

2. Conceptual approaches to the development of marketing activities of agricultural enterprises in the transforming economy of Ukraine

The market transformation of Ukraine's economy is accompanied by qualitative changes in the functioning of all spheres of economic activity, particularly in the agricultural sector, which remains a strategic branch of the national economy. Under these conditions, marketing activity becomes a key factor in ensuring the competitiveness, stability, and profitability of agricultural enterprises.

Ukraine's agricultural sector is actively integrating into the global economic space, which necessitates the use of modern marketing approaches to manage production and sales processes, position products in domestic and foreign markets, build brands, and enhance customer orientation. However, despite the evident importance of marketing, most agricultural enterprises still do not fully utilize its potential due to limited resources, weak institutional support, a low level of digitalization, and insufficient awareness of managerial staff in the field of marketing management.

The relevance of this topic is also determined by the need for a scientific reconsideration of the concept of marketing activity in the context of ongoing economic changes, the transformation of consumer needs, the growing role of digital communications, and the sustainable development of agriculture.

The application of a systematic marketing approach in agricultural production enables not only increased economic efficiency but also the creation of prerequisites for forming competitive business structures focused on quality, innovation, and social responsibility.

The issues of marketing activities of agricultural enterprises have been the subject of scientific research by many Ukrainian and foreign scholars, including F. Kotler, J.-J. Lambin, M. Porter, P. Doyle, A. Kravchenko, L. Balabanova, S. Harkavenko, O. Olenkovska, I. Lytovchenko, M. Malik, O. Shpykulyak, T. Mostenska, and others. Their works reveal the essence of marketing, its role in ensuring competitive advantages, and mechanisms for managing marketing activities of

enterprises in various economic sectors. However, the conceptual development of marketing activities in agricultural enterprises under market transformation conditions remains insufficiently studied. The methodological basis for assessing the effectiveness of agri-marketing, adapting global practices to Ukrainian conditions, and developing a modern concept for marketing system development in agriculture requires further clarification.

Thus, the theoretical generalization of scientific approaches and the practical substantiation of directions for the development of marketing activities of agricultural enterprises under transformational changes constitute an urgent scientific problem, the solution of which is crucial for enhancing the efficiency of Ukraine's agricultural sector.

2.1 The evolution of marketing in the system of market relations

Marketing as a distinct economic science emerged relatively recently, only at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1902, marketing courses were launched at the University of Michigan, the University of Illinois, and the University of California, Berkeley. These processes were preceded by the so-called Industrial Revolution, during which the market required fundamentally new approaches to doing business. During the same period, specialized marketing organizations began to emerge, and in the 1920s, associations of marketers and advertisers started to appear. The overproduction crisis that began in 1929 and became one of the most severe in history compelled American companies to incorporate elements of the marketing concept as a fundamental aspect of economic activity and management from the 1930s onwards. Marketing achieved a certain degree of consistency in the 1950s, and from the 1960s onwards, it began to be used as a key tool for achieving the long-term strategic goals of enterprises. From the second half of the 20th century, in the practice of economic entities in countries with market economies, and from the 1990s, with the change in the paradigm of the functioning of the national economy and in post-socialist countries, marketing became not only mandatory, but also, in part, the main segment of management activities.

However, the real development of marketing in the activities of economic entities began long before the formation of marketing thought in scientific works. Convincing evidence of this is the fact that basic economic definitions, such as "price," "market," and "product sales," were described and explained in scientific literature as early as the 17th century and were actively developed by representatives of various economic schools and movements.

Understanding the essence of marketing and its practical application requires tracing the evolution of the marketing concept from the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century to the present day. Early marketing, at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, was focused primarily on the production of goods. An entrepreneur's success was ensured only when his company could produce as many goods or services as possible. The ease of selling was associated with market absorption through the mass consumption of goods that were previously unavailable to a wide range of consumers.

In some cases, market imbalances caused by overproduction against a backdrop of insufficient consumption gave rise to the first economic crises. However, alongside their destructive impact on financial systems, crises also helped to even out market imbalances and were overcome using specific anti-crisis tools [21]. Although crises were mainly episodic in nature, they gradually motivated researchers to study sales processes in greater depth and forced practitioners to realize the importance of the sales process.

As production and consumption grew, it became clear that in the new conditions, it was no longer enough to focus exclusively on production for effective management, as more and more difficulties began to arise in the area of sales. After all, if earlier the market could consume all the goods offered, except in situations of economic crisis, then later the supply somehow began to exceed demand. It was this situation that led to the evolution of the marketing concept and caused a gradual transition to more aggressive forms and methods of offering goods, selling them, and especially advertising. The new paradigm of product supply began to focus on overcoming buyer resistance, including unconscious and hidden resistance, and on ensuring the ability to

sell everything that was produced.

C. McCormick (1809–1884), an employee of a harvesting equipment manufacturing company, is considered the founder of the modern understanding of the concept of “marketing.” He was the first to propose that marketing should be the primary function of any enterprise, and that finding and serving customers should be the primary task of a manager. It was C. McCormick introduced the concepts of marketing analysis and marketing research and formed concepts regarding the market, pricing policy, and customer service.

Today, there are over 2,500 definitions of the term “marketing.” Gradually, marketing has expanded from the micro level and the sphere of economic relations between sellers and buyers to occupy a prominent niche in industry, regional, and international business, among others [22]. It is this multiplicity of definitions that suggests the theoretical basis lacks comprehensiveness and systematicity.

The first approaches to interpreting the concept of marketing emerged in the early 20th century in the United States. The word “marketing” comes from “market.” In economic terms, marketing is designed to exert a particular influence on the market environment to increase sales and, consequently, profits. It is in this context that the significance of marketing is currently being considered by a significant cohort of domestic and foreign economists [26].

American scientists Evans J. and Berman B. were among the first to present their own interpretation of the term “marketing.” They paid particular attention to distinguishing between “sales” and ‘marketing’ approaches. They noted that “an adequate definition of marketing should not be limited exclusively to goods and services, since its objects can be organizations, people, individual territories, and ideas” [29, p. 3].

A fundamental definition of the marketing concept was formulated by the prominent American scientist F. Kotler [13, 30, p. 9]. According to his definition, “marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups of individuals satisfy their needs and desires through the creation and exchange of goods and consumer values” [31, p. 35]. F. Kotler also identified and characterized the basic

elements of marketing, including periods of development, marketing tools, consistency, unity, and the technological efficiency of marketing means and techniques.

Subsequently, these scientific achievements formed the basis of marketing planning, which is based on a detailed analysis of consumer needs and ensures the integrity and completeness of marketing activities [32, p. 27].

Further development of marketing definitions and categories has already brought certain clarifications regarding the levels and scale of marketing activities. It is in this context that J. McCarthy and W. Perrow [33, p. 8] describe it.

Subsequently, marketing took its place in strategic management and became its key element. It was marketing that became the cornerstone on which promising development strategies began to be created at various levels of economic relations.

In contrast, in the works of G. Churchill and P. Peter, marketing is presented as a process of planning and developing concepts for pricing, promotion, and distribution of goods through exchange. According to scientists, this process is designed to satisfy individual and social needs, as well as to underlie the achievement of the organizational goals of the enterprise [38, p. 7].

American scholars E. Rice and J. Trout considered the use of marketing tools in a competitive environment, proposing the concept of "marketing warfare." They pointed out that "marketers have always focused on buyers and warned managers to pay more attention to customers than to production." They have to compete for buyers and customers, and "war is an integral part of competition" [39, p. 6]. Currently, in the US domestic market, marketing is interpreted as the process of doing business aimed at facilitating the flow of goods and services from the manufacturer to the consumer or user. The above opinion prevailed in the US in the 1960s.

Despite the widespread perception of marketing as a paradigm of war and competition in science and practice, the opposite concept is gradually gaining ground and significance, which consists in the coordination of interests and motives of market participants, ideally leading to market equilibrium and eliminating the need for hostile "military" actions by some market participants against others [40]. The formation and

development of the ethical component in marketing and marketing communications played a crucial role in this process [41].

A significant evolution in marketing concepts occurred after World War II. Since then, marketing has been associated with people's desire to change their lifestyle through the pursuit of goods with useful properties and high functionality. This necessitated a change in the mindset of entrepreneurs, and consequently, a transformation of the production, distribution, and sale of products. This is how the paradigm of the market for ecological products, and consequently, environmental marketing [42, 43] or green marketing [44], emerged. This led to a transformation in consumers' perceptions of the principles of convenience in market distribution processes, resulting in the spread of network marketing [45] and a shift in the fundamental principles of "need-demand-satisfaction-consumption" and the emergence of agile marketing [46], among other developments.

By contrast to American approaches, European approaches to defining and understanding marketing are somewhat different. The most notable achievements in this area belong to J. J. Lamben. He understood marketing as the system-forming basis of business, its unique philosophy. At the same time, the scientist applied a process approach in his study, as an active, specialized activity focused on meeting the needs of individual consumers and society as a whole. This refers to essential goods that are of value to these consumers or society [47, p. 4].

In contrast, German marketers E. Dichtl and H. Hershgen viewed marketing primarily not as a philosophy, but as an art, a creative endeavor. In their opinion, marketing is based on a corresponding way of thinking and expressing entrepreneurial abilities [48, p. 12].

The Scandinavian school of marketing has made a significant contribution to expanding terminology and distinguishing concepts such as "service marketing" and "internal marketing." The Scandinavian school owes these achievements primarily to K. Grenroos. In particular, he introduced the concepts of "internal consumer" and "internal product". E. Gumesson, a professor at the Stockholm University Business School, noted the role of employees who are involved in the marketing process but

are not directly employed by the marketing department, i.e., "part-time marketers". E. Gumesson also compares relationship marketing with marketing mix and proposes the concept of "30R" (Relationship).

Based on the results of his own business analysis, Yugoslav scientist D. J. Karich, a representative of the European school of marketing, systematized the prerequisites for the use and application of marketing elements in the economy. In particular, he characterized marketing from several positions: as a business function, as a scientific discipline, and as an economic process. Another of his compatriots, L. Radonich, believed that the basis of marketing is people's tastes, needs, and preferences. It is knowledge about them that can be turned into profit for the enterprise.

Scientists from the British School of Marketing focused their efforts on studying the theory of relationship marketing. In particular, they actively researched issues related to the concept of service marketing, product quality management problems, and theoretical approaches to relationship marketing.

Gradually, in the process of the evolution of marketing theories, marketing has turned into a holistic business system, according to which the volume and structure of demand for goods and services are predicted, needs are developed and satisfied through the prism of marketing research and the formation of a marketing information system, and types of exceptional products that are increasingly in demand among the population (for example, the eco-products above) are developed. Marketing, therefore, is not only a set of practical actions consisting of the application of appropriate methods, but also, first and foremost, a way of thinking about the market and the enterprise, its role and tasks that ensure the survival and further development of entrepreneurial structures.

Since the mid-1990s, scientific activity in marketing studies has experienced a revival in Ukraine. It is worth noting that marketing as a science in Ukraine began to develop only after the collapse of the command-administrative system. The shift in ideas and concepts in domestic economic theory occurred precisely under the influence of the country's development of market economic relations.

