economy, which for various reasons, including national food security, could not be approached like the rest. Although this industry was included in the GATT, the rules applicable to agricultural raw materials showed a number of important differences compared to the rules applicable to industrial products (for example, quantitative restrictions on imports and subsidies to agricultural producers). This approach has led to distortions in world agricultural markets. Therefore, lengthy discussions within the GATT⁴, and then the WTO facilitated in 1994 the signing of the Agreement on Agriculture in Marakesh. This document entered into force in 1995 and is currently the main one in the field of regulation of world agri-food trade.

The Agreement on Agriculture is a document that consists of a preamble, 21 articles and five methodological annexes. It considers issues of production and foreign trade in agricultural products. The list of products covered is determined by Article 2 and Appendix 1 of the Agreement (excluding fish and fish products, forest products and goods made from fibers) and (including cotton, linen, silk, leather and skins), introduces them into the range of goods regulated by the GATT-1994.

The Agreement on Agriculture is based on three main ideas:

1. *Enhanced access to the domestic markets of WTO members.* This area concerns import regulation tools. In accordance with the Agreement, non-tariff measures (such as quantitative restrictions or import bans) were replaced by tariff ones that were "tied" at a certain level (that is, import tariffs could not exceed the established boundary level) and were subsequently subject to gradual reduction. Now many WTO members apply existing import tariffs at a level significantly lower than the "bound"⁵.

To improve market access opportunities, some countries include in their obligations conditions on the application of tariff quotas for a number of agricultural products. Since the import tariff rate under the quota is usually much lower than the usual rate outside the quota, this gives additional opportunities for exporters. Under the WTO, countries apply more than 1000 tariff quotas for various agricultural products.

² WTO Agreement on Agriculture. Available at: <http://www.vavt.ru/wto/wto/AgricultureAgreement> (accessed 08.01.2019).

³ General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994 (GATT); Agreement on sanitary and phytosanitary measures; Agreement on technical barriers to trade; Agreement on subsidies and countervailing measures; Safeguards Agreement; Trade Facilitation Agreement; Agreement on import licensing procedures, etc.

⁴ During the Tokyo GATT round (1973-1979), attempts to liberalize agrarian politics in the world were suspended. In response, the United States passed the Fair Trade Act, which provided for sanctions against countries that violate GATT rules.

⁵ The binding (consolidation) of customs duty rates is a legal obligation of a country, taken during trade negotiations, not to increase duty rates on specific goods specified in its list of tariff obligations, higher than those indicated in the list of levels. In tariff negotiations, a country can commit itself to linking (consolidating) the current level of customs duties on specific goods or lowering it and linking the lowered level. Currently, developed countries have linked 100 % of duty rates on manufactured goods. The level of related duties for developing countries is lower.

In addition, Article 5 of the Agreement establishes a special protective system for agricultural products. These are increases in the import tariff, which are applied on a temporary basis for certain goods in the event of a significant increase in imports or falling world prices. Only those countries that have reserved this right in their schedule of tariff obligations for specific goods can apply this tariff tool.

2. *Decrease in domestic support for agriculture by WTO members.* The agreement establishes the rules regarding this instrument and the corresponding obligations of the organization members. The main criterion is an assessment of the degree of influence of domestic support measures that countries provide to national producers on trade. Some of them can seriously affect trade, while the influence of others is minimal or nonexistent. The first group includes the “yellow basket” measures, which include all types of direct support provided at the level of a specific product, as well as support not related to a specific product; in the second - for example, the “green basket” measures - this is support that is provided through government programs funded from the state budget, and not by transferring funds from consumers; does not result in producer price support. In accordance with the WTO rules, there is the so-called *minimum criterion (de minimis)*, which applies to:

product-oriented internal support, if such support does not exceed 5 % (for developing countries - 10 %) of the total value of the basic agricultural product;

non-product-oriented domestic support in the event that such support does not exceed 5 % (for developing countries - 10 %) of the value of all agricultural products of the country.

3. *Increased export competition and reduced export subsidies by WTO members.* In accordance with Article 9 of the Agreement, countries are required to reduce the use of export subsidies, the receipt of which is associated with export. An important stage was the adoption of a decision on the introduction of a ban on subsidies on agricultural exports from December 19, 2015⁶. Negotiations on this issue lasted twenty years, and only in 2015, all WTO members were able to find an acceptable solution⁷.

