

The Importance of State Support and Regulation in the Agro-Industrial Complex

By

Zhilyakov D.I.

Kursk State Agricultural Academy,

Ryakhovsky D.I.

Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation,

Bondarenko N.G.

Pyatigorsk Institute (branch) of North-Caucasian Federal University in Pyatigorsk,

Stepanyan T.M.

Russian University of Transport (Moscow State University of Railway Engineering (MIIT)),

Sigidov Yu.I.

Kuban State Agrarian University

Abstract

The main tasks of state support and regulation of the agro-industrial complex are to maintain the level of profitability necessary for expanded reproduction, ensuring food security and social development of rural areas. The profitability of the main types of agricultural products that has developed in recent years has been more satisfactory to agricultural producers. This was achieved through the implementation of the State Program “Development of agriculture and regulation of agricultural products, raw materials and food markets for 2008-2020”. Agreements on agriculture and on subsidies and compensatory measures ratified in August 2012 changed not only the principles and mechanisms, but also the amount of state support. At the same time, in the scientific literature, the categories “State support” and “State regulation” are very often used as synonyms. The study contains excerpts from legal acts, opinions of the authors, as well as an analysis of these economic categories. The study revealed that these economic categories differ in theory and practice. Their differences are due to: the tools and mechanisms of their implementation; sources of financing; the target orientation of funds; the ratio to the sources of capital financing; target indicators, performance indicators

Keywords. State support, state regulation, customs quotas, tax incentives, customs and tariff regulation, budget subsidies.

Introduction

At the stage of world trade liberalization, the competitiveness of national agricultural products is of particular importance. The problem of forming mechanisms for the sustainable development of production affects the interests of not only individual enterprises, but also industries and even regions. In the list of the most urgent problems of the Russian economy, according to many authors, including S. Arakelyan [2], the problems of the agro-industrial complex are of primary importance. The sharp rise in prices on the world food markets has seriously affected the situation in our country. To the greatest extent, this was felt by pensioners, large families, and other socially vulnerable groups of the population, for whom food is the main item of expenditure in family budgets.

In the current conditions, it is necessary to pay close attention to the development of the national agro-industrial complex, to the further development and formation of the national market of food and resources. Our country has one of the world's most significant agricultural potentials, which allows not only to provide its own economy with raw materials, and the population with food, but also to feed at least 350 million people.

Our key tasks, as Vladimir Putin said [8, 9], are to ensure sustainable development of rural areas, improve the quality of life in rural areas, achieve a significant increase in the efficiency of the agro-industrial complex and the competitiveness of national products, and this means to insure ourselves against sharp fluctuations in the world market conditions. Vladimir Putin noted that at the end of the 1990s, 90% of agricultural enterprises in the country were unprofitable. Today, there are still a lot of them, about 25%. But still not 90! And that is most important, there is a tendency to change for the better the mood of people living and working in rural areas.

Such trends in the agricultural sector appeared due to the state support of agricultural production and the development of the social sphere. Since the adoption and implementation of the NPP "Development of the agro-industrial complex" and up to the present time there have been ongoing discussions among scientists concerning the used terminology. The terms state regulation and state support are often blurred in scientific publications and sometimes interpreted as synonyms. In fact, these economic categories are not equivalent. And in this regard, it is necessary to define the main features of the terms "state support" and "state regulation".

Methods And Materials

The work used systematic, comparative and other research methods. The used materials were federal laws, decrees of the President of the Russian Federation, resolutions of the Government of the Russian Federation, published works of research institutions of the Russian Academy of Sciences, statistical materials at the federal and regional levels.

Research Results

The current federal and regional regulatory documents do not provide an answer to this question. Meanwhile, the Accounting Regulation 13/2000 "Accounting for state aid" treats state aid as subsidies and subventions (budget funds) budget loans (with the exception of tax credits, deferrals, installments for the payment of taxes and payments, and other obligations), including the provision of various types of resources other than cash (land, natural resources and other property), and in other forms [1].

Thus, state support involves the transfer of budget resources in monetary and material form to agricultural producers. Based on this definition, and the existing world and national practice, state support can be both direct and indirect.

It should be noted that in the world practice, in a generalized form, the methods of direct impact on the economy include:

Table 1 Methods of direct impact on the economy in the world practice.

