

## AGRICULTURE OF ARTSAKH: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

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**Introduction.** Agriculture was one of the strategically important sectors of the Artsakh economy. It was not accidental: firstly, during the Soviet period, the economy of Nagorno-Karabakh was agrarian-oriented and was the raw material supplier of Azerbaijan for nearly 70 years, secondly, the natural conditions of Artsakh were and are favorable for the development of agriculture. The rich agro-biodiversity of Artsakh is notable for wild legumes, edible plants, and a large number of various plants and animals. Artsakh is rich in water resources, the soil is quite fertile. Agricultural lands make up about 30% of the world's land fund, 48.9% in the case of Artsakh. Of the total 1180.3 thousand hectares of land areas of Artsakh (as of 01.07.2020), 30.7% were pastures, and 11.4% were arable lands. At the same time, arable lands made up 23.2% of agricultural lands, and orchards - only 1.3%<sup>1</sup>.

According to the data of the last Soviet census in 1989, the rural population in Artsakh was 48.3% of the total. This was significantly different from the indicator of 1926 (the initial period of Sovietization), when Nagorno-Karabakh was a predominantly agrarian country, and 93.4% of the population was concentrated in rural areas. As of January 1, 2020, before the war that shook the existence of Artsakh, the rural population made up 43.0% of the total population, the indicator registered a steady downward trend due to the increase in urbanization<sup>2</sup>. This phenomenon deepened especially due to the territorial losses that resulted from "the 44-day" Artsakh war when the residents of the rural areas of Hadrut, Shushi, Shahumyan, and Kashatagh regions were forcibly accommodated in the capital's hotels and uninhabited apartments.

During the period of independence, agriculture was always the focus of attention of the country's government, and the budgetary injections in the sector were quite large. However, agriculture provided only 6.5% of the GDP (according to 2022 data), while in 1999 it provided 29.4%, and in 2000 it provided 30.3%<sup>3</sup>.

In 2022, 85.5% of the gross agricultural product was provided by farms, including 90.3% in the case of animal husbandry. Compared to the contribution to the value added, the sector's participation in providing employment was high (12.1% of the employed)<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Artsakh, 2022, page 265.

<sup>2</sup> Demographic collection of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Artsakh, 2022, page 10.

<sup>3</sup> Minasyan M., The strategy of economic reforms in NKR, PhD thesis, 2002, p.118

<sup>4</sup> Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Artsakh, 2022, page 70

Therefore, there is a need to give a historical overview of the achievements in the field of agriculture, which determines the relevance of the research topic. **The purpose of the article** is to present the history of the development of agriculture in the Republic of Artsakh. To achieve that purpose, **the following research problems** were solved: to analyze the path of development of the sector, the trend of indicators, to present the connection of the sector with other sectors of the economy, and to identify the reasons for the slow growth of the gross agricultural product.

**Literature review.** Agriculture has always been a subject of study by governments and the scientific community because of its significance and role. Agricultural products can not be reproduced or replaced by other products of other industries. Because of that and rather high risk, in the conditions of the market economy, the system of agriculture state regulation not only does not lose its importance but is even more improved and complicated<sup>1</sup>.

One of the fundamental documents of the agrarian policy in RA is "The Strategy of the Main Directions Ensuring Economic Development in Agricultural Sector of the Republic of Armenia for 2020-2030", approved by the decision of the Government N1886-L of December 19, 2019. The aforementioned document envisages having a sustainable developing, innovative, high value added agriculture that cares for natural resources and is in harmony with the environment, creating ecologically clean products and guaranteeing the well-being of the people in rural areas. H. Mkrtchyan referred to the role of agriculture and the main directions of agrarian politics, noting that the class of landowners was formed as a result of land privatization, which also initiated new economic relations in the sector<sup>2</sup>.

The RA Government has a planned structure, that is hard to implement but important, in its "2023-2025 support for the consolidation of agricultural lands in the Republic of Armenia" program<sup>3</sup>. The Artsakh Government approved an annual support program for agriculture every year, a significant place was allocated to the branch in the analytical packages of the state budget.

