



REVISTA INCLUSIONES

TRABAJO EN EQUIPO SIN FRONTERAS

Revista de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales

Volumen 7 . Número Especial

Octubre / Diciembre

2020

ISSN 0719-4706

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**FOOD SUPPLY OF THE POPULATION IN THE CONDITIONS
OF THE GLOBAL RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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Fecha de Recepción: 26 de mayo de 2020 – **Fecha Revisión:** 10 de junio de 2020

Fecha de Aceptación: 22 de septiembre 2020 – **Fecha de Publicación:** 01 de octubre de 2020

Abstract

Amid the global fight against the pandemic and economic instability, extreme factors come to affect the life and health of people, which pose a serious threat for the population in Russia and abroad. The paper addresses the specifics of the implemented measures to safeguard food security in Russia amid the global fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The author believes that the coronavirus will switch the focus of most countries inwards and keep it within their borders rather than abroad, at least for several years. Accordingly, many countries, including Russia, risk being dragged into a looming food crisis, unless measures are taken to support food supply chains between countries; to ensure healthcare and medicine provision and social protection of the underprivileged; to mitigate the consequences of the pandemic for the food system as a whole. The recommendations are to revise the list of socially important food products and to curtail price growth for the respective items, as well as to stockpile strategic food reserves as prioritised for economic accessibility for the population. All these and other measures should lay the foundation of sustainable demographic development aligned with public health policies aimed at the native Russian population. The conducted analysis specifically involved qualitative and quantitative methodological studies based on the comparative analysis of food supply performance amid the COVID-19 pandemic and economic instability. The present study provides references to foreign practices of implementing emergency measures to ensure social protection of the population. Proposals are drawn on how to safeguard food security in Russia.

Keywords

COVID-19 – Coronavirus – Measures – Population – Pandemic – Food security

Para Citar este Artículo:

Vartanova, Marina Lvovna. Food supply of the population in the conditions of the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Revista Inclusiones Vol: 7 num Especial (2020): 122-134.

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PH. D. (C) MARINA LVOVNA VARTANOVA

Introduction

The global pandemic left many countries alone with their problems, which led to heightened fatality rates due to inadequate capabilities of the authorities and health services for coping with COVID-19. The spread of the coronavirus across the globe has raised, among other questions, the problem of food security in the affected countries, including Russia.

The issues of maintaining food security were also brought to the fore following the outbreak of sanctions wars and Russia's further course of import replacement. Such a combination of issues and problems invokes a "natural organisational link between economics and politics and the need to understand how such economic processes determine what happens in politics and respond to changes in it"¹. It is worth pointing out that this problem is significant not only in terms of production, but also in a social aspect, since agriculture as a sector originally began to develop in the living environment as a civilisational institute. The purpose of this paper is to summarise the practice of maintaining food security as a factor of sustainable demographic development in Russia and abroad and to analyse trends affecting businesses in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic instability. The following trends can be discussed here:

- spikes of demand for products with long shelf-life;
- problems with suppliers: increased risks of supply disruptions, underdeliveries, slides in demand.

Various sources were used for the study, including the media, own research on the subject and a review of previous research by other scholars; the existing approaches were expanded to integrate the toolkit of scenario planning².

Methods

The actual state, problems and outlook of food security and further development of external trade and external cooperation between countries have recently topped the agenda. The spread of the coronavirus has exposed the mechanisms of the battle of interpretations perpetuated by the leadership both within the country and in the global arena³. Currently, "food security in Russia is defined as a state of the economy, in which its food independence is maintained and the population is guaranteed access to foods and quality fresh water that meet physiological dietary needs"⁴. A principal assumption here is that the population and food supply in the situation of a pandemic represent uneven structures and many additional factors come into play that affect food security and public health.

¹ V. I. Staroverov y M. L. Vartanova, *Agrarnaya politika Rossii: sotsialnaya realnost*. Collection of papers: Molodezh. Semya. Obshchestvo. Collection of research papers. Under general editorship of T. K. Rostovskaia. (Moscow, 2019): 125-130.

² A. Iu. Tarasova, *Razvitie regionalnoi otrasli v APK*. *Ekonomika, predprinimatelstvo i pravo* [Journal of Economics, Entrepreneurship and Law] num 3 (2015).