Method	Description of method
Direct funding of research and development from the budget.	At the same time, budget funds are provided to both public and private companies for the purposes related to their innovative development. As part of the implementation of this direction, the state can also initiate the creation of holding companies.
Conducting competitions for the provision of budget funds	This is due to the implementation of certain goals of the state, which are dictated by its scientific and technological policy.
Provision of budget funds for the creation of an innovative structure	At the same time, a quantitative assessment of the indicators of innovation activity of the enterprise is made, reflecting the ability and readiness for rapid assimilation and introduction of scientific and technical achievements associated with risks of uncertainty; predicting the possibility of achieving the expected result in production, economic, financial and innovation processes, having the ability to respond flexibly to changes in the internal and external environment of the enterprise. Thus, the proposed mechanism of innovative budgeting of activities of the enterprise can productively influence all economic, technical, production, and innovation processes, minimize the impact of adverse factors, and increase the competitiveness of products.
State evaluation of innovative projects	This is an operation of systematic verification and evaluation of the quality of the project by its main indicators. During the examination process, the following indicators of the innovation project are monitored and evaluated: 1) the system of normative and methodological, design and other documents that are part of the project; 2) professionalism of the project manager and his team; 3) scientific, technical and production potential, competitiveness of the project and the organization; 4) the reliability of the performed calculations, the degree of risk and the effectiveness of the project; 5) the quality of the project development and implementation mechanism, the ability to achieve the set goals.
Not monetary support related to the promotion in the form of state awards and certificates.	This is a method of stimulating employees for conscientious and professional work. Rewarding employees for a well done job not only motivates the recipient to continue working hard, but also encourages the rest of the team.
Focus on personnel training	Training of personnel in innovative specialties, as well as the formation of managers capable of implementing innovative design [15, 17].

It is not surprising that in the world practice, direct financing of R&D is on the same place as project financing and subsidies. This indicates the crucial role of science in the economy of developed countries.

In particular, an important political and economic moment was the speech of President Barack Obama at the National Academy of Sciences of the United States on April 27, 2009, where attention was paid to the functioning of basic science. He made it clear that basic research is a source of new technologies and products and therefore their priority funding is needed. At the same time, it was decided to develop a plan to restore and resume investment in the United States [20].

Indirect methods of state support in a generalized form include the following methods:

Table 2 Indirect methods of state support.

1	<p>Tax benefits – as a rule, a reduced tax rate or adjusted tax base is provided. In practice, there are benefits associated with the production and sale of scientific and technical products, the use of property in scientific activities, and, accordingly, a preferential tax rate on property used for scientific purposes. In a number of foreign countries there are tax benefits associated with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provision of borrowed funds for research or innovation implementation; - provision of tax holidays in connection with the production and sale of innovative products; - preferential taxation of any dividends, provided that innovative products are produced and sold; - preferential taxation of profits, if this is related to the use of the results of intellectual activity in production; - concentration of a certain part of the profit on special accounts, and its further use for innovative purposes; - adjustment of the tax base for individual taxes and fees, if the economic entity directed funds for the development of innovative activities; - adjustment of the income tax base, if the business entity used the funds for the purchase of scientific equipment.
2	<p>Preferential lending is largely associated with preferential tax rates, or any other benefits associated with lending to the production of innovative products [14, 17].</p>

Based on the above, state support can be both direct and indirect. In turn, state regulation assumes the functioning of mechanisms that are not related to the transfer of budget resources to agricultural producers and assumes both direct and indirect effects on the economic mechanism of management.

In particular, according to AR 13/2000, such measures include state regulation of prices and tariffs, all types of tax regulation, the provision of benefits, deferral and installment payments for taxes and fees, investment tax credits, etc., the participation of the Russian Federation, the subjects of the Russian Federation and municipalities in the authorized capital.

Thus, based on the provisions of economic theory and practice, we can distinguish 4 forms of state regulation:

Table 3 Forms of state regulation.

1	2	3	4
Approval of uniform rules of conduct of business entities (for example, implementation of the provisions of the Civil Code of the Russian Federation, the Tax Code of the Russian Federation, the Labor Code of the Russian Federation concerning the functioning of the economic mechanism).	The establishment of different legal regimes for individual groups of economic entities (for example, the Federal Law “On Limited Liability Companies”, “On Production Cooperatives”, etc., regulatory legal acts regulating the activities of small businesses, etc.).	Use of individual administrative management acts [143].	Regulation of the economy using prices and tariffs, all types of tax regulation, the provision of benefits, deferrals and installments for the payment of taxes and fees, investment tax credits, etc.