The main feature of the development of domestic marketing thought was the separation of functional, geographical, and commodity aspects in marketing. Domestic scientists such as G. O. Andrusenko [39], L. V. Balabanova [40], A. V. Voychak [41], O. V. Gavrilets [42], V. G. Gerasymchuk [43], O. V. Deyneha [44], and others have expanded the traditional theoretical aspects of marketing with practical applications for different markets, specific segments, and specific target audiences.

At the end of the 20th century, some Ukrainian scholars researched the theoretical basis of marketing (concepts, functions, principles, and ideas) from the perspective of the American approach. In general, the formation of the domestic school of marketing occurred over a quarter of a century, beginning in 1992. One of the key figures in this process in Ukraine was A.V. Voychak [16]. It should be noted that the scientist's main contributions to the development of marketing theory were the identification of eleven programs and types of activities on which the process of internal marketing management is based.

The scientist presented his own classification of approaches to studying marketing concepts and also distinguished between internal marketing, depending on the internal market of the enterprise. Based on an analysis of literary sources, A. V. Voychak also identified different approaches to understanding the essence of marketing: from the point of view of management as a conceptual basis for activity, as a functional apparatus, from the point of view of a product as an element of behavioral economics, as well as in terms of national and institutional levels. He also studied internal communications in enterprises.

Other equally well-known scholars, L. A. Moroz and N. I. Chukhrai, interpreted marketing as an activity aimed at shaping demand and achieving set goals by maximally satisfying consumer needs [29].

A. O. Starostina considers marketing primarily through the prism of organizational and managerial decision-making. She views it as the foundation for developing business strategies and determining a business entity's market position (positioning). A. Starostina pays particular attention to identifying the impact of the

environment on marketing and its relationship with the achievement of the main interests of enterprises.

Summarizing the research of the Ukrainian school of marketing, it can be argued that domestic marketing scientists have gradually developed their own views on the theoretical basis and key issues in the field of marketing, which in turn have become the basis for implementing practical marketing provisions in Ukraine. The research conducted by representatives of the domestic marketing school primarily focuses on theoretical issues and marketing problems. Undoubtedly, their fundamental theoretical approaches will form the basis for the implementation and introduction of practical foundations of domestic internal marketing. Therefore, in the future, scientists should focus on consolidating the implementation and adaptation of the developed marketing tools in the domestic market.

Having examined numerous views on the very nature of the category of "marketing" in domestic and foreign scientific literature, it can be argued that a common feature of many definitions is the establishment of a link between marketing and the needs and expectations of buyers, as well as production and commercial activities subordinated to buyer orientation. That is why marketing has become the foundation for the operations of entrepreneurs, whose activities are focused on understanding consumer needs and identifying the most effective ways to satisfy them through innovation and high-quality products.

In general, all the variety of interpretations of marketing can be reduced to four positions, considering this concept as a process, as management, as an activity, and as a business philosophy. All of them are summarized, along with references to the scientists who supported and developed each of these positions, as shown in Fig. 1. One can agree with all of the above approaches to interpreting the term "marketing." However, it should be noted that they are somewhat isolated, do not reveal, and do not take into account the whole essence of the concept of "marketing." Therefore, there was a need to justify an integrated approach to interpreting the nature of marketing.

Synthesizing the views and interpretations of foreign and domestic scholars, we

consider it appropriate to understand the concept of “marketing” as a mechanism for implementing the key idea of a business by intensifying the entire process of enterprise management, ensuring the continuity of its activities aimed at fulfilling its key mission and making a profit, based on identifying and satisfying consumer needs.

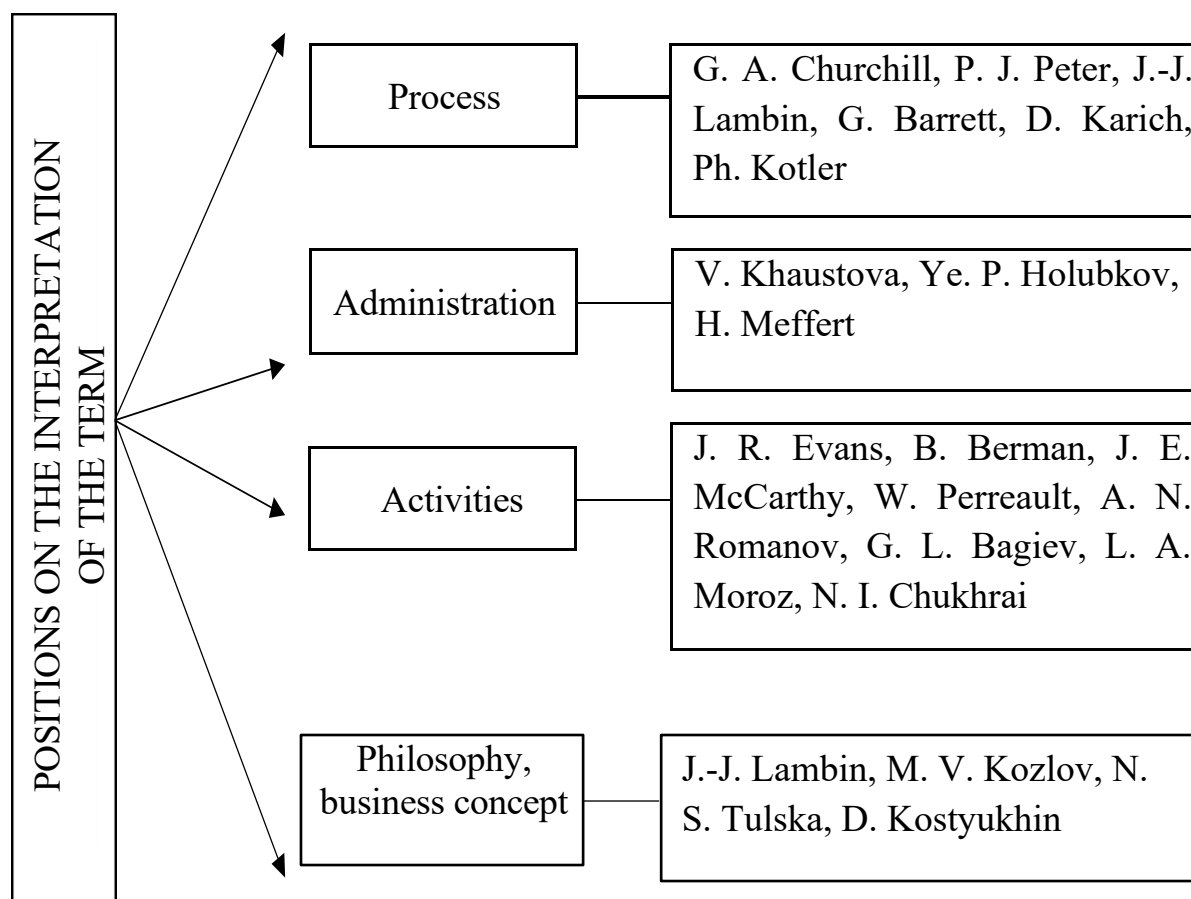


Figure - 1. Systematization of approaches to defining the essence of the concept of “marketing” in scientific literature

Source: systematized by the author

Modern marketing concepts are based on satisfying customer needs. Therefore, the success of marketing and, in general, the activities of any economic entity should be measured by two key parameters: the size of the customer base and the degree of satisfaction of their requirements. With this in mind, the primary goal of a seller in the market is to attract customers, expand their customer base, and ensure complete satisfaction with the quality, price, and other characteristics of the goods they purchase.

In essence, marketing becomes a system-forming factor for success in the market. It forces manufacturers and sellers of goods (those who shape supply) to focus on buyers (those who shape demand) by constantly researching the latter's needs, developing products that best meet the existing, hidden, and stimulated requirements and expectations of consumers, as well as by providing buyers with timely information about market offers, places of access to goods, pricing policies, etc.

Based on the study and generalization of literary sources in the process of dissertation research, the main tasks of marketing management at an enterprise were identified and grouped as follows:

- terminating the key mission of the business entity by identifying and analyzing the needs, tastes, and preferences of consumers;
- formulating a system of activity goals (including primary and secondary goals of various orders) by structuring activities, establishing a range of products that meet consumer needs, and forming an implementation plan based on marketing research and interpretation of consumer needs;
- justifying the principles of positioning the enterprise and its products on the market, based on informing consumers about the product and its properties;
- forming a production plan – to fulfil the sales plan as fully as possible, fully meeting demand while preventing the accumulation of unsold stock of products that are not in demand;
- developing a financial plan – by drawing up a forecast estimate of production and sales costs and ensuring the economic entity's stable position in the market, maintaining its image among consumers, developing sustainable competitive advantages, etc.

Interpreting the above marketing management tasks as a holistic system, marketing begins and ends with the consumer, their needs, expectations, requirements, tastes, and preferences. That is why a company that wants to operate successfully in the market needs to conduct regular marketing research. Based on such research, the company obtains information about the structure and other characteristics of consumption. This information, in turn, serves as the basis for forming a production

plan, including its quantitative and qualitative parameters, as well as the foundation for a sales plan. This plan encompasses the formation of a pricing policy, determining the optimal channels for promoting products to consumers, and developing approaches to advertising goods, among other aspects.

The role of marketing research in the effective functioning of an enterprise in a market environment cannot be overstated. After all, to ensure the effective management of marketing activities, the information obtained from marketing research results must be processed, systematized, and summarized in a specific report. Based on this report, the enterprise's management can forecast financial and production costs for manufacturing products, determine the necessary market costs, etc. Ultimately, this approach enables the creation of a layout, the development of a design, and the actual production of products. In other words, marketing research lays the foundation for a company's market operations.

Along with marketing research, marketing communication tools are also necessary, as they enable sellers to inform their target audience and convey messages about a product or service. In the context of active marketing communications, the buyer can make an informed decision about whether to purchase or refuse to purchase a product or service. The interaction of basic marketing concepts is schematically illustrated in Fig. 2.

Despite differences in products and buyers, the basic principles, rules, and methods of marketing remain unchanged. In the course of the study, the main rules were summarized, covering the following provisions:

- the most valuable thing is the availability of information about the market and buyer needs based on systematic marketing research;
- buyer needs determine the main orientation of the entrepreneur-manufacturer and seller;
- production and sales are integrated links in the organizational structure of each production activity, and the degree of compliance of decisions with economic feasibility is formed in the market in the process of conducting operations;
- the marketing strategy is based on the expected product turnover cycle in the

relevant market segment;

- production cycle planning is a dynamic process that changes over time, starting with the decision to produce and sell products and ending with the actual sale, focused on achieving the set business goals;

- the success of every entrepreneur's business depends on the skilled selection and effective use of marketing tools and methods for communicating with buyers in the process of production and sales.