**Methodology.** Comparative, descriptive, historical-analytical, socio-statistical, and comparison methods of scientific research were used in the scope of the research. Research articles of domestic and foreign authors related to the field, and normative legal acts regulating the field were the information basis for the article.

**Analysis.** Observing the trend of the gross agricultural output of the Republic of Artsakh in 1996-2022, it becomes obvious that there was no steady growth in the sector, a decline in the volume of gross product was observed from time to time, especially the

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<sup>1</sup> Zakharova G.P., Increasing the effectiveness of state support measures for agricultural producers in times of crisis, Bulletin of the Kazan State Agrarian University, 2015.N4/38, pp.16-19

<sup>2</sup> Mkrtchyan H., Land relations and the main directions of modern agrarian policy in RA, Yerevan, 1997, p. 14

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.irtek.am/views/act.aspx?aid=117278>

period of prolonged decline of 2018-2021 period. As a result of the observation of agricultural product indicators for 26 years (in five-year stages), it becomes obvious that the average growth in the branch in 1996-2000 was 13.3%, in 2001-2006 - 9.0%, in 2007-2011 - 10.3%, in 2017-2021 - the average rate of decline was 14.5%.

The main reason for the decline in the gross agriculture product was the resource losses resulting from the Artsakh war when the decline in the sector was 21.7% in 2020, and 51.1% in 2021 (72.2% percent in the horticulture subsector).

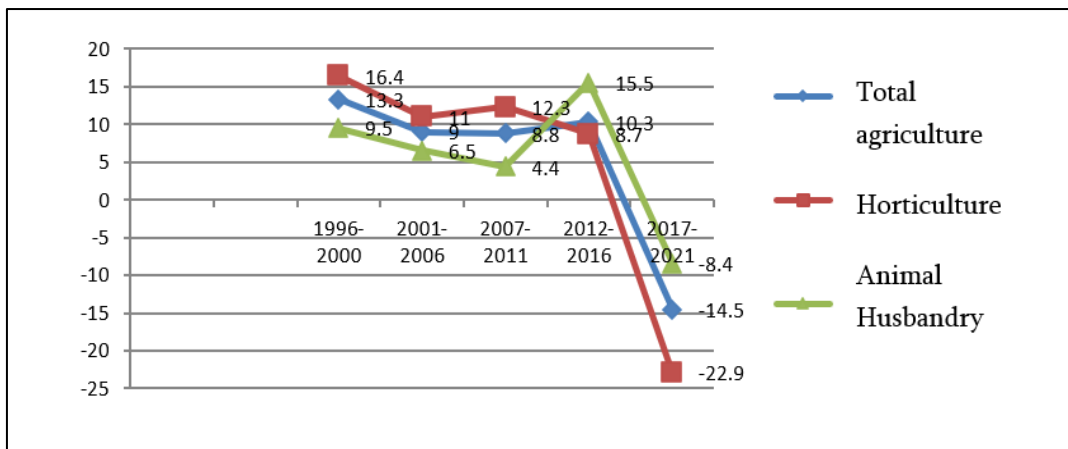


Figure 1. The dynamics of agriculture gross product, 1996-2021<sup>1</sup>

Since for a long time, the share of horticulture in the gross agricultural product was significant, the main reason for the fluctuations was, as a rule, unfavorable climatic conditions and the ineffectiveness of control measures. Although agriculture was considered a sector of strategic importance in Artsakh, its share in the GDP had decreased. In 1999-2000, the average share of agriculture in the GDP was about 30%, in 2013-2017 - 13.2%, and already in 2018-2022 - 8.3%<sup>2</sup>.

The structure of agriculture in each country is determined by local, natural features and conditions. As a rule, in the structure of agriculture, the animal husbandry section dominates in highly developed European countries (for example, Germany or Denmark), as well as in developing countries where there are extensive pastures and the area of arable land is very small (for example, Mongolia, Sudan, and Ethiopia). In Artsakh, from 1995 to 2014 (except 2014), the share of horticulture in the gross agricultural product was large, on average 61.3%, but in 2018-2022 the picture changed in favor of animal husbandry, which on average accounted for 62.6% of the gross agricultural product.

