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DEVELOPMENT OF OFF-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RURAL ENVIRONMENT: TRENDS AND DIRECTIONS

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РАЗВИТИЕ НЕСЕЛЬСКОХОЗЯЙСТВЕННОЙ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ В СЕЛЬСКОЙ МЕСТНОСТИ: ТЕНДЕНЦИИ И НАПРАВЛЕНИЯ

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the development off-farm employment such as storage, processing and marketing of agricultural products, rural trade, agrotourism, folk crafts, domestic and socio-cultural services for the rural population, harvesting and processing of wild fruits and berries and etc. in the rural environment.

Аннотация. Статья посвящена развитию в сельской местности несельскохозяйственной деятельности, такой как хранение, переработка и сбыт сельскохозяйственной продукции, сельская торговля, агротуризм, народные ремесла, бытовые и социально-культурные услуги для сельского населения, сбор и переработка дикорастущих плодов и ягод и т. д.

Keywords: off-farm employment, agrotourism, rural residents, trade, population.

Ключевые слова: несельскохозяйственная деятельность, агротуризм, сельские жители, торговля, население.

One of the main problems of sustainable development of rural environment in world practice is the problem of labor surplus in agricultural production, which is aggravated with the growth of the productivity of this sector.

In Uzbekistan, agricultural market production provides only one third of jobs in rural environment. The surplus able-bodied population is being pushed into the sector of personal subsidiary plots, which produces competing agricultural products, but with lower productivity.

The solution to this problem is possible through a more dynamic development of off-farm employment in order to increase the employment of the rural population. There are several directions for the development of off-farm employment in rural environment. These are storage, processing and marketing of agricultural products, rural trade, tourism in rural environment, folk crafts and crafts, household and social and cultural services for the rural population, harvesting and processing of wild fruits and berries, medicinal plants and other non-wood raw materials, harvesting and processing of wood, production of building materials and others.

With the beginning of economic transformations, a rapid decline in agrarian employment began, especially in regions with worse climatic conditions for agriculture. Often this was due to the bankruptcy of unprofitable agricultural enterprises. For a part of the released labor the only source of existence was the personal land ‘tamarqo’. However, products manufactured in personal lands ‘tamarqo’ are in limited demand, and do not provide a substantial income. Therefore, the population in rural environment at the same time engages in off-farm employment using local natural resources. It is obvious that off-farm employment in rural environment have a modernizing effect on the lifestyle of the rural population, however, its most important indicators remain today significantly lower than in the city and are not sufficient to solve the problem of employment of the villagers. To alleviate the problem, it is necessary to develop off-farm employment using local resources. The basis for the development of off-farm employment should be the natural-territorial and social potentials of rural settlements [1]. To determine how favorable the conditions are for these purposes, first of all, it is necessary to carry out regionalization of territories, taking into account their functional features. This will not only reveal the natural and social potential, but also achieve an optimal interaction of economic structures with the natural complexes of the territories and ensure rational placement of types of off-farm employment, choose its specialization and development directions in order to increase employment of the rural population everywhere.

The transformation of rural employment in the direction of off-farm employment requires a variety of forms of training rural dwellers, increasing their skills.

In the system of preparing the population for off-farm employment labor adaptation schools organized at the cluster, on the basis of rural schools, libraries, information and counseling services in districts and settlements, may play an important role [2]. Here, villagers (schoolchildren, retirees, the unemployed, etc.) will be able to gain theoretical knowledge, acquire skills in organizing and implementing certain types of off-farm employment on a free basis. Training programs should have a pronounced practical orientation. Series of informative programs will be useful on local television and radio, special informational articles in newspapers.

The programs for the development of off-farm employment in rural environment should include organizational and economic mechanisms that provide the necessary conditions and incentives for the development of off-farm employment, especially in the logistics infrastructure, industries processing agricultural products, construction and production of building materials from local raw materials, wood harvesting and wood processing, agrotourism, shopping and consumer services, folk crafts and crafts, harvesting and processing of wild fruits and berries, medicinal plants and other natural raw materials.

There are several areas of development of off-farm employment in rural environment. These are storage, processing and marketing of agricultural products, rural trade, tourism in rural environment, folk crafts, domestic and socio-cultural services for the rural population, harvesting and processing of wild fruits and berries, medicinal plants and other non-raw materials, harvesting and processing wood, production of building materials and others [3].

One of the areas of off-farm employment is agrotourism. Agrotourism (rural tourism) can be viewed in a narrow and broad sense. In the first case, agrotourism should be understood as holding events (sports, recreational, cultural and entertainment) aimed at creating favorable social conditions in agriculture (primarily, increasing employment of the local population), increasing production efficiency (due to capital inflows) and, finally, ensuring an optimal competitive environment in the tourist market. In a broad sense, agrotourism may be the dominant industry in the region, and the road facilities and transport, food supply, trade, folk crafts and culture adapt technologically to the appropriate natural and recreational environment. This is one point of view.