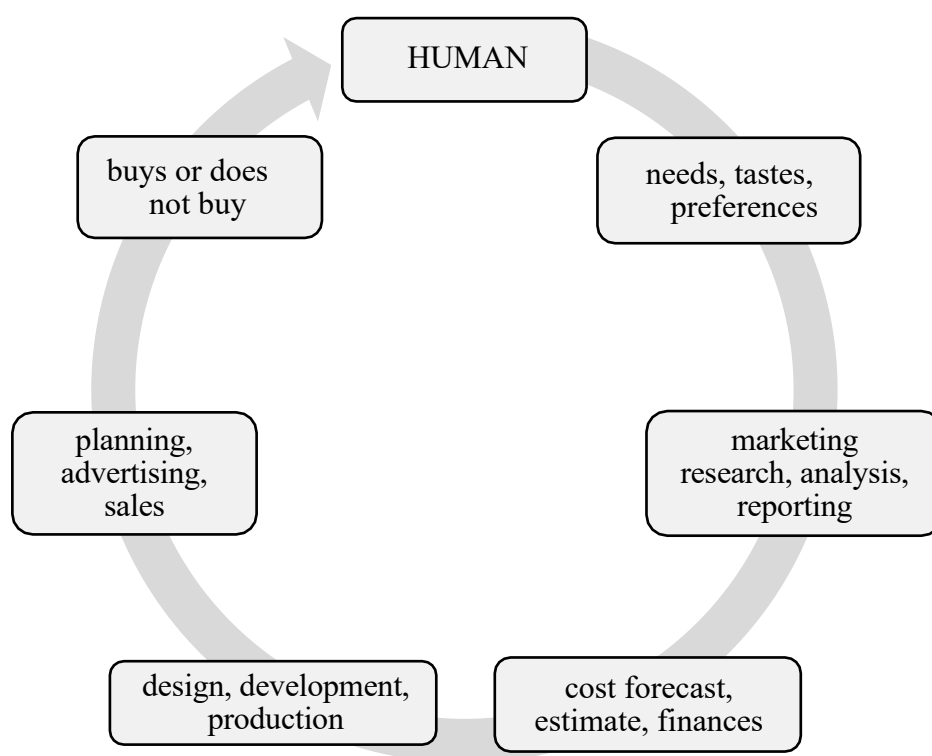


Figure - 2. Interaction of basic marketing concepts

Source: developed by the author

As theoretical research has shown, since the mid-19th century, marketing has been considered one of the most crucial management functions, not only for commercial enterprises but also for agricultural and industrial ones. In modern conditions, any enterprise, including agricultural ones, can hardly operate without using marketing tools. It is well known that people's needs are constantly changing. In such a situation, only those enterprises that can anticipate changes in consumer tastes, requirements, and expectations will survive in the market.

In general, theoretical and practical approaches to marketing implementation in agriculture have developed rapidly. After all, marketing was primarily seen as an effective tool for managing economic activity as a whole, as a mechanism for transitioning from a narrow product range policy to a broader one, but most importantly, as a method for identifying and satisfying the needs and preferences of potential consumers. The importance of agricultural marketing has increased amid intensifying and tougher competition in the agricultural products market, as well as the growing influence of these products on the functioning of various sectors of the economy.

It is pretty tricky for Ukrainian agricultural enterprises to operate in market conditions. Farmers constantly face several problems, including: state support that does not meet the needs of commodity producers in terms of direction and volume, high interest rates on loans, an imperfect management system, problems with pricing, difficulties in forecasting and identifying consumer tastes and preferences, complications in organizing communication and product policy, and determining effective distribution channels. Research has shown that agromarketing, as an effective management system, can offer a balanced mechanism for interaction between market participants at both the macro and micro levels, particularly by reconciling consumer needs on the one hand and the capabilities of agricultural enterprises to meet those needs on the other. It is the need for such balancing that makes it necessary to study the agricultural product market, research its conditions, forecast trends, and identify and assess demand for these products.

In developed market conditions, marketing functions in agricultural enterprises are typically performed by a specialized marketing service or department. At the same time, the formation of short-term and long-term goals, mission, and strategy of the enterprise is based on specific forecasts, recommendations, or calculations of such a department or service. Failure to comply with their prescriptions often leads to negative consequences, and sometimes to bankruptcy. That is why economic entities recognize the importance of the work of the marketing department or service.

Moreover, as competition in agricultural markets intensifies, agrarian enterprises

are increasing their spending on marketing management systems. For example, in the US, approximately \$500 billion is spent annually for this purpose. It should be noted that almost half of these resources are allocated to pay marketers.

However, in the reality of Ukrainian agricultural enterprises, agromarketing has not yet reached the level of development at which domestic agricultural producers could actively use all the levers of marketing influence. It is for this reason that the competitiveness of domestic enterprises is often lower than that of foreign producers of similar products. Even with Ukrainian producers gradually entering international markets for plant and animal products, increasing exports, and boosting profitability, the competitiveness of domestic agricultural businesses remains limited.

Currently, scientific literature offers a wide range of views on the interpretation of marketing in agriculture. Still, the most commonly used terms are "agromarketing," "marketing in the agro-industrial sector," and "marketing in agriculture." The concept of "agribusiness marketing" was first introduced by J. N. Davis, who interpreted it as "marketing operations from the first buyer to the end consumer."

Thus, V. A. Klyukach proposed considering agricultural marketing as a complex of commercial, financial, technical, and organizational functions of any enterprise that maximally satisfy the needs of consumers for agricultural products.

In turn, American scientists R. L. Coles and J. N. Ul defined the term "agromarketing" as a type of activity that is included in the process of direct distribution of agricultural products, beginning at the production stage and ending with the purchase by end consumers.

Agro-marketing has a long history of development in Ukrainian science. Even in the early days of the Soviet Union, scientific research on the development of entrepreneurship in agriculture, initiated in the 19th century by N. Kondratiev, N. Makarov, A. Radishchev, A. Chayanov, and others, was devoted to its study.

These authors agreed that the use of marketing tools is an effective lever in coordinating the activities of agricultural enterprises in a market economy.

In turn, another domestic scientist, P. I. Ostrovsky, argues that agromarketing is part of the agribusiness system, noting: "The agribusiness system functions as a result

of the combination of processes of agricultural production, processing, storage, transportation, and delivery to the consumer. Various entrepreneurial structures that contribute to this combination form a complex of economic relations called agrarian marketing. "N. M. Kozub believes that" agromarketing is a holistic phenomenon of a socio-economic nature, the modern content of which reflects the evolution of the market for agricultural products and goods of their industrial processing, consistently combining the processes of market research, agricultural production and processing of its products, commodity circulation, demand formation, and sales promotion."

According to L. Soroka, agricultural marketing should be understood as a comprehensive set of economic activities carried out to bring agricultural products to market and deliver them to consumers, thereby fulfilling the goals and objectives of agricultural producers.

On the other hand, V. V. Pysarenko believes that agromarketing encompasses a set of functions within an enterprise, including organizational, technical, financial, and commercial aspects. At the same time, these functions should ensure a more complete and timely satisfaction of the existing demand for agricultural products and food [39]. In domestic literature, the concepts of agromarketing and agricultural marketing are often equated. However, it should be noted that, unlike Ukrainian scientists, their foreign colleagues, in particular R. E. Branson and D. G. Norwell, clearly distinguish between the concepts of "agricultural marketing" and "agromarketing." The former has a specific expression in the activities of producers aimed at meeting consumer needs. At the same time, agromarketing encompasses all activities related to the production and sale of agricultural products, including production, transportation, storage, processing, and delivery to the end consumer, as well as motivating the consumer and influencing their behavior [46]. This distinction between the interpretations of the concepts is quite reasonable and methodologically correct. In the future, we will proceed from the assumption that marketing in agriculture is a narrower concept. At the same time, agromarketing is much broader, encompassing processes such as production cycle planning, direct food production, and the organization of distribution channels at all levels of the agricultural sector.

We share the authors' opinion on the distinction between the concepts of marketing in agriculture and agromarketing. Based on the above, in our opinion, agromarketing is a large-scale activity that includes planning, forecasting consumer demand for agricultural products based on market conditions, implementing effective policies for processing, production, and storage of products, determining effective pricing, promotional activities, and product sales to ensure the profitability of the agricultural sector.

In our work, we will employ the narrower concept of "agricultural enterprise marketing," which we define as business activities that directly impact the flow of products from producers to consumers, thereby satisfying consumer needs while ensuring that agricultural enterprises achieve their primary economic objectives and generate a profit.

Marketing of agricultural enterprises, or marketing in agriculture, is unique and deserves considerable attention, primarily because of the sector's importance to a country's economy. Most agricultural products are basic foodstuffs, and their price and movement are considered strategic objectives of the country's government.

In market conditions, the market is the motivator and catalyst for any activity. However, in most countries, the state regulates and controls markets in general, and to some extent, the marketing of agricultural products. Marketing activities in agriculture are crucial, as they enable new agricultural enterprises to establish themselves in the market. Ultimately, their success is determined by effective participation in markets, not by an increase in production volumes.

The successful introduction and implementation of agricultural product marketing depends on conditions, organization, and the provision of resources and services. At the same time, the conditions for marketing activities are those that support all commercial transactions and exchanges. In our opinion, the main conditions include:

- 1) regulatory and legal support for production, economic, commercial, sales, and marketing activities;
- 2) financial and credit support for agricultural activities, availability of

monetary and credit resources for commodity producers;

3) a pricing system, in particular regarding the validity of product prices, the prevention of price disparities, and significant fluctuations in the price environment;

4) the system of organization and control of production, economic, and commercial activities, in particular regarding the organization of production processes, ensuring compliance with established standards and requirements, quality control, etc.

Additionally, to utilize marketing effectively in agricultural enterprises, several issues related to its implementation must be addressed.

The main ones include: The main ones include:

- the need to study the efficiency and flexibility of the production processes of various types of products, their processing after harvesting, storage, transportation, primary processing, and deep processing, etc., to determine and evaluate the ability of various areas of activity of agricultural enterprises and types of products to respond quickly to market changes;

- the need to analyze entrepreneurial and technical skills in all aspects of the marketing process for relevant products, including the ability to choose between different products, types, seasons, markets, and processing options, etc., to maximize agricultural income;

- the advisability of identifying and expanding various marketing channels, including storage, processing, transportation, packaging, and the development of retail infrastructure;

- the importance of providing public and private services that producers need to sell their products, such as marketing, finance, information dissemination, market research, forecasting and assessment, and dispute resolution;

- the need to develop information and communication capabilities relating to products, location, time, types, quantity, quality, prices, and any other information necessary for producers and consumers to make informed management and consumer decisions.

Marketing in agricultural enterprises begins when a farmer, entrepreneur, or enterprise decides what to produce, including which crops or products to grow, and

when and how to do it. To operate successfully in the market and maximize profits, agricultural enterprise management must make informed management decisions. Although the means for production are created by agricultural land, financial, human, and technological resources, it is the agricultural market that makes the incentives for production. In other words, it is the market that determines what products to produce, in what quantities, of what quality, what distribution channels to use to get the products to the buyer, and so on. That is why agricultural producers cannot do without knowledge of the market, its segments, consumer demands, and goods, i.e., without knowledge and the use of marketing.