³ COVID-19 obnazhaet mekhanizmy ideologicheskoi borby. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. March 25, 2020. Retrieved from: https://www.ng.ru/editorial/2020-03-25/2_7826_editorial.html

⁴ V. I. Staroverov y M. L. Vartanova, *Prodovolstvennaya bezopasnost Rossii vazhneishaya sostavlyayushchaya demograficheskoi politiki strany*. *Ekonomicheskie otnosheniya* Vol: 4 (2019): 2851-2862.

The main strategic document stating the "official position regarding the goals, objectives and major directions of the state socioeconomic policies in maintaining food security in the Russian Federation"⁵ is Presidential Decree of the Russian Federation No. 20 dated January 21, 2020, the Doctrine of Food Security.

National food security comprises two main elements: ensuring an adequate supply of own agricultural produce for the population and protection of the food market from food products that may present a health hazard⁶. The research findings described in this paper are based on cumulative practices and monitoring of macroeconomic indicators measuring the efficiency of food security efforts in Russia and abroad.

Russia is endowed with vast stretches of agricultural lands with millions of ha of crop areas, however, it considerably depends on vegetable supplies from China. Unfortunately, the state of the Russian economy does not provide sufficient support to ensure food security.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, a major priority is associated with the mechanism of ensuring food security in Russia:

- monitoring the measures to provide food and essentials supplies, antiviral and other medications to the population;

- analysis of the trends shaping national stock management; economic case behind measures to support socially vulnerable groups and implementation control during the pandemic.

Given that the global pandemic disrupts the access of the workforce to food production and supply chains, the following several factors can be identified as exerting influence on the food outlook:

1. Specifics and scale of the pandemic in some countries;
2. Dependence on agricultural imports;
3. Food supply disruption;
4. Price growth and economic instability;
5. Inaccessibility of essentials to socially vulnerable groups;
6. Quality of consumption.

The set objectives can only be achieved with government support set as a complex of measures ranging from the development of a favourable investment climate and financial support of agricultural producers to domestic market protection against price dumping on inflows of agricultural products from third countries.

⁵ Presidential Decree of the Russian Federation num 20, Doctrine of Food Security, January 21, 2020.

⁶ M. Vartanova; G. Osadchaya y T. Yudina, The national food security of the member states of the Eurasian economic union. Economic and Social Development Book of Proceedings (2018): 565-571.

Results

The announced quarantine and self-isolation measures in many countries including Russia set agricultural producers idle and force stockpiling. The following trends can be discussed here:

- a spike in demand for products with long shelf-life, such as canned food and cereals, as well as sanitisers and hygiene items;
- slides in demand for certain items or categories that customers neglected during the crisis;
- problems with suppliers: increased risks of supply disruptions, underdeliveries, slides in demand.

According to an FAO forecast, "restrictions on movements and 'basic aversion behaviour' by workers could impede farming. Food processors could also be prevented from processing the farm products"⁷. "We are already seeing, however, challenges in terms of the logistics involving the movement of food and the pandemic's impact on livestock sector due to reduced access to animal feed and slaughterhouses' diminished capacity (due to logistical constraints and labour shortages) similar to what happened in China"⁸.

After the cutoff of Chinese supplies of fruit and vegetables, prices in some of Russia's Far Eastern food retailers skyrocketed in a matter of days. As it turned out, "domestic agriculture only produced huge harvests on paper, while actual trade had lived off supplies from China"⁹. The only alternative in this situation was supplies from Turkey, Iran and Kazakhstan, but, as compared to China, food imports would have to travel enormous distances from there to reach Far Eastern markets. Consequently, the price of green onion and garlic immediately doubled to 400 rubles per kg; the price of tomatoes or bell pepper rose a bit less, by nearly 50%, and reached 550, 600 and 450 rubles respectively; exorbitant prices were charged for lemons, ginger, etc.

Price growth is only one problem, though. Even worse, grocery shelves were swept empty. The "rush demand"¹⁰ and unavailability of products in grocery shelves led to an urgent announcement that the ban was impracticable, and the border entry points reopened for trucks with Chinese products. Higher supplier risks emerge, and if most suppliers are foreign companies, prices are likely to increase, too, especially amid the strengthening foreign exchange rates and weakening ruble. Accordingly, Russian companies would be also forced to raise prices for local products, which would also hit demand. The most consistent trends observed today are associated with the impact of the coronavirus in many countries across the globe.