<sup>1</sup> Statistical yearbooks of Artsakh, statistical collections of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Artsakh

<sup>2</sup> Statistical yearbooks of Artsakh, statistical collections of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Artsakh

It is noteworthy that the reforms made in the sector did not have a significant impact on the diversification of agricultural products or on changing its structure. Initially, grain production had the largest share in the gross agricultural product, the second and third places were shared by meat and milk, since 2017, the share of meat has increased significantly.

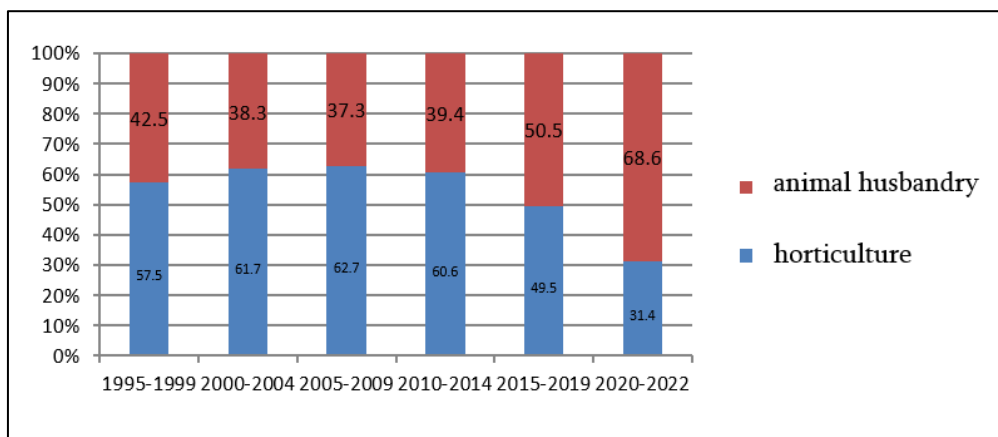


Figure 2. The structure of gross agricultural product by sub-sectors in Artsakh, (1995-2022)<sup>1</sup>

Although in recent years Artsakh pomegranates and persimmon enjoyed fame and were mainly exported, the share of the fruit in agricultural production was very small (5.7% in 2017-2022).

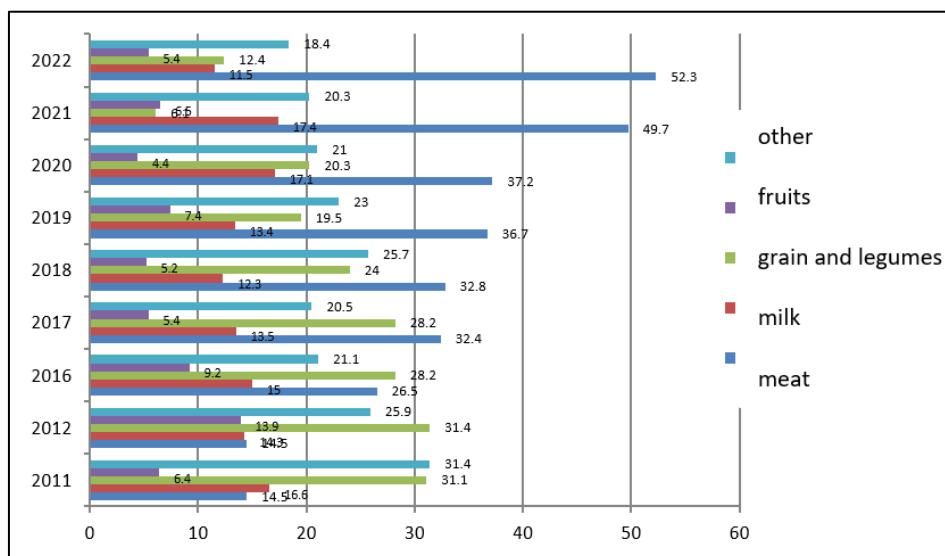


Figure 3. The structure of the agriculture gross product according to the main products in Artsakh, 2011-2022<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Statistical yearbooks of Artsakh, statistical collections of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Artsakh

In 2022, compared to 2017, the state support of agriculture in Artsakh increased by 3.2 times<sup>2</sup> (in the same period in the Republic of Armenia it decreased by 16%)<sup>3</sup>, and the gross agricultural product - 1.7 times<sup>4</sup> (in the Republic of Armenia it increased by 1.6 times)<sup>5</sup>.