It should be noted that WTO rules allow countries to apply temporary restrictions on food exports in the event of a critical shortage in the domestic market. In this case, the country must notify the WTO in advance and, if necessary, consult with importing countries, which may affect the introduction of such a restriction.

In addition, the Agreement on Agriculture includes other provisions:

Article 12 - prohibitions and restrictions on exports. Demands that WTO members considering introducing new restrictions on food exports take due account of the food security implications of importing WTO members;

Article 15 - special and differential mode. Acknowledging the limitations faced by many developing countries trying to take full advantage of the new trading opportunities;

Article 16 - developing countries that are net importers of food (technical and financial assistance, financing mechanisms, export loans to agriculture, food assistance);

Article 20 - continuation of the reform process. Obligations of WTO members are part of an ongoing process.

Thus, the Agreement on Agriculture prohibits the application of non-tariff restrictive measures with respect to imports or exports, which include quantitative quotas and bans, minimum import prices, voluntary export restrictions, restrictive and non-transparent practices of licensing imports or the activities of state-owned trading enterprises.

The agri-food sector of Belarus is one of the priority sectors of the national economy and performs a set of interrelated functions: production, economic, social, environmental, cultural. The total area of land in agricultural circulation is almost 8.5 million hectares or more than 40 % of the country's territory. In recent years, the share of agricultural products in GDP has remained at the level of 6.0-7.0 %, of the rural population in the total number - 21.6 % (table 1).

⁶ The 10th WTO Ministerial Conference, which was held in Nairobi (Kenya) from December 15 to 19, 2015.

⁷ Depending on the specifics of foreign trade policy, different regimes are provided for each group of countries. Thus, the possibility of providing subsidies to countries that have not applied export subsidies for the past three years is completely lost. Developed countries are instructed to immediately abandon subsidies (in so doing, until 2020 they have been granted a transitional period for goods previously included in export subsidy notifications and considered by the WTO Committee on Agriculture). For developing countries, there is a five-year transition period after the complete rejection of export subsidies at the end of 2018. An exception is also made in the provision of export subsidies for marketing and transport - developing countries should refuse these types of financial assistance by the end of 2023, and the least developed countries and countries, net food importers - until 2030.

Table 1. The main socio-economic indicators of agricultural development of the Republic of Belarus, 2012–2018

Indicators	Years					Growth rate, 2018 to 2017, %
	2012	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Gross value added (at current prices), million BYN (2012–2015 – billion BYR)	44 526.4	56 492.2	6.5	8.2	7.8	95.1
– as a percentage of GDP, %	8.1	6.3	6.9	7.8	6.4	-1.4 p.p.
<i>Agricultural products in farms of all categories</i>						
– at current prices, million BYN (2012–2015 – billion BYR)	94 864	135 378	15 502	18 043	18 843	104.4
– in comparable prices as a percentage of the previous year	106.0	97.5	103.3	104.2	96.7	-7.5 p.p.
<i>Labor productivity in agriculture:</i>						
– per employee, thousand rubles	220 687	358 739	43 103	52 013	56 146	107.9
– as a percentage of the previous year	109.7	99.8	106.5	108.9	99.2	-9.7 p.p.
Exports of agricultural products and food products, million USD	114 040.2	176 679.0	20 724.5	23 180.0	25 133.1	108.4
– as a percentage of total exports	18.5	23.9	25.3	24.6	22.8	-1.8 p.p.
Investments in fixed capital of agriculture, million BYN (2012–2015 – billion BYR)	5083.6	4453.0	4231.6	4972.2	5280.1	106.2
– as a percentage of the total investment in fixed assets	11.0	16.7	18.0	17.0	15.6	-1.4 p.p.
List number of employees in agricultural organizations for the year, thousand people	22 987.5	20 824.1	1732.3	2178.5	2453.3	112.6
– as a percentage of the total number of people employed in the economy, %	14.9	10.1	9.3	10.4	9.8	-0.6 p.p.
Nominal average monthly wage of agricultural workers, BYN (2012–2015 – thousand BYR)	343.5	315.2	303.2	293.6	284.6	96.9
– as a percentage of the average national level	8.3	8.0	7.9	7.8	7.6	-0.2 p.p.
Gross value added (at current prices), million BYN (2012–2015 – billion BYR)	2690.0	4847.3	493.2	564.0	651.5	115.5
– as a percentage of GDP, %	73.2	72.2	68.2	68.5	67.1	-1.4 p.p.

