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Spis treści  
Оглавление  
Contents

Gennadii G o l u b , Taras P o h r e b s k y i , Sergiy G o l u b , Alla P o t a p o v a : Socio-geographical characteristics of rural settlement of the Volyn Region ( <i>Cechy społeczno-geo- graficzne osadnictwa wiejskiego w obwodzie wołyńskim; Общественно-географические особенности сельского расселения Волынской области</i> ).....	5
Taras P o h r e b s k y i , Gennadii G o l u b , Sergiy G o l u b , Alla P o t a p o v a : The current state, problems and prospects for the development of organic agriculture in Ukraine ( <i>Stan obecny, problemy i perspektywy rozwoju rolnictwa ekologicznego na Ukrainie; Современное со- стояние, проблемы и перспективы развития органического сельского хозяйства в Украине</i> ).....	13
Tadeusz S z c z y p e k , Oimahmad R a h m o n o v : Przyczynek do badań mechanicz- nych cech piasków oraz wieku pokrywy eolicznej Pustyni Włędowskiej ( <i>Вклад в изучение механи- ческих свойств песков и возраста эолового покрова Блендовской пустыни, южная Польша; A contri- bution to the study of the mechanical properties of sands and the age of the aeolian cover of the Bledow De- sert, southern Poland</i> ).....	21

## Taras Pohrebskyi, Gennadii Golub, Sergiy Golub, Alla Potapova

Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University, The Department of Economic and Social Geography, Potapova str. 9, 43021 Lutsk, Ukraine; e-mail: pogrebskyi.taras@vnu.edu.ua ORCID 0000-0002-2290-134X; golub.gennadiy@vnu.edu.ua ORCID 0000-0003-3548-6998; golub.sergiy@vnu.edu.ua ORCID 0000-0001-6204-2570; potapova.alla@vnu.edu.ua ORCID 0000-0002-4287-2486

# The current state, problems and prospects for the development of organic agriculture in Ukraine

Pogribskij T., Golub G., Golub S., Potapowa A. **Stan obecny, problemy i perspektywy rozwoju rolnictwa ekologicznego na Ukrainie.** Artykuł poświęcony jest rozwojowi rolnictwa ekologicznego na Ukrainie. Przedstawiono czynniki rozwoju rolnictwa ekologicznego. Uwzględniono także specyfikę obecnego stanu tego typu rolnictwa na Ukrainie, wyjaśniono przestrzenne różnice w jego rozwoju. Zidentyfikowano problemy rolnictwa ekologicznego i podzielono je na grupy. Na podstawie analizy SWOT zbadano zewnętrzne i wewnętrzne czynniki tego rolnictwa na Ukrainie w kontekście zrównoważonego rozwoju obszarów wiejskich. Określono przesłanki i perspektywy rozwoju rolnictwa ekologicznego w tym państwie.

Погребський Т., Голуб Г., Голуб С., Потапова А. **Современное состояние, проблемы и перспективы развития органического сельского хозяйства в Украине.** Стаття присвячена розвитку органічного сільського господарства в Україні. Автори дають характеристику факторів розвитку органічного сільського господарства. В дослідженні розглянуто особливості сучасного стану органічного сільського господарства в Україні. Виявлені просторові відмінності розвитку органічного сільського господарства в Україні. Виявлені та розділені на групи проблеми в органічному сільському господарстві. Досліджені зовнішні та внутрішні фактори органічного сільського господарства в Україні в контексті збалансованого розвитку сільських територій на основі проведеного SWOT-аналізу. Визначені передумови та перспективи розвитку органічного сільського господарства в Україні.

Погребський Т., Голуб Г., Голуб С., Потапова А. **Сучасний стан, проблеми та перспективи розвитку органічного сільського господарства в Україні.** Стаття присвячена розвитку органічного сільського господарства в Україні. Автори дають характеристику чинникам розвитку органічного сільського господарства. В дослідженні також розглянуто особливості сучасного стану органічного сільського господарства в Україні. З'ясовано просторові відмінності розвитку органічного сільського господарства в Україні. Виявлено та розділено на групи проблеми у органічному сільському господарстві. Досліджено зовнішні та внутрішні фактори органічного сільського господарства в Україні в контексті збалансованого розвитку сільських територій на основі проведеного SWOT-аналізу. Визначено передумови та перспективи розвитку органічного сільського господарства в Україні.