In fact, against the backdrop of allocations from the state budget, the gross agricultural product in Artsakh grew slowly, especially the picture was unsatisfactory in terms of qualitative indicators. Table 1 shows that yield indicators remained low, and not significantly improved by the implemented support programs. Among them, perhaps, the provision of irrigation water at a subsidized price should be singled out, as disease and pest control support, the provision of preferential, low-interest loans to farmers and buyers of agricultural raw materials, the provision of intensive vineyards and orchards, as well as the construction of "smart farms", state support for the financial leasing of agricultural machinery, agro-processing equipment, and other measures.

*Table 1*

**The average yield of crops in Artsakh, 2010-2022, centner/ha<sup>6</sup>**

Years	Grain and legumes	Wheat	Potato	Vegetable	Technical crops	Melons
2010	13.0	12.1	83.9	76.7	40.1	170.5
2011	19.2	18.7	97.1	81.4	33.0	324.3
2012	17.7	17.1	100.8	90.2	18.1	335.7
2013	19.1	18.1	110.4	102.0	37.0	353.0
2014	12.7	13.9	84.3	77.2	23.5	262.7
2015	26.4	28.2	60.7	81.5	32.6	171.2
2016	25.2	27.2	80.5	113.7	22.9	217.7
2017	25.5	27.5	83.3	146.1	18.7	293.6
2018	20.0	22.6	72.4	106.1	13.0	365.7
2019	17.3	18.5	50.9	92.9	7.9	233.6
2020	12.5	13.9	40.4	61.1	6.2	203.2
2021	6.8	8.4	29.2	25.7	29.0	102.4
2022	17.4	20.1	55.5	24.4	27.0	179.5

Accurate accounting of agriculture in Artsakh always faced serious limitations, and after the change of the economic system, the problem became more serious. At first, as a result of the privatization of land, agricultural machinery, and other production means,

<sup>1</sup> The agriculture of Artsakh, statistical collections of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Artsakh

<sup>2</sup> State Budget Laws of 2007 and 2022 (Artsakh), <https://minfin-nkr.am/>

<sup>3</sup> State Budget Laws of 2007 and 2022 (RA), <https://www.gov.am/am/budget/>

<sup>4</sup> The agriculture of Artsakh, statistical collections of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Artsakh

<sup>5</sup> Statistical yearbooks of RA, 2008, <https://armstat.am/am/?nid=586&year=2008>, Statistical yearbooks of RA, 2023, <https://armstat.am/am/?nid=586&year=2023>

<sup>6</sup> The agriculture of Artsakh, statistical collections of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Artsakh

resources were decentralized, then, the rural collective farms formed on the basis of dissolved collective soviet farms (where centralized accounting was conducted). Finally, accounting forms and standards that would refer to agriculture were not introduced (accounting was placed on the leaders of the communities, who did not keep proper records. The problem of accounting in agriculture exists in many countries, where, however, various additional tools are used in parallel, for example, in the Republic of Armenia statistical data are also presented by enumerators who have professional knowledge and carry out regular observations. In addition, according to the current legislation, a comprehensive census of agriculture will be carried out for the second time in 2024 (the first being carried out in 2014). In the case of Artsakh, in 2019, the pilot phase of the agricultural census was held, which was not followed by the widespread census due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the war. The non-recognition of the country, geopolitical tension, closed borders, when the only opportunity connecting the world was the Republic of Armenia and it was very difficult and expensive for the peasant to export his products or import means of production negatively affected the agriculture of Artsakh. It was no accident that the export volumes of agricultural products and their processing products, except for grain, did not have a significant share in the product structure of the foreign trade of the Republic of Artsakh. Thus, the average share of animal husbandry in the export structure of Artshakh in 2017-2022 was only 2.1%, vegetables - 4.4%, and food products - 3.9%. The successive governments of Artsakh wanted to develop agriculture for many years, strengthening competitiveness, especially in terms of exports. However, it should be noted that a significant part of agricultural products was grown not so much as a product subject to sale, but as a means of self-sufficiency, that is, the level of commercialization of agricultural products is quite low. In 2010, the National Statistical Service of Artsakh conducted a sample survey of the current costs of agricultural production and the sale of agricultural products.