Source: Agriculture of the Republic of Belarus: stat. sat / Nat. stat. Resp. Committee Belarus. Minsk, 2019, pp. 13-15 (in Russian).

The main types of marketable products are milk, livestock and poultry, grain, potatoes, sugar beets and flax raw materials. The current structure of agricultural production allows us to guarantee the physical accessibility of food for the population in an energy rating of 3200 kcal per 1 person per day, which virtually eliminates hunger and malnutrition. The country produces 618 kg of potatoes per 1 person, 184 kg - of vegetables, 775 kg - of milk. There is a high level of self-sufficiency in the main types of agricultural products, raw materials and food (table 2).

Since 2005, the republic has consistently provided an adequate level of food security through its own production. In the Global Food Security Index 2018, Belarus became the 44th out of 109 countries (2017 - 46th place)⁸. The country occupies a significant place in world production and export of agricultural and food products: 4th place in the export of flax fiber, 6th - butter, whey, 8th - rapeseed oil, 9th - skimmed milk powder, 11 - cheese and cottage cheese, 14th - sugar, 18th - beef⁹.

Given the socio-economic importance of the agri-food industry for the Belarusian economy, we will justify the features and effectiveness of the implementation of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture in the republic, taking into account a set of factors:

how optimal are the republic's obligations in relation to agriculture (import access to the domestic market, domestic support, etc.);

taking into account the obligations of the EAEU member states that joined the WTO after the creation of the Customs Union and subsequently the EAEU (Russian Federation, Republic of Kazakhstan);

will it be possible to defend the most sensitive positions for the agricultural industry;

how competitive will domestic products be in domestic and foreign markets.

⁸ Global Food Security Index. Available at: <http://foodsecurityindex.eiu.com> (accessed 20.12.2018).

⁹ Data from UNCOMTRADE and FAO.

Table 2. The level of self-sufficiency in basic agricultural products, 2014–2018, %

Products	Years				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Meat	126.1	132.4	132.1	134.7	135.2
Milk	212.6	229.8	233.1	231.0	235.1
Eggs	130.7	129.4	132.0	129.2	123.7
Fish	12.1	13.1	15.3	13.9	15.0
Potato	108.7	105.1	104.1	112.3	106.4
Vegetables and gourds	97.8	94.8	106.7	105.5	99.8
Fruits and berries	63.5	55.2	57.5	43.5	80.5

Source: Agriculture of the Republic of Belarus: stat. sat / Nat. stat. Resp. Committee Belarus. Minsk, 2019, p. 197 (in Russian).

In this regard, the Institute for System Research in the agro-industrial complex of the NAS of Belarus developed and tested scientific and methodological approaches to determine the level of sensitivity of the domestic agricultural and food market to imports. The main indicator is proposed to be considered as integral, taking into account the level of self-sufficiency, the growth rate of imports, the level of protection of the domestic market. In development of this, the classification of goods is presented: supersensitive (the sensitivity index of which is equal to or greater than 1); medium sensitive (from 0.5 to 1); insensitive (up to 0.5) [30].

Calculations showed that the first group includes dairy products, the second - sugar and sugar confectionery, fats and oils, meat and meat offal, fruits and vegetables. This is confirmed by the fact that the traditionally commodity structure of agricultural exports of Belarus is formed by products of animal origin (2017 - 66.0 %, 2018 - 62.7 %).

Studies show that Belarus expects to join the WTO on conditions similar to Russian ones, namely:

- the number of agricultural goods for which the level of related tariff obligations was lower than ETT - 2500;
- average final bound rate - 7.8 %;
- the average final rate of import tariffs on agricultural goods - 10.8 %.

An important place in the development of agriculture is held by state support. Currently, the mechanism for providing support to the agricultural sector is fixed in Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus N347 "On the State Agrarian Policy"¹⁰, State Program for the Development of Agricultural Business in the Republic of Belarus for 2016-2020¹¹.