It is obvious that in the future, the role of taxation as a regulatory mechanism in the process of Russia’s functioning in the WTO will increase. Within the WTO, agriculture issues are considered in two agreements - the Agreement on Agriculture and the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures.

At the same time, in the signed agreements, the benefits do not apply to tax benefits, as the latter are not considered as subsidies [10].

We agree with the opinion of A. Derbichev that state regulation of the agro-industrial complex should be carried out, as a priority, for the following purposes.

Table 4 Objectives of state regulation of the agro-industrial complex according to A. Derbichev.

1	2	3
Guaranteed provision of the country’s population with high-quality agricultural products produced by Russian agro-industrial organizations.	Creating economic conditions not only for agricultural production, but also for processing and servicing, developing the social infrastructure of rural areas, and improving the quality of life.	Implementation of timely significant volume of procurement and commodity interventions, implementation of protectionist policies in relation to domestic agricultural producers [3].

The level of state support and regulation for basic agricultural products is defined in the Food Security Doctrine approved by the President of the Russian Federation on January 30, 2010, Order No. 120. Paragraph 8 of this document defines the minimum list and values of criteria for food products that ensure food security of the Russian Federation.

As it is known the criteria for ensuring food security for production are as follows:

- seed – not less than 95%;
- sugar – not less than 80%;
- vegetable oil – not less than 80%;
- meat and meat products (in terms of meat) – not less than 85%;
- milk and dairy products (in terms of milk) – not less than 90%;
- fish products – not less than 80%;
- potato – not less than 95%;
- salt – not less than 85%.

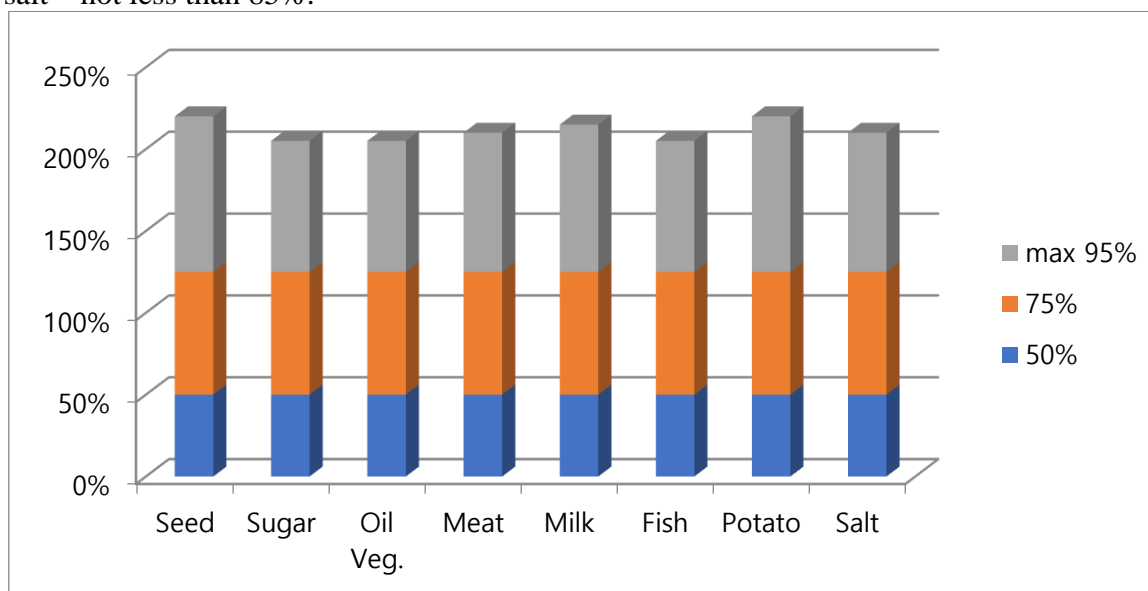


Figure 1. Criteria for ensuring food security for production.

At the same time, it is impossible to say definitely that the state agricultural policy should be protectionist in nature and regulated fully by the state. It is obvious that the agricultural policy should be protectionist in those cases when the state defends the interests of national producers on the world market.