Only when the state undertakes to purchase agricultural products or the producer knows the buyer of their products in advance do they not have to worry about marketing. In all other cases, marketing must become a central part of management activities.

The activities of an agricultural enterprise based on marketing principles include, in particular, the optimal movement of products to the end consumer in the right place, at the right time, with the right marketing communication policy tools, and at the optimal price. In turn, marketing management at an enterprise should focus on its ability to produce the correct goods, advertise, and sell, among other tasks. Therefore, the use of marketing management is associated with practical analysis, planning, implementation, and control over achieving set goals and objectives. It is an art of combining production technologies, pricing policies, distribution of goods, product promotion, and sales into a single mechanism that functions taking into account economic, social, psychological, and other factors.

To sum up, marketing is a complex and multifaceted concept in business. Competition forces sellers to take specific measures that would meet the market expectations of consumers in accordance with established trends. Only those agricultural enterprises that develop a specific marketing strategy and adapt their product portfolio to meet market requirements can compete effectively, grow, generate a profit, and achieve their economic objectives.

2.2 Specifics and directions of marketing activities of agricultural enterprises

Over the years of our country's independence, the transformation of the economic system and the development of market principles of financial management through agrarian reforms have not formed a mechanism that ensures the stable functioning of agricultural enterprises. In the face of fierce competition in the agricultural market, enterprises seeking to improve their position must search for conditions that ensure stable profits and market share. This issue has become particularly relevant in the context of Ukraine's accession to the WTO. After all, such membership, along with many positive aspects, has led to complications in specific segments, including the implementation of commercial operations and ensuring effective state regulation.

Therefore, marketing tools as components of the overall management system have become particularly important for the development of agricultural enterprises in an imperfect market environment. However, the introduction of marketing tools into the practice of Ukrainian agricultural enterprises is proceeding very slowly, especially among small commodity producers. In particular, enterprises often overlook the unique characteristics of the agricultural product market and, consequently, the specific marketing policies applicable to this market.

The importance of the agricultural product market cannot be overestimated, as it is this market that shapes and ensures the food security of each country.

Typically, the agricultural products market, including its functioning, saturation, and supply and demand ratio, is considered from the perspective of ensuring an adequate level of food security for the state. According to the Law of Ukraine "On the Fundamentals of National Security," food security is considered to be "the protection of the vital interests of individuals and citizens, society, and the state, whereby the state guarantees the physical and economic accessibility and quality of vital food products to the population in accordance with scientifically based food sets, maintains the stability of food supply to the population, and ensures food independence" [27].

According to agricultural scientists, "the key characteristics of food security are

accessibility, availability, sustainability, and utilization of food, which largely depend not only on the growth of agricultural production, but also on trade policy and the development of trade relations in agricultural markets, which can strengthen these characteristics to a positive level". Thus, awareness of the importance and principles of food security is the starting point for understanding the significance of marketing in the agricultural sector.

Summarizing the work of researchers on food security issues, it can be argued that Ukraine has not yet achieved the necessary level of food security, as it does not yet correspond to that of developed countries. At the same time, the level of development of the domestic food market does not align with the country's socio-economic development, and the low income of the population, combined with a systematic increase in prices for consumer goods, poses a threat to Ukraine's food security. Although there have been some positive developments in the agricultural goods market in recent years, ensuring relative stability and enabling increased exports, these changes are not yet sufficient. To determine the paths for further necessary transformations, it is advisable to study the nature of agricultural markets and identify the characteristics of marketing activities undertaken by agricultural enterprises within them.

The classical economists laid down the theoretical basis for interpreting the market. In various literary sources, the concept of "market" is defined in different ways, in particular as: "any interaction that people enter into to trade with each other"; "a mechanism that brings together supply and demand for a particular commodity"; "a meeting place for supply and demand." At the same time, the following definitions have become most widespread in economic literature: "agricultural market," "market for agricultural products," "market for agricultural goods," and "agricultural market," among others.

These definitions are ambiguous, as the authors' opinions do not always coincide, and there are certain discrepancies or inaccuracies in the interpretation of the above concepts. Many works by domestic scientists are devoted to defining and interpreting the relevant concepts. Among them, the works of V. Andriychuk, Yu.

Bilyk, Yu. Kovalenko, Yu. Lupenko and M. Malik are noteworthy [28-37].

We share the opinion of scholars who, in substantiating the concept of the agricultural market, draw attention to the fact that such a market includes not only agricultural products and food, but also means of production, services, results of scientific developments and innovations, etc.

Y. Bilyk shares this opinion, emphasizing the interaction of market participants, in the process of which production is ensured and the free movement of agricultural products, processed products (foodstuffs), as well as technologies, means of production, and services for the effective functioning of the agro-industrial complex, based on the formation of agricultural scientific and technical products [14].

On the other hand, T. Ostashko interprets the economic essence of the agricultural market as the interaction of sellers and buyers connected by a system of commodity-money exchange relations, encompassing producers, consumers of agricultural goods, and intermediaries as representatives of the market infrastructure [39]. Agricultural scientists P. Sabluk, M. Malik, O. Shpykulyak, Y. Lupenko, and others believe that the market is a system of institutions that brings together sellers and buyers of specific goods or services [32, 33, 40, 41].

Y. Kovalenko also applied a systematic approach to the interpretation of the agricultural market, substantiating its essence as:

- a system of institutions, methods, and resources, where the main task is to coordinate and manage the country's agro-industrial production based on exchange processes to satisfy consumer needs, noting its purpose as a system for controlling the specified production, the functioning of which contributes to the satisfaction of citizens' consumer needs, with exchange processes serving as the means;
- relations between agriculture and industrial enterprises and other consumers of its products, as well as the totality of exchange transactions between agricultural producers themselves [34].

The structure of the agricultural market comprises specialized markets, including the agricultural products market, the land market, and the market for agricultural means of production. At the same time, there has been a recent trend in scientific thought to

distinguish between the concepts of “agricultural market” and “agricultural products market.” For these reasons, it is advisable to study the essence and components of the agricultural products market in more detail.

Since the ultimate purpose of consumer goods is consumption, it is natural that the market serves as the connecting link between the buyer and the seller. It is the market that performs the function of exchange and distribution of all goods and other material values, and it is here that all the laws of material production are realized. In the simplest sense, the market is a meeting place for sellers and buyers, where some offer goods and others form demand for these goods, negotiate, and offer a price acceptable to both parties.

Thus, V. G. Andriychuk believes that the agricultural market should be studied in terms of qualitative and quantitative characteristics, based on the fact that agricultural production and the formation of supply are carried out by a large number of enterprises in completely different sectors of the economy [24].

According to Yu. O. Lupenko, the formation of an agricultural market is a prerequisite for ensuring food security in Ukraine, and its condition is the starting point for forecasting supply and demand in the agricultural market [24, p. 20].

However, it should be noted that some authors equate the concepts of agrarian and agricultural markets. Thus, in the dictionary of foreign words, the term “agrarian” is borrowed from the Latin word ‘agrarius’ and means “land”. According to the definition in the explanatory dictionary of the Ukrainian language, the word “agrarian” is interpreted as referring to land and its use [11, pp. 17, 20]. In this case, the agrarian and agricultural markets are equated.

However, V. O. Rybalkina and V. G. Bodrova believe that the agricultural product market is a set of economic relations concerning the organization and sale of agricultural products [27, p. 366], while A. O. Pavlenchik, in turn, notes that the agricultural product market can be interpreted as a system of economic relations formed with the participation of various institutions, which ensures and regulates the production of agricultural sector products and the movement of goods to consumers in the sphere of exchange [28, p. 5].

To sum up, it can be argued that the variety of interpretations of the concept of “agricultural market” and related categories is due to different approaches among scientists. After all, the methodological basis for interpretations is the consideration of other activities and different goods traded on this market.

A crucial prerequisite for the development of agriculture in Ukraine is the organization and implementation of marketing activities, taking into account the industry's unique characteristics. In this regard, according to Yu. B. and I. Yu. Skorbiny, the tasks of marketing in agriculture are: selecting goods and determining their consumer properties; establishing quality parameters for production; monitoring compliance with current environmental and methodological requirements; justifying the volumes and terms of the agricultural output; calculating the need to attract additional financial resources with an indication of their sources; forming requirements for product packaging; developing a business plan and conditions for commercial operations, etc. [29]. The tasks of marketing activities of agricultural enterprises are described in detail in the works of many modern scientists.

Marketing is a key element in the management of any enterprise, including agricultural enterprises. It determines the upward position of the economic entity, its mission, and strategy. Thus, A. L. Dichenko substantiated the structural and logical combination of the mission and strategy of an agricultural enterprise through the interconnection of the enterprise's overall goals and its specific marketing activities, as well as the goals and objectives of commodity policy. In general, a significant number of scientific studies are devoted to developing an effective marketing strategy for agricultural enterprises. Thus, Yu. G. Berezhna points to the connection between a well-thought-out strategy and the effectiveness of an agricultural enterprise [31], while O. S. Yevseytseva, P. S. Volkovynska [22], I. G. Kadyrus and co-authors [35], and K. O. Latyshev, V. G. Tyagun focus on the formation and maintenance of an appropriate level of competitiveness. I. A. Gogol [15] and G. Ya. Levkiv [16] focus their research on improving methodological approaches to strategy formation and the definition of strategic guidelines.

Research by I. A. Kravchuk [27], L. V. Tarasovich [28], and T. V. Ustik [29] is

aimed at developing approaches to the formation and implementation of marketing strategies for agricultural enterprises, while scientific studies by R. V. Logosha and O. L. Poleva [30], S. I. Poperechny and T. Yu. Kudla [31] and A. A. Postol [22] aim to identify their fundamental characteristics.

The works of L. O. Kustrich [23], O. O. Levchenko [24], S. I. Poperechny [25], and A. V. Tarasyuk [26] reveal the internal and external factors of forming marketing strategies for agricultural enterprises, analyze the most optimal principles for evaluating alternatives, identify methods for implementing strategies, propose ways to optimize them in the future, etc.

A summary of the results of the analysis of literary sources, as well as a rethinking of the essence and significance of the formation of marketing strategies in the activities of agricultural enterprises, gives reason to assert that a marketing strategy is a methodological way of preparing and conducting market activities aimed at achieving a set goal in certain conditions, i.e., a specific time, place, and market segment.

In view of the above, it can be stated that a marketing strategy should mainly include:

- market analysis, which allows determining what products, of what quality, in what price range, and in what quantity are needed by existing and potential consumers in the market;
- approaches to streamlining the production and sales structure of agricultural enterprises, determining the optimal size and specialization of an agricultural enterprise;
- strengthening the specialization of an agricultural enterprise or diversifying its activities depending on market requirements, territorial, geographical, natural and climatic characteristics, and regional specifics;
- optimization of the structure and number of the employed population against the backdrop of increased mechanization and automation of the main production processes, as well as the collection, storage, transportation of crops, their primary processing, etc.;

- changes in the production profile of agricultural enterprises, primarily of the farming type, to produce more modern crops and breed animals and poultry, which is due to scientific and technological progress in agriculture, the spread of new knowledge about technologies, genetics, engineering, etc.;

- intensification of the production of cash crops and livestock products.