**Keywords:** organic agriculture, development of rural areas, SWOT analysis, Ukraine

**Słowa kluczowe:** rolnictwo ekologiczne, rozwój obszarów wiejskich, analiza SWOT, Ukraina

**Ключевые слова:** органическое сельское хозяйство, развитие сельских территорий, SWOT-анализ, Украина

**Ключові слова:** органічне сільське господарство, розвиток сільських територій, SWOT-аналіз, Україна

## Abstract

The article is devoted to the development of organic agriculture in Ukraine. The authors describe the factors of development of organic agriculture. The study also considered the peculiarities of the current state of organic agriculture in Ukraine. Spatial differences in the development of organic agriculture in Ukraine have been clarified. Problems in organic agriculture are identified and divided into groups. External and internal factors of organic agriculture in Ukraine in the context of balanced development of rural areas were studied on the basis of the SWOT analysis. Prerequisites and prospects for the development of organic agriculture in Ukraine are determined.

## Introduction

Organic agriculture ensures a balanced state of ecosystems, which is a guarantee of sustainable development of the economic and social sphere of the entire society. During the entire life cycle of organic products, it is mandatory to comply with a number of requirements, which, in the end, contribute to the sustainable socio-economic development of agricultural production, providing for a balanced solution of socio-economic tasks, problems of preserving a favorable state of the environment and natural resource potential in order to satisfy public needs of contemporaries and future generations. The social benefits of organic production are the creation of additional jobs in rural areas and the emergence of new prospects for small and medium-sized farms, increasing the viability of rural communities, etc. Clarifying the state of development of organic agriculture in Ukraine is relevant, as it is defined as an agrarian country and has significant potential in the production and consumption of organic food products.

The problems and prospects of the development of organic agricultural production are investigated by foreign scientists: M. Gzybovska, M. Grunda, H. Villiers, M. Okada, J. Rodale, R. Steiner, and others, and Ukrainian scientists: V. Artysh, T. Zaichuk, N. Holovachenko,

T. Zinchuk and others (АРТИШ, 2011). O. Shkuratov, P. Stetsyshyn, V. Rekunenko, and V. Pindus were engaged in the analysis of the foundations of the development of organic production (ШКУРАТОВ, 2011; ШКУРАТОВ, ЧУДОВСЬКА, ВДОВИЧЕНКО, 2015), studying the international experience of using organic farming technologies in Ukraine: M. Kobets, O. Yatsenko, Yu. Zavad'ska (КАРУНСЬКИЙ, ВОЄЦЬКА, ГАРБАДЖИ, without date), clarifying the state of formation of demand for organic food products in Ukraine: O. Rudnytska, V. Chudovska, O. Shubrav'ska (ПАСХАВЕР, ШУБРАВСЬКА, МОЛДОВАН, 2009; ЧУДОВСЬКА, 2013), O. Shkuratov, V. Chudovska, and A. Vdovychenko dealt with the problems of the development of the market of organic agricultural products in the state, and trends in its efficiency (ШКУРАТОВ, 2011; ЧУДОВСЬКА, 2013; ШКУРАТОВ, ЧУДОВСЬКА, ВДОВИЧЕНКО, 2015), socio-geographic aspects of the development of organic agriculture in the country: Ya. Sosnytska (СОСНИЦЬКА, КАРПЮК, ШЕВЧУК, 2019). But many issues related to the development of organic agriculture and the market for organic products still require further research.

**The purpose of the article.** The purpose of the article is to characterize the current state, identify problems and prospects for the development of organic agriculture in Ukraine.

## Research methodology

In the process of researching the current state and development of organic agriculture in Ukraine, materials from the Department of Agrarian Policy and Agriculture of Ukraine, the Federation of the Organic Movement in Ukraine, the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (RIOA), the International Federation of Organic Agriculture, etc. were used. The methods used during the writing of the scientific article are systematic, ecological and geographical analysis and synthesis, modeling, comparison, analogy and statistical.