Processing of agricultural products in Artsakh was a strategic issue, however, it did not get a comprehensive solution for many reasons. There were factories for the production and storage of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, dairy products, vegetable oil, and bread products, which could not meet the domestic demand.

In developing countries, such as Artsakh, state support programs are mainly aimed at the development of the sector and provision of infrastructure, while in developed countries support programs are aimed at environmental protection and ecology. In Artsakh, agricultural subsidy programs were mainly limited to subsidizing agricultural loans as well as inputs purchase (seeds, fertilizers, and fuel). It can be argued that the national policy in the field of agriculture would be bankrupt if agricultural subsidies took into account the net production costs. The real problem in Artsakh was the high cost of agricultural production. In developed countries, risk in agriculture is seen as a more serious political and economic reason for providing subsidies than previously accepted market failure.

Table 2

The marketability level of agricultural products in different regions of Artsakh, 2010, %<sup>1</sup>

	Total	Askeran	Hadrut	Martakert	Martuni	Shahumyan	Shushi	Kashatagh
Grain	57.7	65.4	46.6	75.2	53.3	68.9	41.1	59.9
Legumes	39.7	9.6	8.1	11.4	0.6	7.6	43.7	60.5
Potato	10.7	7.1	9.0	0.4	12.8	14.4	26.1	17.4
Vegetables	39.9	60.3	12.3	7.2	1.3	23.6	34.1	63.7
Melons	90.0	92.0	87.4	0	23.8	0	0	85.7
Fruits	21.2	51.9	25.6	12.3	15.6	20.6	10.0	18.6
Grape	72.7	54.5	46.8	54.4	77.7	31.2	0	0
Meat	77.8	65.2	82.5	85.7	74.8	78.7	78.6	85.3
Milk	35.3	36.5	21.0	68.1	14.7	24.9	64.0	25.2
Egg	28.9	38.5	3.3	52.5	18.6	20.2	33.2	27.2
Honey	49.7	38.6	16.0	53.0	66.3	60.6	61.3	46.1

Reforms aimed at the free market economic system in RA started with the privatization of land. The Republic of Artsakh, having announced systemic changes in 1995, started the process of land privatization in 1998, and that too in the conditions of serious resistance from the peasant collective farms. As a result of the war, as well as the mistakes made during privatization, the main agricultural resources were destroyed, and the cultivated lands, the number of livestock, and the number of agricultural machinery significantly decreased. The indicators in the tables below show that the cultivated areas of crops, the number of livestock, and the harvest decreased significantly in the early period of independence, and then recovered.

Table 3

The comparison of the sown areas of primary crops in Nagorno Karabakh and the Republic of Artsakh <sup>2</sup>

Sown areas, ha	1982	1995	2000	2010	2020
Total	67458	38653	31781	51298	94175
Grain and legumes	36340	32135	29274	48930	80197
Technical crops	430	493	68	109	7665
Potato	1273	1138	1152	966	523
Vegetable	613	639	1023	907	964

<sup>1</sup> Report of a sample survey of current production costs sales of agricultural products, 2010, the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Artsakh

<sup>2</sup> The table was compiled by the authors according to the data of Azerbaijan SSR statistical yearbook (1982)

Table 4

**The comparison of the gross product of primary crops in Nagorno Karabakh and Republic of Artsakh<sup>1</sup>**

Gross product, tonnes	1982	1995	2000	2010	2020
Grain and legumes	68166	39066	36586	63162	88961
Technical crops	314	-	-	429	1751
Potato	2584	6984	12661	8094	2107
Vegetable	7235	7617	10126	6788	5468