The practice of protectionism shows that the greatest effect is achieved at:

- 1) implementation of the same type of import and export duties, and other forms of withdrawal of funds by the fiscal authorities in respect of all business entities, without any benefits;
- 2) the increase in the amount of duties and subsidies, simultaneously with an increase in the level of processing, as well as with the complete abolition of duties on imported raw materials;
- 3) total imposition of import duties on all goods and products;
- 4) preferential customs taxation of imported goods that are impossible to produce (for example, bananas in northern Europe) [16, 18].

At the same time, there are a number of problems related to tariffs. For example, the tariff rate may be high, and in this case, imported products will not enter the market, or will not stimulate exports. In this regard, there is a problem of finding optimal rates that ensure both economic growth and the growth of the well-being of citizens. Currently, the weighted average rate level is 11%. In developed countries, from the late 1940s to the present, the level of import customs tariffs has decreased from 50% to 3%. Perhaps, with the work within the framework

of the WTO legal framework, in the future, the customs rates, as well as in developed countries, will decrease [16].

It is possible that in practice, protectionist economic policies in an idealistic and theoretical form should not exist, as this contributes to the reduction of competition and the development of production. In parallel with the protectionist policy, a stimulating tax policy should be implemented that motivates the innovative development of all sectors of the economy, without exception, and contributes to GDP growth, but not to the detriment of the purchasing power of the population. In this regard, both protectionist and tax policies should be flexible and interact constantly not only in the process of forming budgets at all levels, but also, most importantly, in assessing the effectiveness of the use of taxes and state support. This is partly necessary to assess the impact of government support.

Over the past decades, the role of customs tariffs has significantly weakened. This is largely due to the ongoing processes of globalization of the world economy, where the Russian economy is also being integrated. It should be noted that due to the increased use of non-tariff restrictions, the degree of state influence on world markets has increased. As it is known from practice, the system of non-tariff regulation works more effectively in developed countries. There is an expert opinion that in such countries more than 50 methods of non-tariff regulation are used, including the system of currency control, sanitary norms and rules, various interventions, etc. [19].

The implementation of the protectionist policy involves the use of customs-tariff and non-tariff restrictions, which is largely aimed at increasing exports of products and curbing imports. With the use of such restrictions, it is possible to artificially regulate the competitiveness of foreign goods in the national market and national goods in the foreign market.

If we evaluate the State Program as a whole, we can note four main points:

- first, the very fact of the adoption of this document, refers to agriculture as a priority sector of the economy;
- second, the adoption of the State Program defines the agricultural policy as stable and predictable, which provides guarantees for the agro-industrial complex and guarantees investors a high level of attractiveness;
- third, the federal law and the State Program accumulate measures of agricultural policy and determine the amount of state support;
- fourth, a comprehensive approach to the development of the State Program allows developing all areas of agribusiness and the social sphere.

However, the state agrarian policy of the country does not form fully a comprehensive economic strategy for innovative development of agriculture as a basis for improving the efficiency and profitability of agricultural production. This opinion was expressed by M. Ermakova [5].

The lack of formation of the agribusiness development strategy and its inconsistency with the WTO agreements – these problems are also inherent in the newly adopted State Program for 2013-2020.

At the same time, within the framework of Russia's functioning in the WTO, the state will continue to support the national economy. During this negotiation process, the planned state support in 2012 amounts to \$ 9 billion. This is almost 2 times more than it has been planned.

Russia in the framework of the WTO has made commitments to bind the volume of state support measures at the level of up to \$ 9 billion. In the period up to 2013 (1.5 times more than planned for 2012 - 5.6 billion dollars, or 170 billion dollars) and its gradual reduction to 4.4 billion dollars by the beginning of 2018: in 2012-2013, the volume of state support - 9 billion dollars; in 2014 - 8.1 billion dollars; in 2015 - 7.2 billion dollars; in 2016 - 6.3 billion dollars; in 2017 - 5.4 billion dollars; in 2018 - 4.4 billion dollars [10].