## Results of the research

Ukraine, having a significant potential for the production of organic agricultural products, its export, and consumption in the domestic market, has achieved certain results regarding the development of its own organic production. Thus, the area of certified agricultural land in Ukraine, used for the cultivation of various organic products, is already more than three hundred thousand hectares, and our state occupies an honorable twentieth place among the world leaders of the organic movement. The share of certified organic areas among the total volume of agricultural land in Ukraine is about 1.3% including the area of agricultural land with organic status – 370,110 ha, the area of agricultural land in the transition period – 52,189 ha. According to the structure of certified organic agricultural land, 76.4% is arable land, 21.3% – pastures, 1.8% – fallow and 0.5% – perennial plantations. The market of organic products in Ukraine is at the stage of formation. According to the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food, 504 operators operate on the organic market of Ukraine, including 304 agricultural producers (*Органічна карта України...*, without date). The total area of agricultural land with the status of organic and transition period is 381.2 thousand ha, while the share of organic land from the total area of agricultural land is 1%. At the same time, Ukraine ranks first in the Eastern European region in terms of certified area of organic arable land, specializing mainly in the production of grains, legumes and oil crops. This production has its own regional characteristics: most organic farms, which usually have a narrow specialization and are focused on the production of one or two types of agricultural products on a small scale – on several tens of hectares, concentrated in Odesa, Kyiv, Kherson, Poltava, Vinnytsia, Zakarpattia, Lviv, Ternopil and Zhytomyr regions. On the Ukrainian organic market, plant products prevail over livestock products in the ratio of 73 to 27%.

The potential of Ukraine in the cultivation of organic products is significant, but the deve-

lopment of organic land use is limited by many factors. This production process is characterized by high costs, which are more expensive than traditional, long-term methods of transition to organic agriculture, which usually last from two to five years. Problems in organic agriculture are also related to the lack of innovative activities in agriculture, underdevelopment market of organic products, low level of state support for organic agriculture. The study of obstacles to the wide implementation of organic farming methods allows us to divide them into three large groups: social-psychological, institutional-legal, and financial-economic. The socio-psychological problems associated with the introduction of organic farming methods in Ukraine are primarily: low level of awareness of the population and producers about organic farming (understanding of the main characteristics and advantages of these methods, as well as possible problems during the implementation process). Another difficult problem is the low environmental awareness of the population, primarily rural, and the low technological efficiency of agricultural production at all levels, from the fields of individual farmers to large organizations engaged in agriculture. This type of problem includes the lack of appropriate training in the theory and practice of organic farming in educational institutions of various accreditation levels. In addition to insufficient education and environmental awareness, there is a reluctance to overcome long-standing stereotypes related to the intensification of agriculture, as well as a low level of innovative activity on the part of managers and the state. In addition, rural areas have a difficult demographic situation and a low standard of living for residents. In the context of necessity, people distrust everything new and do not hesitate to risk existing assets.

The institutional and legal problems associated with the introduction of organic farming in Ukraine are as follows: the absence of an appropriate legislative and regulatory framework that meets the requirements of international law, an insufficient national system of certifica-

tion and supervision of organic farms and their products. Among other problems related to land reform, there is the need to preserve large farms, the prohibition of combining field and soil-protective crop rotation or the destruction of the latter – all of this is related to the implementation of land reform. The process of soldering land should be carried out on areas that are already structured by contour lines, this is necessary because it is necessary to follow the description of the project. The financial and economic problems associated with the implementation of organic farming are as follows: lack of market research for organic products, potential changes in market conditions for organic products during the transition period, and lack of support from the state during the conversion period or the provision of benefits or subsidies for the production of organic products. The growth of the state market for organic products could be faster if it were not for the current barrier, which is the relatively high cost of organic products and services. Prices for organic produce are usually higher than conventional produce. For example, according to European standards, the percentage of markup on organic products and goods is reasonably 20–30%, but in Ukraine this indicator sometimes exceeds 50%. For example, if you compare the price of organic groceries with regular groceries, the price ratio will be several times higher: bread – 3–6 times; 10 times more sugar; 2–3 times more milk; eggs, 4–5 times more; chicken, 3 times higher; 7–12 times more potatoes; 2–4 times more apples; and honey is 2 times higher. First of all, this is explained by the significant costs associated with the production process. Production costs in organic agriculture are significantly higher than in conventional agriculture. For example, the procedure for raising animals and poultry using organic methods has a high cost, and the organic fodder base is expensive. In addition, organic products are usually produced at a higher cost per unit because the product components are more expensive and the existing handling and storage regulations result in higher overall production costs

(*Органік в Україні*, 2010). The costs of organic products have increased due to their high prices, this is also due to the limited volume of production and the short distance that organic products travel. In addition, there are labor costs, administrative costs, the inspection and certification process, and the price premium associated with organic products. However, the high cost of organic products is compensated by their special quality and exceptional benefits, as a result of which the demand for products is growing, and the world movement towards naturalness is progressing. Many people see it as a lifestyle philosophy. The FAO assessment of the future development of agriculture in the world is based on the concept of organic agriculture, which is characterized by a careful approach to nature, the farmer and the consumer (*Можливості державної підтримки...*, without date).