Table 5

**The comparison of the livestock in Nagorno Karabakh and the Republic of Artsakh<sup>2</sup>**

	1982	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2021
Beef	94813	33079	34860	44589	44900	54083	19639	13330
Mutton	302108	32590	38452	41136	55894	103888	27768	26776
Pork	76192	11908	14019	20245	10375	24004	9887	17108
Poultry	259795	131819	170004	283145	312681	386803	173480	247213
Beehive, unit	-	-	-	-	20421	31441	10501	14451

The example of China shows that agriculture under public ownership of land can rise dramatically if liberal but regulated market mechanisms take root in the agrarian sector. Here, the state provides financial support in the direction of increasing soil fertility and crop yield, equipping small farms with new machinery and tools, and promoting the social development of rural areas. By owning 7% of the world's arable land, China provides about 20% of the world's agricultural output, and the share of agriculture in the GDP is about 10%<sup>3</sup>.

During the independence, the gross agricultural product of the RA increased 7.3 times in nominal terms (from 9692 million AMD in 1996 to 70592 million AMD in 2019)<sup>4</sup>.

However, the low level of agricultural productivity and efficiency, poorly developed irrigation infrastructures, the predominance of traditional technologies and production methods over innovations, small and fragmented land plots, increasing production costs, difficulties in storing and sales of agricultural products, shortage of specialists, the difficulties of harvesting without loss created serious problems for the development of the agriculture. For comparison, on average in 2017-2022, state support

<sup>1</sup> The table was compiled by the authors according to the data of Azerbaijan SSR statistical yearbook (1982)

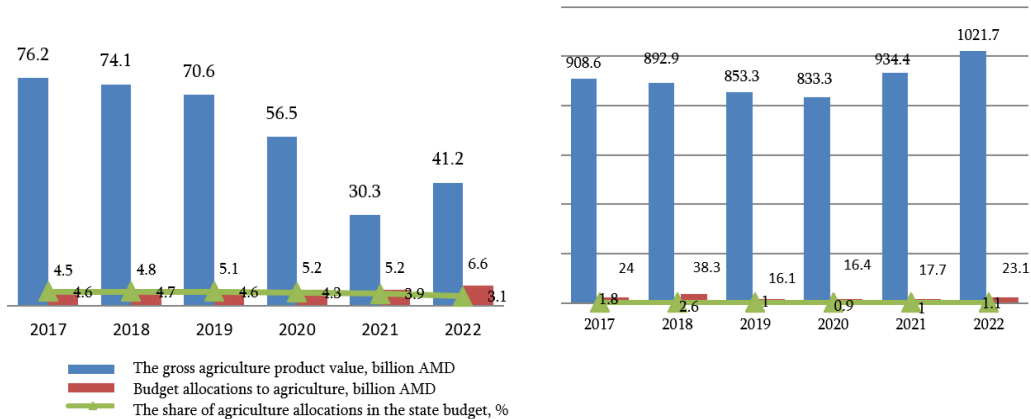
<sup>2</sup> The table was compiled by the authors according to the data of Azerbaijan SSR statistical yearbook (1982)

<sup>3</sup> Concept of agricultural subsidy directions in RA

<sup>4</sup> Statistical yearbooks of Artsakh, statistical collections of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Artsakh



for agriculture made up 4.2% of state budget expenditures in the Republic of Artsakh and 1.4% in the RA.



*Figure 4. The comparison of the gross agriculture product and state support in RA and the Republic of Artsakh<sup>1</sup>*

As a result of the ten-month blockade by Azerbaijan (from December 2022 to September 2023), many issues of food security had intensified, and there was a realization that those issues had to be solved using new approaches, that traditional ideas of agricultural development had to be replaced by intersectoral cooperation and creativity. In particular, it was necessary to lean on:

- the use of natural and economic risk management structures, as well as the promotion of technical armament and digitization,
- the use of drones in agriculture,
- to the establishment of innovative greenhouses,
- to the implementation of effective logistic solutions,
- development of urban and data-based agriculture,
- the implementation of smart drip irrigation systems,
- the introduction of vertical agriculture in Stepanakert, which would provide excellent solutions for food security, when the crops from the villages did not reach the capital due to lack of fuel, and none of the newly established greenhouses in the nearby areas with state support could fully meet the requirements of Stepanakert, where more than half of the population was concentrated in that city.