Scientific thought is actively developing certain areas related to the formation of strategies for agricultural enterprises, particularly in the context of greening production. Marketing strategies are being developed as a comprehensive marketing system in individual product markets, such as grain, milk, meat, and vegetables, or in specific organizational and legal forms of economic activity in rural areas.

Numerous marketing analysis tools are used in the marketing process, the most important of which are the SWOT analysis (an assessment of a company's resources, strengths, and weaknesses) and portfolio methods (used to assess a company's development opportunities and analyze competitors). Currently, agricultural markets are experiencing active competition with a real struggle for customers. Therefore, a company that lacks a specific strategy and fails to adapt its product portfolio to market requirements will eventually lose its competitive position, consumers, and market share. On the other hand, only an agricultural enterprise that knows its position in the market and the positions of its competitors can take the leading position.

In this regard, the scientific literature currently devotes considerable attention to studying the entire range of marketing tools, including those based on digital technologies, mass psychology, and the specifics of human perception, among others. Scientists are also paying considerable attention to the study and improvement of communication channels, which is particularly important for agriculture due to its unique nature.

The sale of agricultural products requires knowledge of many conditions that influence buyer behavior related to the selection and purchase of products. Agricultural producers and marketers have no influence over a significant proportion of these conditions. However, one of the most effective ways to influence the remaining conditions that directly affect the sales and economic performance of agricultural

enterprises is marketing. After all, marketing is a market activity carried out to sell goods and services with the maximum possible effect.

Most agricultural enterprises on the market are production-oriented, as evidenced by their efforts to meet necessary product quality standards while minimizing production costs. At the same time, the determination of product quality standards and parameters, as well as the organization of their sale, are often carried out by processing enterprises and intermediaries, which, unlike agricultural producers, mostly have market-oriented rather than production-oriented approaches in their activities.

At the same time, the needs for developing marketing activities in agricultural enterprises vary considerably depending on their organizational and legal forms of management and size. Thus, due to dynamic development, the availability of new technologies, investments in science and innovation, large agricultural enterprises require a special reorganization of their structure through the creation or expansion of marketing departments. This reorganization is necessary to maintain their market positions. Such producers require a significant marketing budget and strive to improve the quality of their products or services, etc. They are increasingly investing in market research to gather information about their customers' needs and preferences. Therefore, their awareness is gradually increasing, which leads to the creation of a positive image. The primary challenge for large agricultural enterprises in developing marketing activities remains attracting highly qualified personnel and rationalizing the marketing organization.

However, for small businesses, this approach to separating and developing marketing departments is complicated and sometimes impossible. For medium and small agricultural businesses, the primary challenge in developing marketing activities is the limited availability of resources. Therefore, new approaches to marketing organizations that are more adaptable to local market requirements need to be developed.

In general, the use of the marketing concept in all types of agricultural enterprises will ensure:

- obtaining realistic information about the market, consumer needs, purchase frequency, preferences for certain goods, etc.;
- the creation of organizational, economic, and technical conditions in which this information will form the basis for rational management decisions at both the micro and macroeconomic levels;
- the creation of effective marketing strategies aimed at intermediate and end buyers, which will allow producers to adapt to consumer needs, strengthen their competitive advantages, and effectively stimulate purchase intentions through appropriate advertising.

When planning marketing activities, it is crucial to consider the unique characteristics of agricultural production. Compared to other sectors of the economy, the agricultural production structure in Ukraine is characterized by a large number of agricultural enterprises of varying sizes. At the same time, a significant proportion of them produce and sell small batches of goods. Therefore, the fragmented structure of agricultural enterprises has several limitations for marketing activities, namely:

- the low financial capacity of enterprises does not allow the use of a range of marketing tools and limits the ability to obtain information that is important for marketing;
- the lack of knowledge and marketing skills among people engaged in agricultural production complicates the use of complex marketing programs;
- the unsatisfactory production capacity of individual farms does not allow for high efficiency of marketing activities in cooperation with large consumers of agricultural products.

In each of the above cases, the position of agricultural producers improves when they act as a group, as the group, with its collective offer, responds more effectively to the recipient's needs and meets market requirements. It is precisely such approaches to group marketing activities based on the principles of agricultural cooperation that should be developed for small and medium-sized agricultural enterprises, including farmers, private entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders.

At the same time, for the introduction and further development of marketing

activities in agricultural enterprises of all types, sizes, and organizational and legal forms of management, it is necessary to take into account that agricultural production is distinguished by several specific features that can significantly affect the creation of marketing communications, change the scope of marketing tools, require special approaches to marketing organization and market promotion mechanisms, etc. These features are summarized in Table 1.

Table - 1. Peculiarities of Marketing Activities of Agricultural Enterprises

№	Essence of the peculiarity	Factors that caused the peculiarity	Risks and advantages of the peculiarities
A	B	C	D
1	Dependence on soil, natural climatic conditions, and geographical location	- Natural and climatic conditions, in particular the length of the growing season, temperature regime, and amount of precipitation; - Soil condition and fertility; - Territorial location of production facilities	Risks: possibility of reduced or lost harvests; loss of feed base for livestock; climatic and soil restrictions on product range; deterioration of sales due to imperfect logistics of geographically remote production facilities. Advantages: opportunities for the production of unique and environmentally friendly products; logistical advantages of geographically close production facilities; competitive price advantages for producers with comparatively better operating conditions; opportunities to increase production capacity through rationalization of land use
2	The importance of agricultural products for the consumer market and related sectors of the economy	- Agricultural products are foodstuffs and essential goods; - They are directly related to the food and national security of the state; - These products serve as raw materials for the processing industry, so their sale is regulated by the level of its development.	Risks: a significant proportion of products are perishable goods; a wide range of products requires significant differentiation marketing strategies; consumption of certain goods is limited by age, gender, religious beliefs, national traditions, and consumer health; there is a significant dependence of the price situation on the effective demand of the population and the financial and economic condition of processors. Advantages: relative market stability due to the impossibility of completely abandoning the industry's products; daily demand for products; need for a wide range of products; ability to significantly influence demand through socio-psychological influences on consumers.
3	Dependence on biological factors	- The use of living organisms, plants, and animals as means and objects of labor	Risks: uncontrollability or relative controllability of the processes of biological growth and development of living organisms; significant duration of the production cycle and its dependence on biological processes; risk of epizootics and the spread of plant diseases, the likelihood of financial losses as a result; difficulty in ensuring product uniformity. Advantages: opportunities to increase production and sales volumes and improve product quality as a result of intensification of activities and the use of more productive organisms; renewability of production resources.

Continuation of table 1

A	B	C	D
4	Cyclical nature of activities and pronounced seasonality of production	- Seasonality and cyclicity in animal and plant cultivation	Risks: seasonal fluctuations in market conditions; losses and complications in the rational use of resources due to mismatches between production and financial cycles; prolonged production periods; inability to respond quickly to market changes. Advantages: the possibility of gaining competitive advantages due to territorial differences in production seasons; strengthening of competitive advantages through the experience effect; predictability.
5	The existence of complexity in organizational and legal forms of economic activity	- Coexistence of commodity producers varying in size, form of ownership, form of business organization, specialization, cooperation, and integration.	Risks: the emergence of multifaceted competition; increased costs for various forms, methods, and tactics of marketing activities. Advantages: opportunities for a differentiated approach in the specialization of various commodity producers; the development of healthy competition with a positive impact on the quality and other characteristics of goods.
6	Inertia of commodity producers, insufficient level of integration and cooperation	- Commitment to traditions, which sometimes leads to low maneuverability; - Negative attitude towards the development of the cooperative movement and integration due to unsatisfactory experience of the "collective farm past".	Risks: intensification of unhealthy competition; loss of market positions compared to progressive, including foreign, businesses; low propensity to spread the cooperative movement; inability to quickly adapt to changing market conditions and transformations in consumer tastes, preferences, and demands. Advantages: opportunities for diversifying marketing strategies; gaining competitive advantages as a result of a progressive attitude and development; strengthening competitive positions as a result of overcoming inertia.
7	Significant variability in the organization of marketing activities	- Diversity of approaches to organizing production and sales activities; - Different financial, human, and material resources of commodity producers; - Differences in specialization and work in different markets.	Risks: loss or failure to achieve strong competitive positions due to insufficient funding for marketing activities among small and medium-sized producers; lack of connection between production and sales processes due to lack of market knowledge; absence or shortage of marketing department employees; low level of marketing activity organization. Advantages: the possibility of significant differentiation of sales policy in different markets and among different commodity producers; differentiation of commodity and pricing policy, which allows for balancing food security; increase in sales channels; development of market mechanisms.

Continuation of table 1

A	B	C	D
8	High sensitivity of agromarketing	- Susceptibility to various types of influences; - Ability to adapt, self-organize, and self-manage the agricultural marketing system.	Risks: high level of competition due to the uniformity of goods; likelihood of chain reactions in the event of a crisis and its spread/ Advantages: flexible response to changes in market conditions; ability to create and develop new forms of market promotion, form atypical channels and means of organization (e.g., such as public procurement associations); possibility of state support through market intervention mechanisms, etc.
9	Specifics of regulatory and legal regulation	- High dependence of agriculture on state influence; - Traditional state support for the industry even in market conditions; - Differences in the regulation of economic processes and phenomena from other sectors of the economy.	Risks: lack of an updated program or concept for new transformations in agriculture; lack of state support during times of crisis; lack of/low activity (lack of initiative) in organizing marketing activities at the macro level. Advantages: creation of additional mechanisms to protect and support commodity producers; mitigation of the negative effects of specific features of agriculture; support for the competitiveness of domestic commodity producers in domestic and foreign markets; additional opportunities for the formation of agricultural market infrastructure; price stabilization; reduction or prevention of price disparities.
10	Features of human resource capacity building	- Combining production with rural lifestyle.	Risks: trained personnel refusing to work in rural areas; inertia in terms of staff training compared to other sectors; resistance to new forms and methods of market promotion due to traditions and habits. Advantages: employee loyalty; combination of work and property management (in cases where the owner or co-owner of an agricultural enterprise is also an employee).

Source: developed by the author

Dependence on soil, natural climatic conditions, and geographical location directly affects the financial and economic results of activities. Agricultural production depends on the fertility, quality, and intensity of land use. The rational use of chemical pesticides and the application of environmentally friendly technologies enable the production of organic products. At the same time, irrational land cultivation hurts crop productivity. Additionally, there is a close connection between the use of land resources and the livestock sector. This link determines the quality, quantity, and range of products. All these conditions ultimately determine the specifics of the marketing activities of agricultural enterprises.

Agromarketing specialists deal with essential goods for the population. Therefore, they must satisfy the demand for agricultural products, taking into account the age, gender, national preferences, and health status of the population, while also ensuring sufficient quantity and quality. If these are perishable goods, specialists must promptly organize their delivery and ensure that it is accompanied by safe packaging. In addition, most of the products sold are raw materials for the buyer, who processes them into final products and brings them to market; this leads to agricultural producers responding to the needs of intermediaries rather than end consumers. It is also worth noting that the primary source of agricultural production is land. Its fertility and quality should determine the commodity policy of the enterprise.

