DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE SUPPORT FOR AGRICULTURAL CONSUMER COOPERATIVES: CASE STUDY OF THE TOMSK REGION

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Abstract

The implementation of state programs for agricultural support provides for the development of agricultural cooperation in the regions as the basis for the rural territory development. Taking the latest global trends into account, only organizations that produce high-quality, organic food can become the basis of agricultural cooperation capable of giving an efficient impetus to the territory development – not single organizations, but rather a system of agricultural consumer cooperatives (ACCs) that provide storage, processing and marketing of finished products in cooperation with the small-scale agricultural sector (private subsidiary farming (PSF) and family (farm) enterprises F(F)E), as well as agricultural organizations that are the main producers of raw materials with modern qualified management, the support of local authorities, regional and federal authorities. In reality, most of the rural population, small and medium-sized organizations are not ready for new investments because they have no own funds but only old loans. Beginning farmers also lack sufficient funds for their further development, even with the help of a selective state support represented as Novice Farmers and Family Farms grants, as well as subsidies for technical equipment. This requires new mechanisms and methods of the state support for the creation and operation of ACCs, as well as intensive involvement of non-agricultural businesses with competences in commerce, logistics, marketing and other skills not typical for agricultural producers in the agricultural cooperation system on the basis of grant support for investment projects.

Key words: agriculture, state support, consumer cooperatives, development program, subsidies

INTRODUCTION

Most of the small and medium agricultural producers are not ready for new investments in the modern realities due to the high debt load and the lack of own funds [6]. The development of the state support for ACCs will allow to solve the problems of small forms of management in terms of logistics, business planning, engineering, and sale of finished products. Agricultural cooperation through the combination of efforts and resources is one of the main ways of ensuring expanded production in the countryside, agricultural products, and thus ensuring decent living standards for the rural population [3, 14].

The factors of the emergence of new areas in the development of the state support for agricultural cooperation have been the following [12, 20]: -lack of interest from large and medium agricultural producers in cooperating with small farms,

-unpreparedness of small agents to increase the production of agricultural raw materials (products) due to the fact that the main added value (and profit) will go not to them (labor resources) but to the capital: intermediaries, processors, and trade. The solution to this problem is to change the existing commodity supply chains (own processing, own sales, etc.) and the structure of the distribution of value added [17]. This requires merges – farmers on their own will not be able to resist large farms,

-imbalance of the state support: 70 % of the budget funds allocated for various support programs are provided to large agricultural producers, and

-creation of separate cooperatives only partially solves the problem of the

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cooperation development [18]. The solution is possible only if a multilevel agricultural cooperation system emerges [5].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The goal of the study is the development and scientific substantiation of theoretical and methodological provisions and practical recommendations for the development of the state support for ACCs in the region.

The object of the study is a system of economic, organizational and managerial relations between the state and ACCs.

The subject of the study includes the trends, conditions and factors influencing the development of the state support for ACCs.

The object of observation is state and municipal authorities and ACCs.

The fundamental principles of economic theory, scientific papers on the problem under study, and regulations of the Russian Federation, including the Tomsk region, served as the theoretical and methodological basis of the study. The data from the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation, including the Tomsk Region, materials from the Department for Social and Economic Development of Villages in the Tomsk region, planning documents and reports of ACCs, as well as special, reference, and other literature were used in this study.

The theoretical significance of this paper is to clarify the idea of the state support for ACCs in the region, the concept and tools for its implementation. The practical significance of the dissertation research lies in the fact that the obtained results can underlie the federal and regional programs for the development of the state support for the agricultural cooperation system. The following methods were used in the work: monographic, analytical, abstract logical, computational constructive, and economic mathematical.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The algorithm of the state support for the creation and operation of ACCs on the basis of the Regional Center for Agribusiness Engineering in the Tomsk region has been

developed and tested. Its main functions are to provide financial support to cooperatives through consulting centers, training centers for agribusiness, and municipal business support centers in the formation competences in cooperative creation, business planning and engineering, marketing and sales, and management of investment project and production systems. Forty-two first level ACCs, or 80 % of the total number, had been established in the Tomsk region by 2017 and are operating according to this scheme.

The mechanism of grant support for ACCs has been improved and tested, according to which they are supported by grants of up to 40 mln rubles for the logistics support of production in the amount of 60 % of the total project amount. The remaining 40 % can be own funds, funds of a private investor, investment, or a preferential loan from the Joint-Stock Company state-owned TomskAgroInvest at 5.25 % per annum with the option to repay the debt with the cooperative production, or a preferential loan from a commercial bank or credit unions with a subsidized interest rate. The grant is provided if there is a business plan ordered at Regional Center for Agribusiness Engineering in the Tomsk region, a business plan for 3 years ahead, and a commitment to operate for at least 5 years after receiving a grant, an expenditure plan, and a commitment to create at least one new permanent job per every 3 mln rubles of subsidies.

The prospects for the state support of ACCs in the Tomsk region are defined in the Program of Developing the Regional System of Agricultural Consumer Cooperation in the Tomsk region for 2017 – 2020, developed by authors. The implementation of organizational, property, legislative, financial support measures, information and consultation measures, measures aimed at arranging sales channels for products, as well as education, training and retraining of personnel, developed by the authors, will require the funding of 1,085 mln rubles from budgets of all levels and extrabudgetary sources by 2020. The number of agricultural cooperatives in the region will amount to 70

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by 2020, while the annual growth of revenue of agricultural producers will be 15 %.

