PROBLEMS AND SPECIFIC FEATURES OF LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT IN NAVOI REGION IN THE EARLY YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

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Abstract. The article analyzes the developmental characteristics of livestock farming in Navoi region during the early years of independence. It highlights that since a large part of the region's territory consists of desert and pasture zones, karakul sheep breeding and sheep farming were the primary sectors. The study illustrates how problems with providing livestock with feed and water, as well as a shortage of fodder crops and compound feed production, negatively affected productivity.

Keywords: Navoi region, livestock farming, pasture livestock farming, karakul sheep breeding, sheep farming, fodder base, transition period.

Introduction. In the early years of independence, under the complex conditions of transition to a market economy, the livestock sector experienced the difficulties of the transition period. Studying the specific characteristics of this period is of great practical importance not only from a historical perspective, but also in developing strategies for the sustainable development of pasture livestock farming, ensuring food security, and increasing employment in rural areas today.

Despite this, the development of livestock farming in Navoi region during the early years of independence has not been sufficiently studied as a separate and comprehensive subject in historiography. Existing research has mainly covered general processes at the national level, leaving regional characteristics—including the specifics of pasture livestock farming in the region's desert conditions, changes in farming forms, and the dynamics of the sector's structure—without in-depth analysis. Therefore, studying this topic based on archival documents and statistical data determines the scientific novelty and relevance of this research.

Results and Discussion. In the early years of independence, the livestock sector in Navoi region experienced a complex transition period due to the disruption of the centralized supply system resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union. Arid (desert) zone pasture areas predominate in the structure of the republic's main land fund, with their total area amounting to 26.6 million hectares, of which 13.0 million hectares consist of sandy soils and massive sand dunes. The main part of these pastures is located in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, as well as Navoi, Bukhara, Jizzakh, Samarkand, Surkhandarya, and Kashkadarya regions.[1]

The Kyzylkum desert zone (Kanimekh, Tamdy, and Uchkuduk districts), which occupies the northern and central parts of the region, accounts for a significant portion of the desert-pasture fund.[2]

Because a large portion of the region consisted of desert and pasture zones, primary focus was placed on karakul sheep breeding and sheep farming. However, serious problems arose in collective farms regarding the provision of feed and water for livestock. The insufficient production volume of annual and perennial fodder crops, as well as compound feed in livestock state farms (sovkhozes), negatively impacted livestock productivity. To supply the population with meat and dairy products, auxiliary farms were established under large enterprise facilities.

In 1992, due to insufficient attention to developing livestock farming, increasing animal numbers, improving breeds, strengthening the fodder base, mechanizing farms, preparing for wintering, and

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ensuring the material incentives of livestock breeders, the region ended the year unsatisfactorily; consequently, the majority of districts and farms failed to fulfill their plans for producing and selling livestock products to the state. Navoi district farms fulfilled the annual plan for selling meat to the state by 57%, Navbakhor district by 53%, and Kyzyltepa district by 61%, delivering significantly less meat to the state compared to the previous year—by 1,412 tons, 360 tons, and 124 tons, respectively. Regarding milk sales, Navoi district fulfilled the plan by 77%, Navbakhor district by 84%, and Nurota district by 70%.

In the early years of independence, livestock farms operating under the old framework committed a number of shortcomings. In particular, the "Uzbekistan" collective farm in Navoi district fulfilled meat production by 67%, milk production by 68%, and egg production by 21%, producing 26 tons less milk compared to the previous year. The "Uzbekistan" collective farm fulfilled its annual plan for meat sales to the state by 44%, milk sales by 70%, and egg sales by 68%. This represents a reduction in state deliveries compared to 1991 by 25 tons of meat, 123 tons of milk, and 5.1 thousand eggs. Milk yield per cow decreased by 148 kg, and calf births declined by 39 head compared to the same period of the previous year.[3]

Cold air currents blowing from temperate and cold latitudes encounter no barriers when entering Central Asian territories, including Uzbekistan. During the winter period, these cold air masses exert a much stronger influence on the weather.[4]

The year 1993 was unfavorable for livestock farming. Winter arrived early that year, with freezing temperatures beginning in November. Continuous snowfalls led to an increasingly thick snow cover, which remained unmelted well into spring. Consequently, karakul sheep were unable to endure temperatures dropping below −20 °C, leading to high mortality rates. In the "Kyzylkum" state farm (sovkhoz) alone, severe winter conditions and extreme cold resulted in the loss of 23,000 head of state-owned sheep and 4,000 head of privately owned livestock.[5]

Conclusion. In the early period of independence, livestock farming in Navoi region developed under the complex conditions of the transition period. Since a major portion of the region's territory consists of desert and pasture zones, the primary sectors of the branch were karakul sheep breeding and sheep farming. Although this circumstance determined the territorial specialization of livestock production, the specific nature of these natural conditions posed a series of serious challenges for the sector.

The research identified that ensuring a stable supply of feed and water for livestock in collective farms remained one of the primary challenges. Insufficient production volumes of annual and perennial fodder crops, as well as compound feed in livestock state farms (sovkhozes), negatively impacted livestock productivity. Furthermore, the need to supply the population with meat and dairy products led to the establishment of auxiliary farms under large industrial enterprises. This acquired particular significance as a temporary measure aimed at improving food supply through the utilization of local resources.

During the early years of independence, the development of livestock farming in Navoi region was influenced by several critical factors. In particular, natural climatic conditions and limited water resources, a weak fodder base, inadequate material and technical supply, weakened breeding work, and declining economic incentives for livestock breeders hindered the sustainable development of the region's livestock sector. This situation reflected the crisis state of the sector during that period, highlighting the urgent need for new economic mechanisms, the diversification of ownership forms, and the strengthening of the fodder base to stabilize the industry.

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