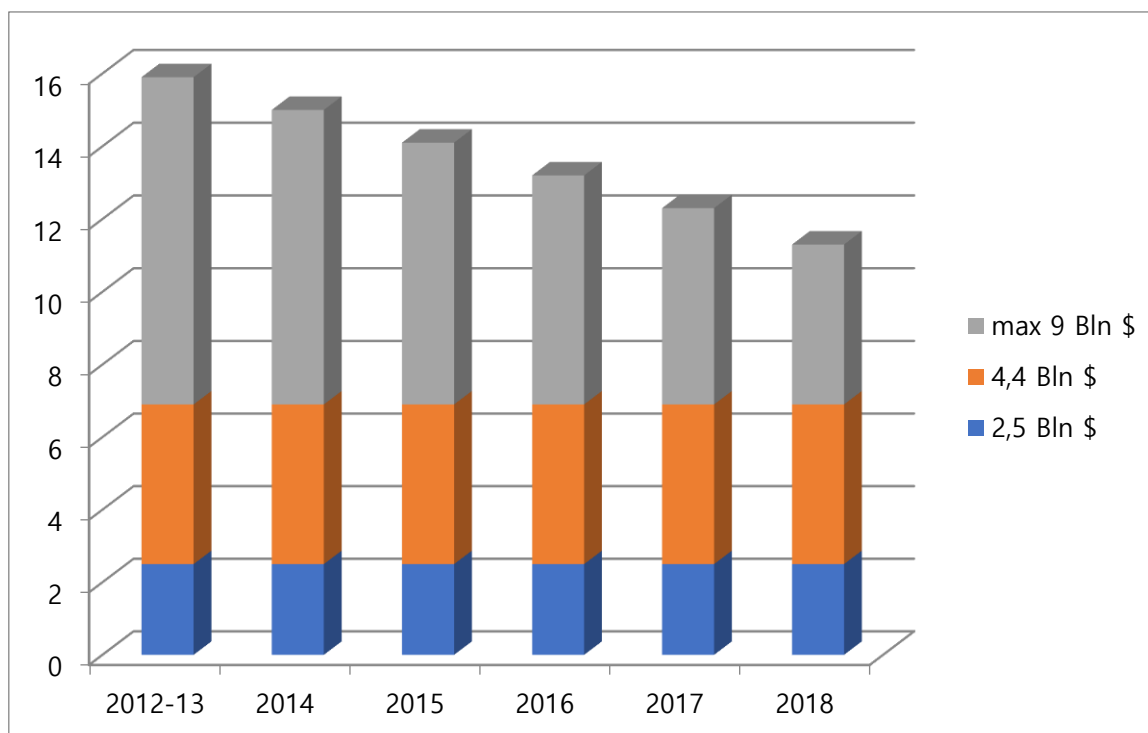


Figure 2. The volume of Russia state support measures in the framework of the WTO in the period up to 2013.

It should also be noted that the WTO rules do not limit state allocations for the development of transport and social infrastructure in rural areas, the creation of new enterprises, subsidizing the education and training system.

Particular attention should be paid to the development of infrastructure and transport. This is due to the fact that a significant part of the costs falls on logistics organizations, which contributes to the rise in price of almost all types of products. And if the state promptly switches part of the state support for direct subsidies to the development of transport infrastructure and logistics, this can become a real economic support.

The course taken by the Government of the Russian Federation for innovative development is certainly correct, but the resource provision of such a course does not meet the stated goals and objectives. As a rule, the idea generators are young scientists who are currently insufficiently supported within the framework of the implemented state programs. The current personnel policy does not contribute to the emergence of innovations in agro-industrial

production. The main reason here is low wages. Sometimes a young scientist who has defended a PhD or doctoral dissertation receives several times less salary than his fellow student working in agricultural production or another branch of the economy.

The current federal support for production and science in the framework of Government Resolution No. 218 requires the implementation of a number of incompatible conditions, the implementation of a complex financial scheme. In practice, it seems that the measures to support innovation are declared by theorists who have no relation to scientific activity, who do not understand its specifics in various branches of knowledge. Meanwhile, it is the support for the creation of laboratories, conducting research in various fields of knowledge, and supporting the initiatives of young scientists that is the platform for successful innovative development. And in this regard, indirect measures of state support should be an increase in the funding of scientific research in all branches of knowledge.

According to a number of economists, including Yu.V. Kulik, N.I. Oxanich [6], one of the most effective and at the same time market-oriented areas of state support is considered to be the reimbursement of agricultural producers and agricultural organizations of part of the cost of paying interest on loans and borrowings. It is no accident that the subprogram for achieving the financial sustainability of agriculture accounts for 56% of the total budget support provided by the state program.

However, subsidizing interest rates on loans within the framework of Russia's functioning in the WTO is a prohibited measure. In particular: "... the prohibited import-substituting subsidy is the preferential lending of individual agricultural producers for the purchase of domestic agricultural raw materials for the primary and industrial processing of livestock products, for the purchase of dry and concentrated milk provided for by the event "State support for lending to the livestock sub-sector" of the livestock sub-program"[7].