The other involves an analogy between agrotourism and the ecological complex [4–6]. The only difference is that the ecological zone is considered as a base for the development of tourism, the purpose of which is to meet certain needs of the population and make a profit. Agrotourism includes:

- the expansion of the scope of activities of the population, including folk craft, off-farm employment (hunting, fishing, etc.);
- environmental protection;
- orientation of tourists to the consumption of environmental resources;
- preservation of the natural environment;
- maintaining the traditional lifestyle of the population in peripheral regions;
- care for the preservation of the local socio-cultural sphere.

For Uzbekistan, this is a new phenomenon, while all of Europe is experiencing an agrotourist boom. The beginning of agrotourism development in Europe was laid in the 1970s in order to stop the mass outflow of the population from the village to the city [7–9].

According to the estimates of experts of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the arrangement of a rural person in a city costs 20 times more than the creation of normal conditions for his life and work in a village [10–12]. At the same time, residents of megacities have a need to communicate with nature, clean air, natural silence. Therefore, agrotourism became widespread primarily in industrialized countries, where pristine landscapes are preserved on small land areas (in the USA by 4%, in Western Europe by 2–3%). Assessment of the scale of development of agrotourism has become possible only with the use of modern information technologies, the creation of electronic databases. For example, in Austria, agritourists made up 16% of the total number of rural tourists in the European Union, in Italy — 13%, in France — 15%, and Spain — 8%. Recently, this type of tourism has become popular in Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic countries and Russia.

Agrotourism in France is represented by the National Organization of Holiday Houses and Green Tourism (Maison des Gites de France et du Tourisme Vert). This organization provides recreation certified to the highest national standards of service. Every year the country is visited by 7 million tourists who prefer to rest in the rural environment. In France, there are various organizational forms of agrotourism:

- seaside farmsteads;
- horse farms;
- wine farmsteads;
- ski chalets;
- Panda hotels and rural cottages.

In France, a children’s holiday program has been developed in the rural environment during school holidays. Children aged 3 to 13 years are placed in families, get acquainted with the rural farmstead (lambs, piglets, rabbits), are engaged in active games in nature with their rural peers, go hiking.

In Spain, more than 5,000 options for recreation in the rural environment. At the same time, almost 27,000 agrotourists can be accommodated in the country. There is a categorization of 750 rural hotels according to the INNS OF SPAIN system, according to which they are assigned a category of accommodation from 1 to 4 tulips. Some rural hotels operate in reconstructed monasteries, estates, historic castles, and Andalusian inns. A large number of hotels opened in the Canary and Balearic Islands. The estimated cost of living in the agrotourism sector is 25–120 dollars. US per person per night. Agrotourism specialization of Italy is wine and gastronomic

tourism. Each province is famous for its grapes and wines. The owners of the agricultural hotels offer guests whole wine cellars, as well as cheeses, meat products, freshly squeezed olive oil, asparagus and handmade noodles with white mushrooms.

A characteristic feature of the development of agrotourism in Germany is support at all levels (federal, land). At the same time, it turns out to be in the form of direct financing for entrepreneurs engaged in the industry (for example, from the Federal Land Support Program for Small and Medium Enterprises). Indirectly agrotourism support various programs for the development of rural environment and agriculture, economic and communal infrastructures. The programs are implemented by the ministries of economy and labor, protection of the rights of consumers of food, agriculture, forests and fish farming. For example, in the framework of the “Renovation of villages” program, local authorities and the population have the opportunity to apply for funding for the restoration of the appearance of villages, roads, and farms.

Polish legislation clearly defines the basic concepts and principles of agrotourism, among other types of tourism services and entrepreneurial activities in rural environment. Relationship with the state in organizing agrotourism is minimal. Those who wish to engage in them are only registered with local authorities (without licensing). The farms do not pay taxes if they provide guests with no more than 5 rooms. Prices for services are regulated by the market. Thus, international practice shows that the agrotourism sector is very diverse, each country has its own specifics and specific agrotourism products.

For the full development of agrotourism requires a detailed state program, involving full support, investment and local initiative. The interest of regional travel agencies is important in the proposal this type of tourism. Professional managers in specific villages and villages are necessary to develop appropriate programs, to ensure the conditions for receiving tourists. In general, it can be noted that Uzbekistan, with its diversity of natural, ethnographic, historical and cultural landscapes, has a serious potential for the development of agrotourism.

All these off-farm employment will make it possible to more widely use the existing potentialities of rural dwellers, find jobs for them by profile and interests, improve their financial situation, reduce social pathology indicators and raise the standard of living of the population in rural environment as a whole.

The priority direction of diversification of the rural economy for all districts of the region should be household and socio-cultural services for the population. The most demanded types of activities include:

- preschool and children's additional education;
- water supply;
- removal of solid household waste;
- transport links;
- organization of leisure and recreation;
- social services for people with disabilities;
- organization of retail trade in small villages and villages, etc.

The paramount importance of this direction is due to the fact that it will help attract young people to the rural environment, develop agrotourism, increase entrepreneurial activity and, ultimately, increase the sustainability of rural environment.

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