⁷ T. Lapin, Iz-za epidemii miru grozit prodovolstvennyi krizis. March 30, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.finversia.ru/publication/iz-za-epidemii-miru-grozit-prodovolstvennyi-krizis-72622>

⁸ T. Lapin, Koronavirus zastavlyaet selkhozproizvoditelei bezdeistvovat, strany delayut zapasy. March 31, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://zen.yandex.ru/media/id/5c34c677cffc6400aaed02c4/izza-epidemii-miru-grozit-prodovolstvennyi-krizis-5e8250125aa311731cd5b713>

⁹ I. Dmitriev, Epidemiya Koronavirusa obnazhila problem bezopasnosti Rossii. Nasha Versiya newspaper num 7, February 24, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://versia.ru/komu-vygoden-peredel-oblebnogo-rynka-sankt-peterburga>

¹⁰ Rossiyanе ustroili azhiotazh iz-za produktov. March 27, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://lenta.ru/news/2020/03/27/russia/>

Amid the current complicated epidemiological situation, countries most exposed to a rise in food price inflation include those with elevated imports as a share of domestic food supply, such as the Middle East, China, Japan and South Korea. Economies with weakened currencies, such as India and Indonesia, are also exposed, as most commodities are denominated in the dollar on the international market¹¹.

The Government of the Russian Federation monitors, on a systemic basis, the availability of both food and non-food items. The reason is, in many regions of the Russian Federation, people drove up demand, specifically for essential food products. The demand rose even higher than during the New Year season. E. g., according to the media, "even in the second week of March 2020, sales of buckwheat rose by 66% vs. the same period of last year. Thus, buckwheat became the most popular food staple among Russians during the coronavirus epidemic"¹². Sales of rice hovered up by 64%, sugar – by 56%, canned meat – by 54%. Beside buckwheat, Russians also bought other essentials, such as flour and sugar. Given such elevated demand, the Government of the Russian Federation took steps to accelerate and expand deliveries to retailers. "The Russian Union of Milling and Cereals Companies made a call to the Ministry of Agriculture to curb imbalances in wheat and flour pricing"¹³.

The aspiration to assure favourable conditions in this competition has pushed governments to pursue alliances of various kinds. The experience of the European Union suggests close economic integration can prove rather efficient and open the way to reap real economic success.

The existing problems within the EU result rather from politics, external pressures and influences of the archaic stereotypes of the cold war. If such factors and the resulting economic impact on the EU economy is cast aside and the focus turns on the mechanism of economic interaction, there are certainly practices imitating and adopt. However, there are other aspects to take into account in designing this kind of economic unions.

According to Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 762-p, dated March 27, 2020, "On Organisations Supplying Food and Essential Goods in the Period from March 30 until April 3, 2020, and Approval of the Recommended List of Essential Non-Food Products", the officially approved government list of socially important essential products includes several categories of products, such as "beef, pork, mutton (all types of meat, except boneless meat), chicken (except chicken leg quarters)"¹⁴. However, the list of socially important products should be adjusted for the current no-hunger reality and should be revised and made more straightforward and clearer. Currently, the list of socially important products in Russia, particularly, includes salt, sugar, meat, fish, butter, cereals (rice, buckwheat, etc.). The latter category has been particularly in-demand with consumers in the wake of reports of the spread of the coronavirus. According to Nielsen, "at the beginning of March, sales of cereals rose by 27.8%. X5 Retail Group (Pyaterochka,

¹¹ I. Dmitriev, *Epidemiya Koronavirusa obnazhila problem bezopasnosti Rossii...*

¹² Nazvany samye populyarnye u rossiyan produkty vo vremya epidemii koronavirusa. March 24, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://lenta.ru/news/2020/03/24/coronafood/>

¹³ Mukomoly prosyat Minselkhoz ustranit disbalans v formirovanii tsen na pshenitsu i muku. TASS Russian News Agency. March 26, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://tass.ru/ekonomika/8086891>

¹⁴ Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation num 762-p "On Organisations Supplying Food and Essential Goods in the Period from March 30 until April 3, 2020, and Approval of the Recommended List of Essential Non-Food Products". March 27, 2020.

Perekrestok, Karusel) already noted a 5% increase in cereal prices by suppliers"¹⁵. Also, experts recommend at least three servings of fruit per day and a proper focus on hydration levels¹⁶.

A challenging situation during the pandemic is also observed in those European countries that have to rely on seasonal workers. Following border closures in the EU, the agricultural sector of France faces a shortfall of about 200,000 workers. France's agricultural minister D. Guillaume suggested that unemployed French workers should lend a hand to local producers, and finance and economy minister Bruno Le Maire called for "economic patriotism"¹⁷, urging wholesalers to stock products from French producers. Notably, Poland also warns that "a third of national production may be at risk"¹⁶. Polish farmers report cases of suspended milk purchases by their partner cooperatives with adopted payment term extension up to three months for the already stocked milk as a result of the epidemiological situation. The price of milk began to decline after the beginning of the epidemic in China, and given that the price level in Poland is lower compared to the EU, the situation is particularly challenging¹⁸.