Crop production is typically obtained once or twice a year, whereas the production process is designed to operate throughout the year. The same cyclicity is also characteristic of livestock production to a certain extent. In this regard, marketers must respond flexibly to market conditions, trends, and changes in consumer demand.

The peculiarity of marketing research of sales markets and product promotion is related to the seasonality of production and product receipt. Currently, there is a need for marketing activities related to the direct processing of products by producers, as the buyer may also be the end consumer. The state of product processing, service, and competitiveness with agricultural products imported from abroad does not currently meet all buyer requirements. The following reasons explain this:

- a) many agricultural producers do not have sufficient financial and material

resources in their organizations;

b) there is a lack of sufficient experience in organizing and conducting marketing activities.

Various forms of ownership of land, means of production, and products lead to multifaceted competition, which is directly driven by demand for products and their satisfaction. It is this feature that determines the variety and diversification of marketing strategies, forms, methods, and tactics of agromarketing.

Agro-marketing systems are formed based on organizational forms of ownership and management. They may differ in terms of organization, management, and functioning, but they are undoubtedly aimed at realizing the interests of buyers. A diverse range of organizational and economic forms, including economic associations, private enterprises, cooperatives, farms, state-owned enterprises, and other forms of financial management, characterizes the agricultural sector. Hence, the variety of marketing forms ranges from marketing strategy planning to performance measurement. Therefore, the primary task of agromarketing is to establish a comprehensive system of marketing principles at the national level that ensures optimal conditions for the reproduction of each agromarketing entity's capabilities.

Different levels of marketing activity impact the entire agribusiness marketing system, encompassing production, processing, and sales. An insufficient level of marketing activities at one level can ultimately lead to unsatisfactory marketing as a whole. As a result, this significantly reduces the efficiency of agribusiness.

The higher sensitivity, receptivity, adaptability, self-organization, and self-management of the agromarketing system compared to other types of marketing are primarily attributed to the existence of high competition due to the uniformity of goods. Therefore, this system must be more flexible in adapting to policy decisions at the state level, given the diversity of organizational and legal forms.

The imperfect regulatory and legal framework for all agricultural activities has a negative impact, primarily on the development of agricultural marketing. In turn, uncertainty, constant changes, and amendments to legislation and regulations at the state level make its evolutionary development impossible.

The peculiarity of human resource development lies primarily in the fact that employees of agricultural enterprises must be mainly rural residents, who, due to the territorial dispersion of land areas, must live near the enterprise itself. This complicates management's ability to attract qualified specialists.

It should be noted that the level of education of personnel engaged in marketing activities of agricultural enterprises is unsatisfactory. Specialists often lack the necessary knowledge, and according to a study by S. G. Turchina, only 15.6% of marketers plan to find employment in the agricultural sector [30]. Marketing has been widely introduced into the field of education [31, 22], and there is an urgent need for its implementation in agricultural education.

Under these conditions, there is a need to introduce several measures to support the development of human resource capacity in agricultural enterprises, as well as state and regional programs that support agriculture and the farm sector as a whole. Currently, Ukraine has a State Target Program for the Development of the Agricultural Sector of the Economy, covering the period up to 2025, and a Concept for the Development of Farms and Agricultural Cooperation for 2025-2030. According to these documents, it is expected that appropriate measures at the state level will enable the potential of agricultural enterprises to be realized, create opportunities for rural area development, and facilitate an increase in the cultivation of agricultural products with higher added value [23].

State support for farms in Ukraine will also contribute directly and indirectly to the development of marketing activities in agricultural enterprises, reducing interest rates on loans, providing preferential loans, financial support for the development of livestock farming, viticulture, horticulture, processing of agricultural products, support for the cooperative movement, and other state measures.

Marketing activities in an agricultural enterprise should begin with the formulation of a marketing strategy, as it justifies the market orientation of the enterprise. In doing so, the peculiarities of the agricultural market should be taken into account, in particular, the fact that some types of agricultural products have common characteristics; most types of products are harvested once a year and consumed

unevenly throughout the year, which causes fluctuations in demand and, accordingly, seasonal price fluctuations; the presence of a large number of producers of similar products generates a level of competition and high price cyclicity in the demand for agricultural products [24]. In addition, the system of marketing tools is influenced by changes in the behavior of potential consumers, as safety and environmental friendliness indicators have become priorities in product selection, alongside quality and other factors. For instance, consumers may engage with products online, offline, or simultaneously in both settings.

Summarizing the above regarding the peculiarities of marketing activities of agricultural enterprises, the marketing management system should include key components such as cultivation, harvesting, storage, delivery, product processing, and direct trade. For a significant number of producers of similar products, this requires the implementation and improvement of each marketing element, leveraging specific innovations and technological advancements.

Given the constant changes in the marketing macroenvironment, it is essential to organize agricultural enterprises' activities on a marketing basis, taking into account all the characteristics of the agricultural sector. Since Ukraine is a member of the WTO and is undergoing constant market globalization, long-term marketing principles must be implemented. The profitability of agricultural producers can be ensured through the availability of market information, systematic demand research, flexible product and pricing policies, and effective communication policies, as well as the formation and annual allocation of a marketing budget that provides strategic direction for planning, organizing, and controlling activities.

2.3 Methodology for evaluating the effectiveness of marketing activities in agriculture

Any agricultural enterprise sets and strives to achieve specific strategic goals throughout its activities, directing its existing production resources accordingly. Achieving commercial success in the market requires an agricultural enterprise to meet the needs of buyers for high-quality and safe products at relatively low costs, while

also conducting environmentally safe production activities, making rational use of resources, and implementing the principles of socially responsible business. Competition for key market positions forces each enterprise to justify its marketing activities, which aim to improve its market position and help maintain its previously achieved position, thereby ensuring the implementation of the enterprise's strategic goals. Therefore, marketing orientation should play a key role in the management of modern agricultural enterprises, and marketing strategies and goals should become an integral part of the development plan.

To date, there is no universal approach in the scientific literature for analyzing the marketing activities of different types of organizations, enterprises, and business entities. The impact of marketing activities on the overall production and economic activities of an enterprise can be determined at various levels: at the state level (meeting market demand for quality goods), at the level of individual agricultural enterprises, as well as at the level of individual consumers and households, agribusiness partners, and rural areas.

Thus, V. I. Baklanova believes that the following indicators should be used to assess the effectiveness of marketing activities of agricultural enterprises:

- profitability of agricultural product sales;
- marketability of agricultural products;
- labor intensity of agricultural production;
- wage intensity of agricultural production

In turn, many scientists believe that improving sales policy has a direct impact on the effectiveness of an enterprise's marketing activities.

At the same time, L. V. Balabanova and other domestic scientists have proposed studying marketing activities using such integrated indicators as buyers, adequacy of information, and overall marketing integration [23]. However, this approach lacks a precise algorithm for determining the overall assessment indicator, which complicates its practical application.

N. K. Moiseeva and M. V. Konyshova characterize marketing activities according to their functions, including market research, product policy, distribution policy, and

communication policy, and evaluate them using general indicators of profitability and return on investment. However, the disadvantage of this approach is that it does not allow for calculating an integral indicator to characterize the marketing policy of an enterprise [24].

G. Assel's opinion is reasonable, who believes that the effectiveness of marketing activities is assessed by the effectiveness of marketing costs [22]. Using statistical methods, the scientist proposes to study the relationship between marketing costs and the final result, i.e., the enterprise's profit or loss. A similar approach is often taken by marketing practitioners, who believe that an effective marketing policy of an enterprise consists of increasing sales and, consequently, profits [25].

Scientific literature distinguishes four groups of methods for evaluating marketing activities:

- quantitative – based on identifying and comparing marketing performance indicators with marketing costs, may include the following criteria: return on investment in marketing activities, brand position in the market, assessment of the company's market success in the competitive environment;

- sociological – based on the use of sociological tools, in particular sociological surveys, sociological research, etc.;

- expert (subjective) – involves the use of relevant knowledge, intuition, and experience of experts or specialists to formulate general conclusions about the state and characteristics of the enterprise's marketing activities, mainly in the form of numerical indicators;

- qualitative methods – based on conducting a marketing audit, analyzing the external and internal operating environment, goals, strategies, and means of implementing marketing activities for the enterprise as a whole or for its individual structural units. Such an assessment is carried out by the enterprise's own management or by independent third-party experts engaged by the enterprise.

Therefore, conducting a balanced and objective assessment of marketing activities is significantly complicated by the ambiguity of approaches and the lack of a single algorithm for performing such analysis and calculating coefficients. The

methodology for analyzing marketing activities includes quantitative and qualitative methods, which complement each other in the research process and are reinforced by expert and sociological assessments. This group of methods includes marketing audits of agricultural enterprises, the identification of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats, as well as marketing research using focus groups, in-depth interviews, expert questionnaires, and other techniques. Qualitative research methods are employed using sociological methods and assessment techniques to confirm or refute the effectiveness of marketing policies by directly obtaining information from consumers.

Currently, research on the application of various marketing research methods and their effectiveness has become particularly widespread.

A comprehensive approach is evident in the work of R. Dudyak, I. Bilsky, and S. Bugil, who propose evaluating the marketing activities of agricultural enterprises by examining their product, pricing, sales, and communication policies. This approach is entirely justified. Still, it would be advisable to slightly expand the list of specific assessment segments for each of the identified areas (Fig. 3). This approach will allow for a more comprehensive and diverse study of the marketing activities of agricultural enterprises and the development of practical strategies for their improvement in the future [21].

The results of agricultural enterprises and management decisions depend to a large extent on the level of marketing development and the implementation of marketing tools in their activities. Decisions on the production of new products, expansion of the product range, setting prices for goods, developing a system of price discounts, optimizing distribution channels, and communicating information about goods or services to consumers are all within the competence of marketing policy. Making the right management decisions is impossible without knowledge of the market, the needs of potential consumers, information about competitors and suppliers, and effective means of communication with the target audience. It is the marketing research system that is responsible for implementing these management decisions within the enterprise.

In Ukraine, marketing technologies for market research began to be used in the 1980s and 1990s, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the onset of perestroika, when advanced and effective foreign technologies became available. However, experience has shown that the use of predetermined “templates” has not justified itself. Most of the marketing literature did not take into account the specific conditions and state of the Ukrainian economy at the time of the research. Gradually, it became clear that marketing research should be conducted as closely as possible to the specifics of each enterprise, market, and consumer.