**Scientific novelty.** By studying the main indicators of the agriculture of the Republic of Artsakh before and during the period of independence, the main failures of the reforms, the issues in the field of accounting, and the inefficient use of resources were revealed.

<sup>1</sup> State Budget Laws of 2007 and 2022 (Artsakh), <https://minfin-nkr.am/>, State Budget Laws of 2007 and 2022 (RA), <https://www.gov.am/am/budget/>

**Conclusions.** The main research findings are summarized in the following:

- Agriculture in Artsakh, despite the implementation of various measures and support programs, continued to be in systemic crisis.
- Support programs for agriculture and the rural areas were mainly situational, and uncoordinated, which implied tactical, not strategic solutions.
- The socio-demographic characteristics of the rural population were changed, and the course of normal demographic developments was violated.
- During the development of support programs implemented in rural areas, insufficient attention was paid to the socio-demographic and cultural components of the rural population.
- The privatization of land in Artsakh, unlike the Republic of Armenia, was implemented late, in 1998, and faced serious resistance. It was remarkable that nearly ten years later, the Government's attempts aimed at enlarging land and encouraging cooperation were not successful. One of the reasons was the behavioral aspect of the issue.
- To promote specialization in agriculture, it was necessary to target the subsidy of the production of products with competitive advantages. It was important to subsidize a certain part of the costs of rehabilitation and inclusion in the rotation of land that has not been cultivated for many years and gradually degraded.
- The dynamics of the main indicators of the sector prove that the existing resource potential was not fully realized and used effectively, and the gross agricultural product did not increase in line with the state budget allocations.

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## ԱՐՑԱԽԻ ԳՅՈՒՂԱՏՆՏԵՍՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ. ՊԱՏՄԱԿԱՆ ԱԿՆԱՐԿ

### Մանուշ Մառլեստի Մինասյան Ծովինար Վրույրի Քոչարյան

**Համառոտագիր.** Անկախության շրջանում գյուղատնտեսությունը Արցախի Հանրապետության կառավարության ուշադրության կիզակետում է միշտ եղել, բավական մեծ էին բյուջետային ներառվումներն ոլորտում, սակայն, վերջին տարիներին ճյուղն ապահովում էր ՀՆԱ-ի չնչին մասը: Հոդվածի **արդիականությունը** պայմանավորված է Արցախի տնտեսության համար ռազմավարական նշանակություն ունեցող ճյուղի զարգացման ընթացքի վերլուծությամբ: Արցախի գյուղատնտեսության վրա բացասաբար են անդրադարձել երկրի չճանաչվածությունը, աշխարհաքաղաքական լարվածությունը, փակ սահմանները, երբ աշխարհին կապող միակ հնարավորությունը Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունն էր և գյուղացու համար շատ դժվար ու թանկ էր իր արտադրանքն արտահանելը կամ արտադրության միջոցներ ներմուծելը:

**Հոդվածի նպատակն** է ներկայացնել Արցախի Հանրապետության տնտեսության կարևոր ճյուղերից մեկի՝ գյուղատնտեսության, զարգացման պատմությունը, արձանագրած ցուցանիշները, հիմնական ձեռքբերումները: Հիշյալ նպատակին հասնելու համար փորձել ենք դիտարկել հետևյալ **խնդիրները**. վերլուծել ոլորտի զարգացման անցած ուղին, ցուցանիշների շարժընթացը, ներկայացնել ճյուղի կապը տնտեսության մյուս հատվածների հետ, բացահայտել գյուղատնտեսության համախառն արտադրանքի դանդաղ աճի պատճառները:

Ուսումնասիրության ընթացքում կիրառվել են գիտական հետազոտության համեմատական, նկարագրական, պատմավերլուծական, տնտեսավիճակագրական և համադրման **մեթոդներ**: Հոդվածի համար տեղեկատվական հիմք են հանդիսացել ոլորտին առնչվող և հայրենական, և արտասահմանյան հեղինակների գիտական հոդվածները, ոլորտը կարգավորող նորմատիվ իրավական ակտերը:

**Գիտական նորույթը.** Ուսումնասիրելով ԱՀ գյուղատնտեսության ոլորտի մինչև անկախության շրջանի հիմնական ցուցանիշները՝ բացահայտվել են բարեփոխումների հիմնական ձախողումները, հաշվառման ոլորտում եղած խնդիրները, ռեսուրսների անարդյունավետ օգտագործումը:

**Բանալի բառեր.** Գյուղատնտեսության համախառն թողարկում, գյուղատնտեսական արտադրանքի ապրանքային կառուցվածք, անասնաբուծություն, բուսաբուծություն, ՀՆԱ, բյուջետային հատկացում, գյուղատնտեսական արտադրանքի ապրանքայնություն, բերքատվություն:

## СЕЛЬСКОЕ ХОЗЯЙСТВО АРЦАХА: ИСТОРИЧЕСКИЙ ОБЗОР

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**Анотация.** В период независимости сельское хозяйство всегда находилось в центре внимания правительства Республики Арцах, бюджетные вливания в отрасль были достаточно большими, однако в последние годы отрасль обеспечивала незначительную часть ВВП. **Актуальность статьи** обусловлена анализом процесса развития отрасли, имеющей стратегическое значение для экономики Арцаха.

Непризнанность страны, геополитическая напряженность, закрытые границы, когда Республика Армения была единственным способом соединения мира, а фермеру было очень сложно и дорого экспортировать свою продукцию или импортировать средства производства, оказали негативное влияние на сельское хозяйство Арцаха.

**Цель статьи**—представить историю развития одной из важных отраслей экономики Республики Арцах—сельского хозяйства, зафиксированные показатели, основные достижения. Для достижения указанной цели мы постарались рассмотреть **следующие вопросы.** проанализировать путь развития отрасли, динамику показателей, представить связь отрасли с другими отраслями экономики, выявить причины медленного роста валового продукта сельского хозяйства.

В ходе исследования использовались сравнительные, описательные, историко-аналитические, статистические и сопоставительные **методы** научного исследования. Информационной основой статьи послужили научные статьи отечественных и зарубежных авторов по данной области, нормативные правовые акты, регулирующие данную сферу.

**Научная новизна.** Изучая основные показатели аграрного сектора РА до и в период независимости, были выявлены основные неудачи реформ, существующие проблемы в сфере учета, неэффективное использование ресурсов.

**Ключевые слова:** Валовая продукция сельского хозяйства, товарная структура сельскохозяйственной продукции, животноводство, растениеводство, ВВП, бюджетные ассигнования, товарность сельскохозяйственной продукции, урожайность.

## AGRICULTURE OF ARTSAKH: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

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**Abstract.** During the period of independence, agriculture was always the focus of the Artsakh government, and the budgetary injections in the sector were quite large, nevertheless, in recent years, the sector provided a small part of the GDP. **The relevance** of the article is determined by the analysis of the development process of the sector with strategic importance for the Artsakh economy.

The geopolitical tensions, and the closed borders, when the only opportunity to connect the world was the Republic of Armenia and it was very difficult and expensive for the farmers to export their products or import production means negatively affected the agriculture of Artsakh. **The purpose** of the article is to present the history of the development, recorded indicators, and main achievements of one of the important sectors of the economy of the Republic of Artsakh– agriculture. The purpose of the article is to present the history of the development of agriculture in the Republic of Artsakh. To achieve that purpose, **the following research problems** were solved: to analyze the path of development of the sector, the trend of indicators, to present the connection of the sector with other sectors of the economy, and to identify the reasons for the slow growth of the gross agricultural product.

In the scope of the study, comparative, descriptive, historical-analytical, statistical, and comparative methods of scientific research were implemented. The information basis of the article was scientific articles of domestic and foreign authors, and legal acts regulating the sector.

**Scientific novelty:** By studying the main indicators of Artsakh agriculture before and during the period of independence, the main failures of the reforms, existing problems in the field of accounting, and inefficient use of resources were identified.

**Keywords:** Gross output of agriculture, product structure of agricultural products, animal husbandry, crop production, GDP, budget allocation, commodity of agricultural products, yield.