At the same time, the authors do not evaluate the effectiveness of state support; do not compare it with the standards adopted in developed countries. Of course, state support for the agro-industrial complex is a priority task for the implementation of the indicators of the State Program and the Food Security Doctrine, but the measures implemented should be as effective as possible, and therefore be characterized by a high return on budget funds.

The most important factor in increasing the investment attractiveness of the industry and the competitiveness of agricultural products, equalizing the economic conditions for the functioning of domestic and foreign producers is rightly recognized as state support for rural areas, improving its quality and optimizing mechanisms. The real confirmation of the approval was the implementation of the priority national project "Development of the agro-industrial complex", which allowed to activate the investment processes and increase the business activity of all modes of the rural economy.

An absolute increase in the volume of state support for agriculture will significantly change the investment attractiveness of the industry and stimulate the attraction of private investment. This opinion was reached by a group of authors consisting of I. Dzagoev, Z. Gasiev. [4].

On the other hand, the state needs to choose either one of the existing models of state support - European or American, or create its own model of state support and regulation of the agro-industrial complex, based not only on international law and the Doctrine of Food Security,

but also real sources of financial resources to finance the activities of the State Program, resources at the disposal of regions and economic entities. It is also important to take into account the territorial division of labor, specialization and concentration of agricultural production. A systematic approach based on the above components should determine the directions of development of the agro-industrial complex and measures for state support, not taking into account the resources allocated by the state, but taking into account the available resources and “launch pads” in the regions. Improving the standard of living of the population, the transition of the agro-industrial complex to an innovative path of development, the motivation of rural labor, increasing the efficiency and competitiveness of the agricultural sector in the national and global markets, the active integration of Russia into the world system are the main strategic tasks facing the state. The implementation of these tasks is impossible without state support - this is a necessary condition for effective state regulation of the agro-industrial complex [12, 13].

One cannot but agree with the above opinions of the authors that state support and regulation are one of the main components of the active development of the agro-industrial complex and food security of Russia. At the same time, based on the above material, it seems to us that state support and state regulation are different in their essence concepts.

As it is known, in its essence state support implies the implementation of a set of measures related to the use of funds from the federal and regional budgets on the terms defined by the legislation of the Russian Federation. The very regulatory mechanism of state support depends largely on the formation of the budget, or rather its capacity for state support of agriculture, while the category of state regulation does not involve the direct allocation of funds from the budgets of all levels to support the agro-industrial complex. For example, the category of “customs-tariff regulation” has already formed empirically, which implies the introduction of customs duties, both export and import, regulating the movement of certain types of goods. The measures listed above are not inherently expenditures of the state; they are organizational actions of the state for regulation of export-import operations. At the same time methods of the state regulation have dualistic character.

On the one hand, it is the establishment of the amount of duty, and then its withdrawal to the budget, and on the other hand, the regulation of commodity and money flows. We believe that a similar situation occurs in relation to tax policy, as well as other methods and mechanisms of state regulation. Based on the above, the categories of “state support” and “state regulation” are significantly different from each other:

- instruments and mechanisms for their implementation;
- funding sources;
- targeting of funds;
- relation to the sources of capital financing;
- target performance indicators (Table 1).

Conclusion

In the course of the study we identified 6 main classification attributes by which we can distinguish the above categories. The selected 6 attributes are evaluated between each other and on this basis the most significant differences between the categories “State support” and “State regulation” are formulated. In connection with the evaluation we can say that the

category “State support” should be understood as any type of monetary support (in the form of subsidies) to organizations of agro-industrial complex at the expense of federal and regional budgets provided on conditions of co-financing and implemented through any state program.

Table 5 Structure of the categories “state support” and “state regulation”.