In 2018, consolidated budget expenditures on agriculture amounted to \$ 728.5 million (in 2017 - \$ 797.8 million). Compensation of bank losses from the issuance of soft loans (over 60.0 % in the republican budget expenditures and about 4.0 % in local budget expenditures) prevailed in their structure. A large share in the republican budget expenditures was spent on financing budgetary organizations (8.0 % of all republican budget expenditures on agriculture), the construction of drainage, drainage and humidification systems and the main structures of land reclamation and water management systems (6.7 %), and the payment of insurance contributions (4.7 %). In the expenditures of local budgets for agriculture in Belarus, a significant share is accounted for by premiums on procurement prices.

The largest share in the structure of support measures that do not have a distorting effect on trade ("green basket" measures) at the republican level was occupied by expenses for general and special training of personnel, services related to infrastructure, payments under environmental protection programs, and research. In general, in the total scope of the "yellow basket" measures, about 90 % are product-specific measures.

The study showed that the directions of state support for agricultural production in Belarus do not fully take into account the current conditions of the industry. To this end, we have developed method-

¹⁰ Presidential Decree Belarus N 347 dated 17.07.2014, as amended by N 50 on 02.02.2018.

¹¹ Council of Ministers Resp. Belarus N 196 dated March 11, 2016, as amended by N 846 dated 22.11.2018.

ological approaches to improve the economic regulation of production and marketing in the agricultural sector, including¹²:

- price regulation, which allows the use of forms of state regulation based on price comparisons of external and domestic markets (export duties, customs tariffs, quotas and other non-tariff barriers; direct state control of domestic prices; regulation of state trade mechanisms);
- income support for agricultural producers providing direct and indirect cash transfers between the state and the producer (compensation payments, payments for the transfer of acreage from crops to steam lands or in case of natural disasters, regulation through taxes);
- support for the acquisition of raw materials is aimed at establishing and paying subsidies for the purchase of raw materials for agriculture (mineral fertilizers, chemical plant protection products, feed, irrigation water), providing soft loans and special preferential insurance;
- stimulating the growth of production efficiency is aimed at supporting market infrastructure, including the development of domestic and foreign trade;
- regional support should be provided by oblast committees and rayon departments of agriculture and food;
- general economic support includes activities that are not aimed at supporting the agro-industrial complex, but that influence it (state tax policy, foreign exchange policy, provision of subsidies, transfers, etc.);
- support for product marketing (market development programs, subsidies for the transportation of agricultural products, inspection and product quality control).

In order to change the concept of subsidizing, we have developed a structured model of state support for agricultural production, based on the expansion of green box measures.

1. *Domestic food assistance*¹³. In 2017, in Belarus, 5.9 % of the total population in the country are classified as low-income. Implementation of food assistance programs will help increase domestic demand for agricultural products, as well as support socially-priority segments of the population and provide them with necessary food products. Programs can be developed and implemented in the country using two main approaches [31]:

- government procurement of food for free meals (in schools, kindergartens, hospitals, free social catering points, etc.);
- preferential purchases of food by the population (using food cards).

2. *Subsidizing consulting services and product promotion services*. To develop this direction in Belarus, we justified a program management system to promote domestic sales and stimulate the export of agricultural products. The novelty of the approach is based on the strengthening of the role of the state in promoting domestic agricultural and food products, as well as providing consumers with complete and relevant market information. For this, it is necessary to create a marketing department under the General Directorate of Economics of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus, the purpose and tasks of which will be aimed at planning and implementing marketing (managerial) activities, including¹⁴:

- analytical studies (domestic and foreign markets; agricultural and food products; countries of exporters and importers on the main types of agricultural products; price monitoring);
- management of commodity (product) programs (for ten products in accordance with the Doctrine of National Food Security until 2030);
- development of regulatory documents aimed at the prevention of unfair actions in the field of agricultural marketing;

¹² Kireyenka N. V. The theory and methodology of the formation of a marketing system in the new business environment (for example, the agro-industrial complex of the Republic of Belarus). Abstract of Ph.D. diss. Minsk, 2017. 64 p. (in Russian).

¹³ In accordance with paragraph 4 of Annex II of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture, “the right to receive food assistance is associated with clearly defined criteria related to the goals of nutrition. Such assistance is provided in the form of direct food supplies to interested parties or the provision of funds that allow eligible food recipients to purchase food at market or subsidized prices. Government purchases of food are carried out at current market prices, and financing and management are transparent”.