According to FAO, "price spikes are more likely for higher value products like meat and perishable commodities rather than for major staples which are still in adequate supply"¹⁹. Indeed, Fitch Solutions says "global food supply is relatively ample with the outlook for the 2020 to 2021 crop year positive thanks to mild weather conditions in key producing regions"¹⁸. Grain production in developed markets, usually done on large farms in low-density areas are less prone to contagion, but labour-intensive sectors such as plantations (palm oil) and manufacturing (meat processing) are more at risk of employee contagion and therefore of temporary lockdown measures.

Some countries could resort to trade restrictions or aggressive stockpiling in a bid to safeguard food security, which could quickly escalate prices of some agricultural crops. Among the major crop-producing countries that have implemented export restrictions are Vietnam, which has curbed rice exports, and Russia, which has halted processed grain exports. The Republic of Kazakhstan has also suspended exports of wheat flour, buckwheat, sugar, sunflower oil and some vegetables. Even though there are adequate supplies of staple food, notwithstanding manpower and logistical challenges, any restrictions by countries reserving strategic supplies would heighten risks. According to Fitch Solutions, "the potential implementation of food protectionism measures at the country level in an attempt to safeguard food security could also significantly disrupt the global food supply" [15], which could lead to an acceleration of food price inflation. The FAO Food Price Index (FFPI) averaged 94.2 points in July 2020, up 1.1 points (1.2%) from June. Rising for the

¹⁵ E. Litvinova, Eksport sotsialno znachimyykh produktov mogut ogranichit. Agroiinvestor journal (March 23, 2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.agroiinvestor.ru/analytics/news/33435-eksport-sotsialno-znachimyykh-produktov-mogut-ogranichit/>

¹⁶ I. Fedorov, Roskontrol dal rekomendatsii po pitaniyu na karantine. Federalnoe agentstvo novostei (FAN). March 31, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://riafan.ru/1263632-roskontrol-dal-rekomendatsii-po-pitaniyu-na-karantine>

¹⁷ S. Stremidlovski, Koronavirus proveryaet prodovolstvennyuyu bezopasnost Rossii i Polshi. March 25, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://iarex.ru/fd-all/74243.html>

¹⁸ I. Dmitriev, Epidemiya Koronavirusa obnazhila problem bezopasnosti Rossii...

¹⁹ E. Litvinova, Koronavirus stal prichinoy rezkogo rosta tsen na pshenitsu. Agroiinvestor journal (March 26, 2020). Retrieved from: https://www.agroiinvestor.ru/analytics/news/33453-koronavirus-stal-prichinoy-rezkogo-rosta-tsen-na-pshenitsu/?utm_campaign=recommendation&utm_medium=home&utm_source=agroiinvestor

second consecutive month, the July value is nearly 1 point (1%) above its level in the corresponding month last year. Price trends followed the June scenario when the prices of vegetable oils, dairy products and sugar grew amid the overall steady value of the cereal price index²⁰.

Year	Nominal index	Real index
1961	20.3	103.8
1962	20.0	100.6
1963	20.9	107.1
1964	21.9	110.6
1965	22.1	110.5
1966	22.3	107.5
1967	22.0	105.4
1968	20.9	101.0
1969	21.9	100.4
1970	23.2	100.1
1971	24.7	101.3
1972	26.4	99.3
1973	36.0	116.5
1974	51.7	137.4
1975	54.9	131.4
1976	47.6	112.5
1977	47.8	104.6
1978	52.9	99.6
1979	59.0	99.5
1980	65.0	99.7
1981	63.5	97.2
1982	55.8	88.1
1983	53.0	85.9
1984	55.4	91.8
1985	49.9	83.6
1986	48.7	71.0
1987	50.3	66.9
1988	56.7	70.8
1989	59.6	74.9
1990	63.0	76.2
1991	62.1	75.8
1992	63.9	76.6
1993	61.9	71.8
1994	66.9	80.0
1995	76.6	83.4
1996	77.6	86.1
1997	70.6	82.2

²⁰ World Food Situation. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. August 8, 2020. Retrieved from: <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/ru/>

