Chapter 49
Food Security and Self-Sufficiency as a Basis for National Security and Sovereignty: Evidence From Russia

Kirill Zemliak
Khabarovsk State University of Economics and Law, Russia

Anna Zhebo
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3142-2188
Khabarovsk State University of Economics and Law, Russia

Aleksey Aleshkov
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3853-4772
Khabarovsk State University of Economics and Law, Russia

ABSTRACT

The study discusses one of the global problems of mankind—ensuring food security for the population. The historical context of the food problem, the formation of the concept of food security, the approaches of the world community and individual countries to its provision and evaluation are considered. The case of Russia reveals the role of food security in ensuring economic, social, and political security and sovereignty of a state. Special attention is paid to the state of agriculture in Russia as a source of raw materials for ensuring food security, problems of its development, and ways to solve them. The place of Russia in ensuring the food security of the world is shown.

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INTRODUCTION

Food problem has a global relevance. It is caused by the mismatch between the growing demand of the population for food products and the capacities of agricultural production. The food problem is multi-dimensional as it combines the following aspects:

- Hunger and malnutrition
- Structure and quality of food
- Health status of population
- Food supplies
- Irregularity in the distribution of food
- Balance between food supply and population needs
- Food prices

Food problem is characterized by increasing severity at the national and global levels. As a result of the significant increase in world prices for major crops and food products, global status of food security deteriorated during the economic crisis in 2008. That fact was stated by international organizations as the onset of the world food crisis. The impact of this crisis has seriously affected low-income countries. These countries are net food importers in international trade (Mintusov, 2016).

The main causes of food shortages in the world are:

- High level of energy intensity of agro-industrial production, which was especially evident in developed countries, major food exporters
- Growing production of biofuels from oilseeds and grain
- Rapid industrial development and consumption growth in China and India
- Growth of intensity in use of natural resources, in a number of regions it reaches the lowest level
- Reduction of agricultural acreage as a result of urbanization and industrialization
- Growth of environmental pollution due to the growth of industrial waste, pesticides, and fertilizers
- Impact of global warming that caused a series of crop failures
- Growth of stocks under the influence of speculative turnover in the world market of food products, the increase in the volume of fixed-term insurance and speculative operations (Mintusov, 2016)

Hunger and malnutrition are linked primarily to local poor production conditions, war and civil strife, poverty and, therefore, to economic inaccessibility of food products. In addition, global climate change and extreme climate events are among the main causes of serious food crises (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 2018b).

Over the past few decades, the world has made some progress in addressing food security problem. In particular, there is a steady decline in the number of undernourished people. Globally, it is up to 820.8 million people (10.9% of the world population). In Russia, it is up to 3.6 million people (2.5% of population of the country) (FAO, 2018a).

Along with the global problem of hunger, there is a problem of overweight. In 2016, the number of people with obesity in the world amounted to 672.3 million people (13.2% of the world population), in Russia – 29.3 million people (25.7% of the population of the country) (FAO, 2018b). In addition to the above, obesity is found among people in the regions where people experience malnutrition. This