¹⁴ Kireyenka N. V. Scientific methodology of economic regulation of agribusiness and the development of its marketing system. Economic issues of the development of agriculture in Belarus: an interagency thematic collection. Minsk, 2019, vol. 47, pp. 166-168 (in Russian).

- supervision of compliance with marketing agreements, regulations, research program management;
- development and management of programs to promote domestic sales and stimulate the export of agricultural products.

It is advisable to use the proposed system of managing agricultural sales promotion programs for any product and product market, which is very important in the context of deepening regional integration.

In the context of the Agreement on Agriculture, increasing export competition is one of the main directions for its implementation. Export subsidies are not applied in Belarus. The republic has created the necessary legislative base and institutional basis for the functioning of the export support system. At the national level, the fundamental documents for the development of the agro-industrial complex of Belarus and the agricultural product promotion system are: The National Strategy for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2030¹⁵; State program for the development of agricultural business in the Republic of Belarus for 2016-2020; National Export Support and Development Program for 2016-2020¹⁶; Republican program for the development of the logistics system and transit potential for 2016-2020¹⁷.

The normative legal basis for regulating the export of agricultural products in the areas are.

1. *Foreign trade activity*: provisions of the Laws “On state regulation of foreign trade activity”¹⁸; “On measures to protect the economic interests of the Republic of Belarus in the implementation of foreign trade in goods”¹⁹; “On Customs Regulation of the Republic of Belarus”²⁰.

2. *Export lending and insurance of export risks with state support*: provisions of the Decrees of the President of the Republic of Belarus “On promoting the development of export of goods (works, services)”²¹; “On Amendments and Changes to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus dated June 21, 2011 № 261”²²; granting to the Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus OJSC the right to grant export loans in the amount of at least 1 million US dollars to residents for the acquisition of goods for transfer to international leasing, as well as to non-residents for the purchase of goods from Belarusian organizations; “On some measures for the sale of goods produced in the Republic of Belarus”²³, providing a mechanism to stimulate foreign consumers of Belarusian products using the resource and customer base of foreign banks, as well as compensation for interest and leasing payments.

3. *Information and marketing support* is provided on the Internet and international information and trade networks; the Export.by portal has been created. The institutional basis of the agricultural export support system is formed by export support institutions²⁴, interdepartmental council on foreign trade policy²⁵, intergovernmental commissions, business cooperation councils with foreign countries, CJSC Meat and Dairy Company²⁶.

In accordance with the global trend in the formation of the digital economy, important attention was paid to work on information support of exports. According to the results of the year, 4.848 Belarusian and 393 foreign enterprises were registered on the portal for exporters Export.by, and information on

¹⁵ Protocol of the meeting of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus N 3 on 10.02.2015.

¹⁶ Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus N 604 on 01.08.2016, as amended by N 480 on 22.06.2018.

¹⁷ Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus N 56 on 18.07.2016, as amended by N 716 on 25.09.2017.

¹⁸ Law of the Republic of Belarus No. 347-Z on 25.11.2004.

¹⁹ The Law of the Republic of Belarus N 346-3 of 25.11.2004, as amended by N 397-3 dated 13.07.2016.

²⁰ The Law of the Republic of Belarus N 129-3 of 10.01.2014, as amended by N. 32-Z dated 19.06.2017.

²¹ Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 544 of 25.08.2006, as amended by N 317 of September 4, 2017, together with the Regulation on export risk insurance with state support; Regulation on the procedure for issuing and using budget loans for the payment of insurance claims under export risk insurance contracts with state support; The Regulation on the Procedure for Compensating Losses to Banks and Non-Bank Credit and Financial Organizations of the Republic of Belarus, Financing for the Assignment of a Money Claim (Factoring) in the Implementation of Export Contracts.

²² Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 45 dated January 24, 2013.

²³ Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 466 of September 24, 2009, as amended by N 31 on 29.01.2019.

²⁴ BRUPEIS “Belexingarant”, OJSC “Promagroleasing”, IRUP “National Center for Marketing and Price Study”, Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

²⁵ Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 524 of 22.06.2015, as amended by No 782 dated 31.10.2018.

²⁶ Specialized organization for export sales of food products manufactured by enterprises of the meat and dairy complex of Belarus; endowed with the status of official exporter of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

16,715 goods and services was presented. Actively developing agrarian distribution network (TPN)²⁷. The TPN of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus abroad consisted of 177 structures, including 35 (19.8 %) with a share of Belarusian investments (trading houses, trade missions and branches, joint ventures, retail outlets) and 142 (80.2 %) - without the participation of domestic capital (dealer and distribution structures)²⁸; Belgospisheprom concern - 11 trading houses, of which 7 (63.6 %) operate on the market of the Russian Federation²⁹.