1998	64.7	78.7
1999	55.2	68.5
2000	53.3	67.0
2001	55.0	71.8
2002	53.1	70.2
2003	57.8	72.6
2004	65.5	77.1
2005	67.4	76.8
2006	72.6	80.7
2007	94.2	98.8
2008	117.5	114.3
2009	91.7	95.1
2010	106.7	106.8
2011	131.9	118.8
2012	122.8	111.5
2013	120.1	109.5
2014	115.0	106.3
2015	93.1	95.1
2016	91.9	97.8
2017	98.0	100.8
2018	95.9	94.2
2019	95.0	95.6
2020	95.4	96.4

Table 1
FAO Food Price Index for 1961 to 2020

However, in the current situation, exports of socially important products may be restricted. Some experts believe such measures as export restrictions would be only appropriate for specific items, particularly, very important medications, veterinary drugs, medical appliances, masks, etc. E. g., one would find logic in export bans on products that help to save lives or prevent illness. Any attempts at food controls or bans would not be helpful for the market or society. It might be, on the contrary, appropriate to take advantage of the situation and where there is demand globally, produce and export the item on a bigger scale. A growing segment of subindustries of the agroindustrial complex in Russia has entered the regime of overproduction over the past years and badly and urgently need to develop logistics and exports. Also, more than 40 million ha of non-used agricultural lands in Russia remain located largely in regions with relatively favourable logistics, overall infrastructure and soil and climate conditions.

Restrictions of exports of socially important products largely constitute a verbal intervention. The vast majority of exports of the Russian agroindustrial complex consists of low value-added primary commodities: grain, fish, oilseeds and vegetable oils in tanks, i. e., Russia mostly does not export finished products and even less socially important categories. Of all finished food products, significant exports are only pursued in confectionery, which is not an essential category. In 2019, Russian exports of sugar were relatively high, because reserves were at a historical maximum.

Potentially strong consequences for the Russian market and disruption to company plans could be caused by an export ban for grain, which is not a socially important product, though there is no guarantee they would take it into account. That would result in considerable accumulation of grain surpluses in the market resulting in lower prices

potentially undermining the financial standing of many Russian plant farmers. As to meat, over 2018-2019, companies and the government put much effort into opening up export markets and setting export flows up and running. Meanwhile, the Russian market is well-supplied with pork and poultry, without any signs of deficits, that is, a ban or restriction on meat exports would be only detrimental to the sector and hardly efficient, given the already low volumes of meat exports. The Russian market of socially important food products is not export-oriented, so restrictions are not appropriate²¹.

Unfortunately, given the significant problems in the market in terms of logistics, payments and all planning functions, market players are forced for a while to constrain their operations to avoid deficits in essentials. E. g., compared to 2019, the principal export items included primarily raw agricultural commodities, such as grain, unprocessed frozen fish, raw vegetable oils. If restrictions are imposed on grain and raw oils, the losses in agricultural exports will be significant.

The waiting regime is on until trade resumes with China and other countries. Unfortunately, the situation of the pandemic in 2020 is likely to affect nearly everyone, if not physically, then economically. Mass media are also mounting pressure on the public psyche, which also negatively affects the overall psychological well-being. When if not now is it time to diversify parts of the production sector to produce sanitising and antivirals to combat COVID-19 and potentially other diseases in the future?

There are moments when old problems, years or even centuries of conflict are forgotten and the humanitarian, human agenda comes to the foreground²². It is exactly during such times posing danger to human life and health when major revaluations are possible, specifically concerning the attitudes to health, the quality of consumption, environmental aspects, etc.

Discussion

Ensuring food security is, beyond other aspects, a governing principle behind quality requirements set forth in standards and other similar documents. It is no secret that quite often, more affordable products from other countries enter the market, even though they fail to meet safety requirements. Thus, it is important not only to impose protective barriers taking the form of strict quality requirements for imports, but also to advance research concerned with the development of the criteria of food safety.

The current challenging environment encourages governments to join their forces behind measures to saturate the market with food products, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to protect it from inferior quality products. Joint international action provides better potential for creating and introducing new deep processing technologies for food commodities, new methods of growing, storing and transporting agricultural produce to improve the health safety of food products for the living and future generations.

²¹ E. Litvinova, Eksport sotsialno znachimykh produktov mogut ogranichit...