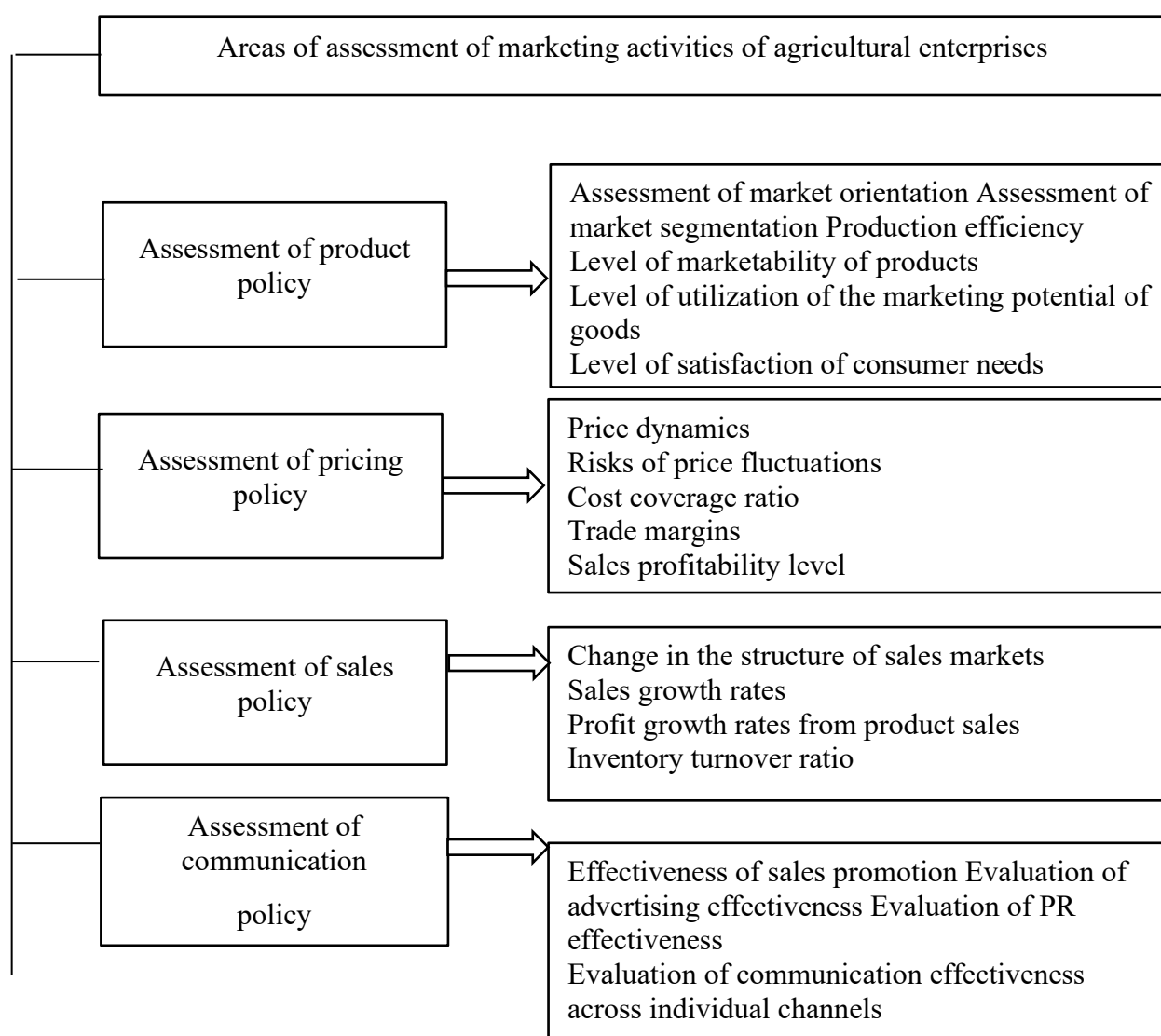


Figure - 3. Areas of assessment of marketing activities of agricultural enterprises

Source: revised by the author based on the work of R. Dudyak et al. [21]

The marketing research system comprises a set of practical tools, techniques, and methods for gathering primary and exclusive information necessary to address specific issues and problems faced by an enterprise.

The activities of any agricultural enterprise require constant improvement of the system of planning, organization, management, and control of production and economic activities, the development of new methods, as well as the solution of such important tasks as adaptation to the needs and preferences of consumers, expanding the product range, maintaining flexibility and increasing production efficiency, improving the system for delivering products from the manufacturer to the end consumer, improving sales promotion, and improving pricing policy. This is precisely what marketing activities are designed to do. It is no coincidence that, in today's successful companies, marketing is central to the management system, as it influences the decisions made by managers.

Marketing is a function that determines the policy, style, and nature of management. The implementation of the marketing concept in the practice of agricultural enterprises enables the formation of rational strategic programs, a flexible response to changes in market conditions, and orientation in complex market conditions, as well as addressing other market-specific problems and peculiarities.

Over an extended period, the marketing approach has undergone significant changes. According to American scientists, marketing now accounts for about 80% of total activity. Therefore, marketing requires substantial capital investment.

Marketing as a management tool is always considered a highly costly means of overcoming competition, as well as the only means of developing the market in crisis conditions. Accordingly, its application is necessary in the current conditions in Ukraine.

The American Marketing Association interprets marketing research as a function that connects buyers and society with marketing specialists through information used to identify marketing opportunities and problems, collect, select, and evaluate marketing activities and processes, monitor marketing effectiveness, and improve the perception of marketing as a process.

J.-J. Lamben argues that “marketing research involves diagnosing information needs and selecting relevant interrelated variables for which reliable information is collected, recorded, and analyzed” [20].

According to many scholars, marketing research is primarily the systematic collection, analysis, and reflection of data related to marketing goods and services.

In turn, F. Kotler believes that “marketing research is, in essence, the systematic identification of the data needed in connection with the marketing situation facing the firm, its collection, analysis, and reporting of results” [18]. P. Hagg notes that market research helps in making the right marketing decisions and improves them [19].

Marketing research is one of the most critical components of the enterprise's management decision support system. It is a systematic process of planning, collecting, analyzing, and presenting market information, the purpose of which is to reconcile the interests of manufacturers and consumers. E. P. Golubkov, on the other hand, considers marketing research to be a function that connects marketers with the market, consumers, competitors, and all elements of the marketing environment through the exchange of information. They are related to decision-making in all aspects of marketing activities [17]. In turn, I. Berezin understands marketing research as the systematic determination of the range of data necessary in connection with the marketing task set before the company, including their collection, analysis, and reporting on the information obtained, as well as the conclusions and recommendations [18].

Many marketing scientists consider marketing research to be the collection of information, and they believe that the collection and processing of information in enterprises is provided by a marketing information system (MIS). At the same time, S. S. Garkavenko believes that marketing research involves the systematic collection, processing, and analysis of data to inform marketing decisions [16].

Summarizing the above definitions of the concept of “marketing research,” it can be argued that the definition of the latter has quite different interpretations. Typically, the primary objective of such research is to mitigate or eliminate the market risk inherent in management decisions. This is primarily due to the relatively volatile

and sometimes unpredictable external marketing environment in which agricultural enterprises operate.

Summarizing and rethinking the findings of scientists, it can be argued that the main principles of marketing research should be:

- systematicity: logic, consistency, periodicity;
- comprehensiveness: consideration and analysis of all elements and factors in their interrelationship and dynamics;
- purposefulness: focus on solving relevant, clearly defined, purely marketing problems;
- objectivity: independence from subjective assessments and influences;
- reliability: informational and methodological support, accuracy of the data obtained;
- cost-effectiveness: the benefits of implementing the conclusions and recommendations obtained exceed the costs associated with conducting marketing research;
- effectiveness: the availability of interim and final results that will help solve marketing problems;
- compliance with the principles of fair competition.

When considering marketing research in agriculture, it is essential to note that it involves a labor-intensive process that requires specific resources, identification of the main stages of implementation, and both theoretical and practical experience.

Marketing research can be organized in the following ways:

- The first option assumes that all departments of the enterprise whose responsibilities include marketing are responsible for collecting and analyzing information. In other words, there is no marketing department.
- The second option involves the existence of a localized marketing department within the enterprise. Each department is responsible for collecting and analyzing information within its competence, and the manager evaluates the conclusions and recommendations.
- The third option involves the existence of a separate marketing research

department within the marketing department. This is due to the large volume of research work.

- The fourth option: research is conducted by specialized consulting firms.

- The fifth option involves combined research, in which, depending on the specifics of the problem, employees study, for example, the profitability of the distribution system, the state of sales, and forms of product promotion, while a specialized firm studies

- market capacity, the external marketing environment, etc.

The purpose of marketing research is to collect and analyze data that will subsequently serve as the basis for making management decisions regarding the organization and optimization of marketing activities of agricultural enterprises.

Regardless of the nature of the industry in which the enterprise operates, accurate information and its proper use are prerequisites for effective and successful decision-making. The existence of marketing problems necessitates the constant collection and processing of information. One way to obtain accurate and reliable information is to conduct market research.

To understand the structure of marketing research for agricultural enterprises, it is advisable to use the proposed structural-logical research scheme (Fig. 1.4).

In the process of marketing research of producers, the questionnaire included questions about the primary type of activity, the organizational and legal form of business, the size of the enterprise, the management's need for marketing tools, the marketing tools used by the business entity, the persons engaged in marketing activities and their knowledge of the subject, the impact of marketing on the performance of the enterprise, and the resources for ensuring marketing activities.

The structure of sales markets by territorial affiliation, market orientation, sources of sufficient market information, the size of the budget for marketing activities and the willingness to increase it, the structure of production and sales of agricultural products, and sales channels were also studied. Additionally, attitudes toward government regulatory measures and priorities in various areas of activity were examined.