In order to ensure competitiveness and gain competitive advantages in foreign agri-food markets, the production and sale of high value-added products remains an important point. The structure of agricultural exports of Belarus, depending on the level of processing, is presented in table 3.

The analysis shows that in recent years the share of products with a high level of processing is 40.0-45.0 %. At the same time, the share of agricultural raw materials decreases annually (2014 - 29.9 %, 2018 - 26.7 %). This contributes to the expansion of the geography of export deliveries of Belarus (2014 - 73 countries, 2018 - 95 countries). At the same time, Russia is the main market, whose share in the total volume of exported agricultural products in 2018 decreased by 6.0 percentage points and amounted to 79.3 % or \$ 4,104.7 million (in 2017 - 85.3 % or \$ 4,242.8 million). At the same time, export deliveries to Kazakhstan increased 2.0 times and amounted to 6.0 % in the geographical structure of exported agricultural products or \$ 309.9 million (in 2017 - 3.0 % or \$ 149.0 million). The EAEU accounted for 90.4 % of the supply of agricultural products in Belarus (\$ 4,676.1 million).

For the effective application of the rules and principles of the WTO, Belarus has developed and defined priorities for export development, including in the agri-food sector: optimization of the national system of support and development of exports; occupying new niches in promising markets, maintaining existing and searching for additional niches, strengthening positions in traditional markets; increase in export potential in the service sector; development of economic integration within the EAEU; increase the attractiveness of the work of business entities in the export direction, the development of the export potential of small and medium enterprises; development of innovative exports through increased exports of high-tech products and technologies.

Conclusion. Thus, the purpose of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture is to establish a fair and market-oriented agricultural trading system by introducing restrictions on policies that distort the agricultural production and trade. The document establishes a system of rules and obligations of countries regarding agricultural policy measures related to the regulation of three key areas: market access, domestic support, export competition. For Belarus, the practical application of the Agreement is extremely important and allows the use of the rules and principles of the WTO, without violating the country's obligations to this international organization. At the same time, the novelty of the author's approaches consists in the development of agricultural trade policy in terms of export and import of products, changing the model of functioning of food markets based on improving the state support system (through green box measures), strengthening the role of the state in promoting domestic agricultural and food products, the introduction of market (transparent) instruments to prevent the threat of food shortages in the domestic market.

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1. The state program of scientific research "Quality and Efficiency of Agro-Industrial Production" for 2016-2020, subprogram 1 "Economics of Agriculture", approved by Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus dated June 10, 2015 No. 483, task 1.3 "Study of theoretical and

Table 3. The structure of exports of agricultural products of Belarus depending on the level of processing, 2014–2018, %

Types of products by level of processing	Years				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Untreated products (agricultural raw materials)	29.9	32.6	30.2	27.0	26.7
Partially processed products	28.1	27.4	27.1	27.1	30.3
Highly processed products	42.0	40.0	42.7	45.9	43.0

Source: Agriculture of the Republic of Belarus: stat. sat / Nat. stat. Resp. Committee Belarus. Minsk, 2019, p. 188 (in Russian).

²⁷ Council of Ministers Resp. Belarus No. 183 dated February 24, 2012, as amended by No. 1000 dated 26.12.2017.

²⁸ Data of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus.

²⁹ <http://bgp.by/ru/commercial-ru/>

methodological foundations the effective functioning of the national food system, improving the foreign economic activity of the agro-industrial complex, methods and mechanisms for managing the quality of agricultural products in conditions deepening regional and international integration” for 2016-2018 (No. GR 20 160 862).

2. The state scientific and technical program “Agro-industrial complex-2020” for 2016-2020, the subprogram “Agro-industrial complex - efficiency and quality”, approved by Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus dated March 12, 2015 No. 190, task 1.1 “Develop a system of scientifically based recommendations ensuring the stable and effective functioning of the national food market, foreign trade policy of the agricultural sector of Belarus, the formation of a mechanism for state regulation of the quality of agricultural products in conditions of development of world trade and economic space” for 2016-2018 (No. GR 20 163 615).

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