²² V usloviyakh pandemii COVID-19 Rossiya napomnila miru o prioritete gumanizma. Federalnoe agentstvo novostei (FAN). April 1, 2020. Retrieved from: https://riafan.ru/1264019-v-usloviyakh-pandemii-covid-19-rossiya-napomnila-miru-o-prioritete-gumanizma?utm_source=yxnews&utm_medium=desktop&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fyandex.ru%2Fnews

A major contribution to this research was the monograph by M.L. Vartanova²². The researcher's analysis of food security addresses the notion as a "modern social phenomenon in human history"²³ and comprises a study of the "current state of food security in Russia as a subject concerning many people across the world".

The modern state of national food security efforts, the problems and outlook of external trade and external cooperation between countries, particularly in the Eurasian Economic Union, have been widely analysed recently. An important highlight in the research body is the paper by M.L. Vartanova, G.I. Osadchaya and T.N. Yudina. The paper comprises a macroeconomic analysis of trends in the economic development of the CIS and a multifaceted analysis of integration in the agricultural sector in Russia and abroad constituting a principal requisite of national security in the food supply in the near future and mid-term.

Generally, the requirement to maintain national food security allows for the best possible realisation of the principles of common economic space with the maximum engagement of the natural and production capabilities of each member state in the agroindustrial complex²⁴. The need to create new interstate unions is driven by the current objective conditions, primarily tough competition in political, economic, information and other social domains.

Conclusion

The coronavirus pandemic acts as a catalyst of global and regional processes and shifts the global balance of powers in the already changing international world order. In these complicated extreme conditions of cooperation, sound food security management becomes crucial. International cooperation means that it is impossible to stay isolated from external markets, so the conditions of participation in international economic cooperation (particularly in food production) should be consistent with national interests. We believe now, during this challenging period of isolation, the time is right to adopt emergency measures aimed at the population in general as follows:

1. Conducting systemic monitoring of food supply in Russian regions;
2. Amid the increase in the numbers of COVID-19 cases and the subsequent response moves to adopt remote work arrangements and expectations of abridged workweek, one would anticipate an outflow of population from cities to distant regions or suburban homes or dachas. Accordingly, it creates the need to accelerate greenhouse farming and engage the released labour resources (after the epidemic) to expand peasant (private) farms;
3. Stabilisation of access to food by consolidating individual purchasing power through cash injections (either unconditional or in exchange for labour as may be possible or practicable) to help affected families accommodate their essential needs without the need to sell their key assets. Stronger efforts should be put into government coordination to expand the scope of social security systems, especially in distant inaccessible rural areas;

²³ M. L. Vartanova, *Prodovolstvennaya bezopasnost strany i puti vykhoda iz mirovogo prodovolstvennogo krizisa: monograph* (Moscow: BIBLIO-GLOBUS, 2016).

²⁴ M. Vartanova; G. Osadchaya y T. Yudina, *The national food security...*

4. If export restrictions are to be introduced, it is worth keeping in mind how challenging it was for Russian exporters to get their products to the neighbouring markets. Any restrictions of this type today constitute an attempt to rationally manage export stocks, as both globally and particularly in Russia, supplies are sufficient to serve the needs, even despite the temporary shutdown of some enterprises and logistics hubs;

5. Given the above, we find it appropriate to support small and medium enterprises and to arrange zero-interest loan payment relief for individuals in Russia;

6. Maintaining food security and subsistence support for socially vulnerable groups and specifically revisiting the development of humanitarian aid programmes and consolidating resilience to external interferences to ensure smooth administration of assistance where requirements are high while also responding to new needs arising directly or indirectly in consequence of the coronavirus COVID-19²⁵;

7. During the pandemic, the continued focus remains on the frenzied movements in global exchanges and mass demand for everyday staples playing a principal part for national food security. Mass panic should be countered with stocked grocery shelves supplied from Government reserves and supervision.

Thus, Russia needs to learn lessons given the current complicated epidemiological situation in some countries and recognise that the international division of labour, in which some production is localised in one country and some in another country, poses danger, as does price growth for essential staples.

All these and other findings of this research concerning the specifics and measures of maintaining food security amid the global fight against the pandemic suggest the problem not only remains highly relevant²⁶, but also makes the basis for further steady progress in food security efforts aligned with public health policies.

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²⁵ Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. August 8, 2020. Retrieved from: <http://www.fao.org/2019-ncov/ru/>

²⁶ M. L. Vartanova, Osnovnye faktory i riski razvitiya prodovolstvennogo krizisa v usloviyakh pandemii COVID-19. Collection of papers: Povyshenie upravlencheskogo, ekonomicheskogo, sotsialnogo i innovatsionno-tekhnicheskogo potentsiala predpriyatii, otraslei i narodno-khozyaistvennykh kompleksov. Penza (2020): 34-36.

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