Active promotion of organic production methods in Ukraine requires the active participation of agricultural producers and their associations, authorities and state institutions, private companies and certification institutions, consumer organizations, scientific and educational institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations, both environmental and, dealing with issues of development, consulting services and rural development. In the near future, it is necessary to develop the following directions regarding the production and distribution of organic agricultural products: to popularize organic farming, to increase the environmental awareness of Ukrainian farmers by highlighting its advantages in the mass media, to hold seminars and conferences on the topic of organic farming, to create associations and unions of farmers engaged in the cultivation of organic products, study the requirements of international standards regarding the certification of organic farms and their products. Informatization in a broad sense is crucial for the development of agricultural production, as it is the basis of sustainable agriculture. The responsibility for creating a comprehensive information system dedicated to agro-industry is immediate. Informa-

tion technologies, which are developing at an alarming pace, allow making long-term decisions that are based on information about the processes taking place both in regional and global product markets. In addition, it is necessary to be able to make changes in agricultural technology, based on the current state of crops and weather conditions during the growing season. This information can be obtained using satellite images of agricultural landscapes and analyzed using a geographic information system (GIS) (*Органічне без меж*, without date). Since the costs of producing organic products and raw materials are higher than the costs of traditional agriculture, it is important to increase state support for the period of transition to organic agriculture, first of all, it should concern the financing of technical costs for the repair of agricultural enterprises and farms. In addition, the typical budget of expenses related to the payment of preferential subsidies should be included in the state budget for the period of development of organic agriculture. To increase the level of knowledge of small and medium-sized commercial farmers in Ukraine, it is advisable to strengthen the activities of advisory services in certain regions of the country. As a result, in order to activate the export potential and solve environmental problems of Ukrainian agriculture, it is recommended that the state support farms during the transition period and in the process of certification for compliance with organic production, and create infrastructure for the market of organic products. However, the evolution of the legislative framework for organic production has led to an increase in the number of investors interested in this field, increased information available to consumers, and the development of organic production has led to an increase in the number of consumers who demand high-quality food products. This will positively affect the preservation of the environment, the restoration of soil and biodiversity, and the improvement of the quality of life in rural communities.

In Ukraine, the implementation of organic agriculture is particularly relevant, as it contri-

butes to the restoration of soil fertility and the preservation of the environment, the development of rural areas and the improvement of the standard of living of their inhabitants, which are the advantages of the agrarian profession. the need to improve Ukraine's reputation as a producer and exporter of high-quality, healthy organic products and the goal of ensuring Ukraine's food security. The contradictions surrounding the improvement of the conditions of organic agriculture, the attraction of investments in this area and the entry into new global food markets are still not resolved (*Моніторинг земельних відносин...*, 2018). As a result, in order to activate the export potential and solve the environmental problems of Ukrainian agriculture, it is necessary to develop a legislative framework, ensure state support for farms in the transition period and in the process of certification for compliance with organic production, and a market infrastructure must be created. Organic production makes it possible to realize the concept of sustainable development of the agricultural sector while maintaining a balanced socio-economic and natural resource composition. Its principles are dedicated to the preservation and reproduction of the natural environment and its biodiversity, maintaining the ecological balance of the environment, saving resources and reducing the intensity of agricultural production, increasing the volume of environmentally friendly products of high quality and improving health. people. The study of external and internal factors based on the conducted SWOT analysis led to the identification of several problems in the development of organic agriculture in Ukraine, in particular, the lack of regulatory support and legal certainty regarding organic agriculture; lack of state financial support, lack of official certification regarding organic agriculture, lack of economic risk insurance regarding organic agriculture, lack of professional knowledge regarding the implementation of organic agriculture, lack of investment resources and a complex procedure for certification of organic agriculture in accordance with current international standards,



primarily the standards of the European of the Union (table 1) (*Органічне без меж*, without date). The transition to an organic system of production is a significant step in the development of the agricultural economy of Ukraine and is necessary for the expansion of agricul-

tural production. The successful development of organic agriculture is possible through the creation of an effective economic and legal mechanism of development, which is implemented through the interaction of legal, economic and institutional components.