Classification features	State support	State regulation
Implementation tools	Direct or indirect support of agricultural organizations, social development of territories at the expense of the federal and regional budget under co-financing conditions, attraction of extra budgetary funding sources	A set of regulatory measures aimed at restraining imports, optimizing taxation, creating conditions for the effective functioning of organizations outside the framework of budget financing.
Implementation mechanisms	Through the implementation of the State Program and relevant regional programs, agreements within the framework of the WTO	In accordance with the tax and customs legislation of the Russian Federation, agreements within the framework of the WTO
Funding sources	At the expense of the federal and regional budgets. Extra budgetary sources of financing	There is no funding, or it is minimal.
Targeting of funds	They are received at the disposal of agricultural producers and other participants of the State Program	Financial resources from the implementation of regulatory measures go to the federal and regional budgets.
Relation to the sources of capital financing	Increase sources of funding for fixed and working capital	At taxation, the sources of financing of fixed and working capital are reduced
Performance targets and indicators	Provided with the State Program	No

The category of “State regulation” should be understood as a set of regulatory measures, not expressed in monetary terms, aimed at respecting the interests of both economic entities of the Russian Federation and the Russian Federation as a whole. Such measures are widespread in developed countries. Such measures include customs and tariff regulation, creating favorable conditions for doing business through the adoption of regulatory legal acts, providing guarantees for investors, etc.

References

- Russian Federation. Ministry of Finance. On approval of the Accounting Regulations “Accounting for State Aid” (AR 13/2000): Order of the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation No. 92n of 16.10.2000. (as amended on 18.09.2006, No. 115n).
- Arakelyan S. Implementation of national projects to support small business in rural areas. Agro-industrial complex: economy, management. 2008. №11. p. 64-65.

- Vernigor N.F. The system of state support of agricultural production (case study - the example of the Altai territory). *Modern Economy Success*. 2017. № 6. P. 7 – 10.
- Dzagoeva I., Gasieva Z. Implementation of the priority national project “Development of the agro-industrial complex” and the Program for the Development of Agriculture in the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania. *Agro-industrial complex: economy, management*. 2008. №12. p. 54-57.
- Ermakova M. Assessment of financial reliability. On annoying inaccuracies and the possibility of their elimination. *Banks and the business world*. 2008. №3. p. 4-7.
- Kulik Yu.V., Oxanich N.I. Problems of financial improvement of agricultural organizations. *Economy of agricultural and processing enterprises*. 2008. №5. p. 48-52.
- Naumkin A.V. Improving the forms and methods of state support for the development of agriculture in the context of Russia’s accession to the WTO. *The economy of agricultural and processing enterprises*. 2012. №3. p. 33-37.
- Putin V. To increase the efficiency of the state agrarian policy. *Agro-industrial complex: economy, management*. 2008. №7. p. 2-5.
- Putin V.V. The state will continue to support agriculture. *Economy of agricultural and processing enterprises*. 2012. №4. p.4-13.
- Schwarzkopf N.V. Improving the use of data mining technology as a way of reducing credit risk. *Russian Economic Bulletin*. 2018. Vol. 1. Issue 1. P. 10 – 18.
- Moiseenko Zh.N. State support of small forms of management in agro-industrial complex: state and development trends. *Modern Economy Success*. 2017. No. 4. P. 12-17.
- Narkevich L.V. Analysis of industrial capacity and break-even production in the crisis management system. *Russian Economic Bulletin*. 2018. Vol. 1. Issue 3. P. 28 – 41.
- Ashmarov I.A. Some approaches to the study of the USSR’ military economy in the soviet and russian national historiography. *Historical Bulletin*. 2018. Vol. 1. Issue 2. P. 19 – 31.
- Kobets E.A. The implementation of import substitution programme in the agricultural sector. *Modern Scientist*. 2017. № 2. P. 71 – 74.
- Minakova I.V. Social and economic condition of Russia and possibility of its transition to innovative hi-tech model. *Modern Economy Success*. 2017. № 6. P. 24-27.
- Krueger A. The Political Economy of the Rent-seeking Society. *American Economic Review*. 1974. Vol. 64. P. 291 – 303.
- Gnatyuk S.N., Pekert N.A. Education as a factor of sustainable development of agriculture. *Russian Economic Bulletin*. 2018. Vol. 1. Issue 3. P. 18 – 27.
- Olkhovskiy V.V. Assessment of the impact of macroeconomic and demographic factors on the Russian model of employment. *Modern Economy Success*. 2018. № 2. P. 31 – 37.
- Narkevich, L.V., Narkevich, E.A. Financial condition analysis in the crisis management system. *Russian Economic Bulletin*. 2018. Vol. 1. Issue 4. P. 10 – 24.
- www.scribd.com/doc/14704415/President-Obamas-Speech-at-the-National-Academy-of-Science-April-27-2009-TranscriptVideo.