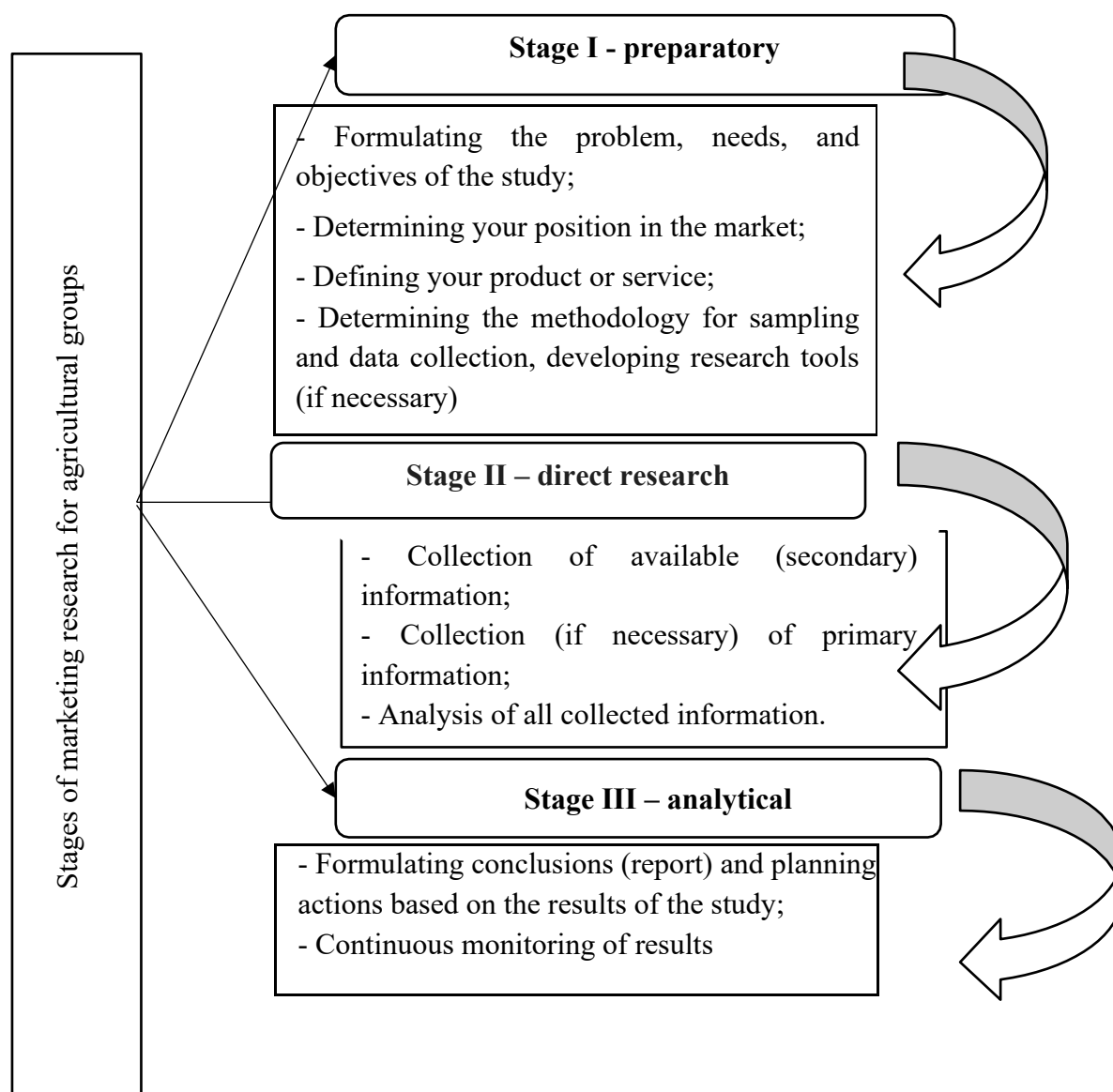


Figure - 4. Structural and logical diagram of conducting marketing research of agricultural enterprises

Source: proposed by the author

The consumer questionnaire includes questions about age, gender, average income per family member, main places of purchase of agricultural products, number of family members for whom agrarian products are purchased, frequency of purchases, criteria used when purchasing agricultural products, the level of influence of marketing tools when buying goods, taste preferences, and the distribution of the total budget for the purchase of various types of agricultural products.

The purpose of marketing research using the proposed approaches is to determine the state of development and level of use and implementation of marketing tools in the activities of agricultural enterprises, farms, and private households, as well as to determine the level of influence of marketing activities on product consumers. It should be noted that private households need to be studied for two main reasons: first, they are a key reserve and foundation for the creation of new agricultural enterprises in the future, primarily through the establishment of farming activities; secondly, agricultural production in these households is a mechanism of self-sufficiency, which significantly affects the structure of sales and consumption in the region and is therefore essential.

The main objectives achieved in the course of the marketing research are:

- 1) to study the agricultural products market in a regional context, the number of producers, their organizational and legal form, overall development dynamics, scope of activity, and financial and economic performance indicators;
- 2) using questionnaires and in-depth interviews, find out about the state of development and implementation of marketing activities by agricultural entities, what tools they use, what budget is projected and spent on marketing activities, who is directly involved in marketing issues at the enterprise, identify product distribution channels; to investigate the role of intermediaries in bringing products to the end consumer, to investigate the costs associated with product sales;
- 3) to investigate consumer behavior by filling out questionnaires, namely: analyze the structure of agricultural product consumption, the frequency of purchases, the average amount of money spent by consumers, what needs and activities motivate them to buy, what criteria or impulses lead to a purchase, and identify the places where consumers most often buy products.

The study proposes using in-depth interviews when working with agricultural producers and surveys when working with product consumers. In sociology and psychology, the in-depth interview method has become widely used, and therefore, it is also used in marketing research.

The study also proposes using expert interviews to obtain in-depth information

about the opinions, views, and experiences of experts in the field of agricultural activity. The interview method shares some features in common with certain types of surveys; however, expert interviews are a form of free discussion, where new questions arise during the conversation and the topic of conversation can take unexpected turns. It is this approach that has proven to be the most effective and efficient in studies conducted in collaboration with experts in the Zakarpattia region.

In the study of consumer behavior, the questionnaire survey method is proposed for use, as it is the most common approach in practice. A survey is a method of collecting primary information from consumers on a predetermined topic. Surveys are a flexible and, at the same time, quite effective method. In the proposed methodological approaches to our scientific research, the survey is standardized.

The selection of experts in the field of production and sale of agricultural products was preceded by the process of forming its criteria. We included the following criteria: level of awareness in the field of marketing activities of agricultural enterprises, work and experience in this field, relevant education, and objectivity in expressing opinions. The study revealed that the best experts in this field are the managers of agricultural enterprises, farms, and heads of private farms who have experience in selling agricultural products, working in markets for plant and animal products, understand all the issues involved in carrying out activities, and are knowledgeable about the issues under study.

For consumer research, it should be conducted in various locations, primarily in markets, supermarkets, and agricultural fairs. Respondents should be people of different ages, genders, social statuses, and levels of material and financial security, which contributes to the impartiality and reliability of the collection and analysis of the entire spectrum of primary information.

The main stages of the study are:

- 1) preparatory – defining the purpose and objectives of the study, the target audience, the means and tools for conducting it, searching for secondary information on the subject under study;
- 2) direct questioning – involves conducting in-depth interviews with industry

experts and surveying consumers of agricultural products;

3) analytical – involves grouping data, analyzing and processing the results of the marketing research, summarizing and generalizing.

The topics covered by the questionnaires differ for consumers of agricultural products and their producers.

Thus, when surveying producers to obtain useful information, clear questions were formulated and all possible alternative answers were considered.

With a certain degree of convention, the questionnaire is divided into several sections, including:

- general – which provides information about the agricultural enterprise's field of activity, its size, and its organizational and legal form of management;

- “marketing” – which contains information on the enterprise's marketing needs, the level of use of marketing tools, data on the person (persons) responsible for marketing activities, and whether they have the relevant professional education, experience, competencies, and skills;

- Sales – containing information about product distribution channels, characteristics of consumers and markets targeted by the enterprise, data on the lack of information in the process of bringing products from the manufacturer to the end consumer;

- financial – contains questions, the answers to which give an idea of the amount of funds that enterprises are willing to spend on marketing activities, the percentage of the enterprise's profits that the enterprise's management is willing to allocate to pay for marketing activities, as well as the resources that the enterprise has at its disposal to organize and conduct marketing activities;

- Production and sales – includes data on the volume of agricultural production, its cost price, total sales expenses, etc.

To study consumers of agricultural products, the questionnaire included a wide range of questions covering a broad analytical spectrum. In particular, it is advisable to group respondents by gender, age, and income level. In particular, five age groups of consumers should be identified, as age-related values and views vary significantly

and require detailed study and comparison with the overall results.

An important aspect of the study is to determine the number of people for whom agricultural products are purchased, as well as the number of family members. Strategically important questions in the questionnaire concern the criteria that buyers use when purchasing goods. Therefore, it is advisable to offer respondents a scale of importance to enable them to rank these criteria in order of importance.

The main criteria are: price, product quality, organic and environmental friendliness of products, packaging, shelf life, and other factors.

Equally important in the questionnaire are questions about understanding the role and impact of marketing tools on purchasing decisions. The criteria that need to be distinguished in this context are: various types of price discounts, increased product volume for the same price, in-store tastings, preference for domestic or imported products, preference for traditional products or environmentally friendly and select products, the influence of packaging, and other factors.

Another important issue is the purchase of different types of agricultural products at different times of the year, namely: vegetables, fruits, milk and dairy products, meat and meat products, eggs, and food industry products. It is also advisable to examine the percentage distribution of agricultural product purchases (by type) in the overall expenditure budget.

After collecting the initial information, it is necessary to ensure a comprehensive process of its processing and analysis. At this stage, the information needs to be grouped according to certain criteria, compared, and analyzed. This qualitative analysis provides extremely valuable information, which will subsequently form the basis for conclusions regarding the marketing research conducted.

Based on the survey results, a report should be prepared containing the following information:

- 1) description of the main stages of the marketing research;
- 2) methodology;
- 3) obstacles, difficulties, and problems that arose during the marketing research;

4) proposals and recommendations based on the research results, which will subsequently form the basis for marketing decisions.

The proposed methodological approaches to conducting marketing research will enable you to collect information on the use or non-use of marketing in the activities of agricultural enterprises in the region. They will help investigate the primary problems and obstacles to marketing development within the overall activities. The research will help identify and assess the impact of marketing activities on buyer behavior, as well as the main criteria that guide buyers when making purchasing decisions. Such research enables the evaluation of an enterprise's marketing activities based on the involvement of all participants in its operating environment, the development of strategies for modernizing these activities' tools, and the proposal of a series of measures for their improvement.

Conclusions

Essentially, marketing is a mechanism for implementing a key business idea by intensifying the entire process of enterprise management, ensuring the continuity of its activities aimed at fulfilling its key mission and generating profit, based on identifying and satisfying consumer needs. Agromarketing is a comprehensive activity that encompasses planning, forecasting consumer demand for agricultural products based on market conditions, implementing effective policies for processing, production, and storage of products, determining optimal pricing, promotional activities, and product sales to ensure the profitability of the agricultural sector.

The marketing of agricultural enterprises is part of agromarketing, a business activity that directly influences the flow of products from producers to consumers, satisfying consumer needs while achieving the primary economic goals of agricultural enterprises and generating profits for them. The basic rules of marketing should be: recognition of the value of information about the market and consumer needs; orientation of the producer and seller towards consumer needs; economic justification of decisions based on the integration of production and sales links; basing the marketing strategy on the expected product turnover cycle in the relevant market

segment; planning the production cycle based on marketing research; skilled selection and effective use of marketing tools and communication methods.

The conditions for effective marketing activities of agricultural enterprises are: regulatory and legal support for production, economic, commercial, and sales activities; financial and credit support; a rational pricing system; and an effective system for organizing and controlling production, economic, and commercial activities. Marketing research on the sale of agricultural enterprises' products should be carried out based on a questionnaire survey of producers and consumers according to the proposed structural-logical scheme in three stages: preparatory, in which the purpose and objectives of the research, the target audience, and the means and instruments of implementation are determined; questionnaires, where secondary information on the research topic is obtained, and direct questionnaires are conducted using in-depth interviews with industry experts and consumers of agricultural products; analytical, during which data is grouped, the results of the marketing research are analyzed and processed, conclusions are drawn, and generalizations are made.

For marketing research, it is advisable to use the two proposed questionnaires, which are designed for in-depth research of producers and consumers, allowing for the study of the agricultural market in a regional context, the identification and assessment of the state of development and implementation of marketing activities by agricultural enterprises, the tools they use, budgets, communication channels, etc., as well as to study consumer behavior, the structure of agricultural product consumption, the frequency and criteria for making purchases, and the amount of expenditure.