Table 1. SWOT – analysis of organic agriculture in Ukraine in the context of balanced development of rural areas

Tabela 1. Analiza SWOT rolnictwa ekologicznego na Ukrainie w kontekście zrównoważonego rozwoju obszarów wiejskich

Таблица 1. SWOT – анализ органического сельского хозяйства в Украине в контексте сбалансированного развития сельских территорий

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The growing role of ecological production in the world and the dynamic expansion of demand for its products.</li> <li>2. Resource conservation and reduction of energy intensity of agricultural production.</li> <li>3. Reduction of production costs.</li> <li>4. Significant potential for the development of the organic sector (the availability of an available network of ecological lands and the number of labor resources).</li> <li>5. Production of high-quality ecologically clean products, safe for human health, which contributes to the preservation of the nation.</li> <li>6. High export potential.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The organic sector is in its infancy.</li> <li>2. Absence of a state strategy and program for the development and support of organic agricultural production.</li> <li>3. Imperfect regulatory and legal support.</li> <li>4. Absence of a clear, state-approved organic production certification system.</li> <li>5. Low level of awareness of the population and producers regarding the opportunities and prospects for the development of organic production.</li> <li>6. Insufficient development of organic product sales markets.</li> <li>7. Special storage conditions for organic products.</li> <li>8. Insufficient level of market infrastructure development.</li> </ol>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of the internal market of organic products.</li> <li>2. Guaranteeing the quality and safety of agricultural products for the consumer.</li> <li>3. Increasing the competitiveness of product manufacturers on the domestic and foreign markets.</li> <li>4. Strengthening the export potential of the state.</li> <li>5. Preservation and reproduction of natural soil fertility.</li> <li>6. Minimizing the impact of agricultural production processes on the environment and preserving biological and landscape biodiversity.</li> <li>7. Ensuring ecological balance of the environment.</li> <li>8. Using the work of world leaders in the field of organic production, their experience in production and marketing activities.</li> <li>9. Concentration of activity not only on the production of organic products, but also on the production of processing products.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Economic and political instability in the state.</li> <li>2. Legislative non-regulation of the production of organic products.</li> <li>3. Lack of qualified quality control of organic products by the state.</li> <li>4. Floating prices for organic products.</li> <li>5. Absence of an effective risk insurance mechanism in agriculture.</li> <li>6. Development of inflationary processes and decrease in the purchasing power of the population.</li> <li>7. Increasing competition – the appearance of foreign producers on the domestic market, who will set low prices for organic products, which will force domestic producers to reduce their profits.</li> </ol>

The constructed matrix of SWOT analysis regarding the development of organic agriculture in Ukraine is the reason for the growing popularity of ecologically clean agriculture throughout the world. In addition, the dynamic growth of demand for organic products contributes to increasing the potential of domestic agriculture, saving resources and reducing energy consumption in agriculture. The effective interaction of these components is designed to increase the competitiveness of the producer in the organic food industry. In addition, the state should take on a role in creating an ideal environment for the development of organic agriculture. The economic subsystem of the mechanism includes economic instruments of influence on the competitiveness of agricultural companies through state supervision and the market mechanism (*Органічне виробництво в Україні...*, without date). The main purpose of the organizational subsystem is to promote the development of organic production by creating appropriate conditions for the internal economic behavior of the company, external factors and the market. The formal component of the mechanism is regulatory assistance to agricultural enterprises that produce organic products. The main tasks of creating and implementing an economic and organizational mechanism for increasing the efficiency of production of organic agricultural products are: increasing the natural fertility of soils; preservation of the environment; improving the quality of organic products produced in Ukraine; increase in the number of employed population; increasing the competitiveness of producers of organic products and attracting external financing.

Ukraine has all the prerequisites for the development of organic agriculture – powerful natural resources, favorable climate, high soil fertility, large areas of ecologically clean agricultural land, low level of use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides or additives. However, at the moment, the potential of Ukrainian producers of organic food products is not fully utilized.

## Conclusions and prospects of further research

Therefore, the potential of Ukraine in the cultivation of organic products is significant. With the improvement of the legislative framework for conducting organic production, the attraction of investments in this industry, the widespread informing of consumers and the development of organic production, the consumer market will be provided with high-quality food products, this will contribute to the preservation and improvement of the environment, the restoration of soils and biodiversity, and the improvement of the level of development of rural areas.

The strategic objectives of the effective development of organic agriculture in Ukraine are: improvement of the regulatory and legal framework; promoting the competitiveness of domestic organic products on the international and national markets; development of the system of state certification of organic products; ensuring clear state control over the quality of organic food; introduction of innovative technologies in organic agriculture and improvement of the infrastructure of the market of organic products.

In general, the development of organic agriculture will contribute to the improvement of the economic, social and ecological situation in Ukraine, the comprehensive development of rural areas and the improvement of the health of the country's population.

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