Analysis of the ACC development

In total, there were 52 agricultural cooperatives in the Tomsk region by the beginning of 2017, of which 23 were

processing cooperatives, 8 – supply and marketing cooperatives, 21 – credit cooperatives, and 80 % of them were created on the basis of state financial and consulting support (Table 1) [11].

Table 1. Indicators of the ACC development in the Tomsk region as of early 2017

Indicator	Number
Number of ACCs	52
Share of operating ACCs in the total number of registered cooperatives, %	80
Share of ACCs that received support from the state (consulting, educational, etc.), %	25
Number of ACCs that received financial support from organizations from the support infrastructure for small and medium-sized businesses	7
Share of ACCs that received state and financial support and continued their activities for 3 years from the date of receipt of such support, %	80
Number of organizations from the support infrastructure for small and medium-sized businesses that provide priority support to ACCs	5
Increase in the number of members of ACCs, %	8
Share of agricultural producers involved in the activities of ACCs, %	15
Increase in revenue from sales of ACCs, % to the previous year	10
Growth of profitability of agricultural producers that are members of ACCs, % to the previous year	10

Source: compiled by the authors.

Sixteen new first level cooperatives had been created in the region in 2014 – 2016, 7 of them became winners of the "Development of agricultural cooperation" competition, received grants totaling 64 mln rubles, and raised more than 70 mln rubles additionally to develop their cooperatives [2, 9].

26.5 mln rubles were allocated for the grant support for agricultural cooperatives from the regional and federal budgets in 2015, 37 mln rubles – in 2016, and 49 mln rubles – in 2017 [7, 10].

Algorithm of the state support for the creation and operation of ACCs

The cooperative creation should not occur "from below" or "from above", but rather with the help of a certain coordinator of all actions of agricultural producers, who will manage the entire process of the ACC creation [1, 8]. The Center for Innovative Development of Agribusiness in the Tomsk region was created with the participation of the authors and the financial assistance of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation and the Fund for the Support of Small and Medium-Sized Businesses of the authorities of the Tomsk region. This Center is funded as follows: 74 % of the total amount

of funding is provided by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation for the provision of services to cooperatives, and 26 % is provided by the government of the Tomsk region to finance the current activities of the Center. With the participation of the authors, the Regional Center for Agribusiness Engineering in the Tomsk region was created on its basis to help small and medium-sized businesses in agriculture form competences in business planning and engineering, marketing and sales, management of investment projects, and production systems.

PSF, F(F)E, individuals, and legal entities develop agricultural production within one village, urban-type settlement, district, or a group of such objects, uniting into ACCs and forming the first level of the agricultural cooperation system – first level ACCs.

Based on the activities of the Regional Center for Agribusiness Engineering in the Tomsk region, we have developed an algorithm of the state support for the creation of a first level ACC and its operation (Figure 1).

The Regional Center for Agribusiness Engineering in the Tomsk region searches for consulting centers, training centers for agribusiness, and municipal entrepreneurship support centers for conducting training seminars in municipal districts. The educational process begins with the heads of administrations (heads of districts, heads of rural settlements). Separately, the existing entrepreneurs and then residents of the settlements gather for the training – those who would like to become a member of the cooperative. As a result, two different-age training groups are formed to be taught basics of creating and operating a cooperative by business trainers employed by the Regional Center for Agribusiness Engineering.

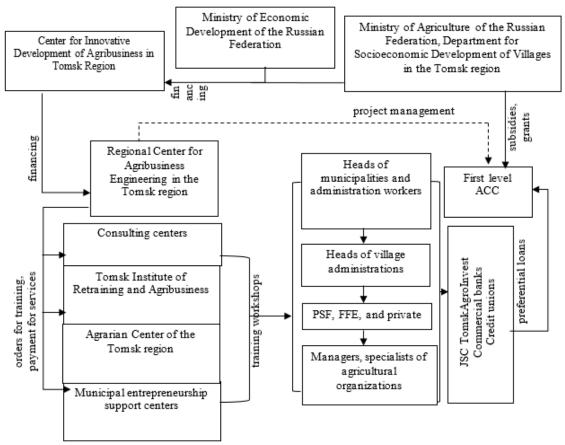


Fig. 1. Algorithm of the state support for the creation and operation of ACCs of the first level Source: compiled by the authors.

The functions of the Regional Center for Agribusiness Engineering in the Tomsk region include management of cooperative projects, which includes the development of business plans, marketing research, and technological support for the created ACCs by consultancy centers.

These services are provided to cooperatives under the following conditions: the first service (for example, a business plan) is provided free of charge, then the ACC pays 5 % of the second order, 10 % of the third order, 15 % of the fourth order, and 20 % of the fifth order. The Regional Center for Agribusiness Engineering in the Tomsk

region carries out a quality check of all services provided by outside organizations, which improves their quality and validity [13].

The first level ACC has the right to claim all measures of the state support provided by federal and regional authorities (subsidies, grants), as well as the support provided by the state-owned JSC TomskAgroInvest in investments or a preferential loan [15].

As such, the algorithm proposed by the authors for creating and operating the first level ACC with the state support sets the motion vector for agricultural entrepreneurs

and executive authorities in the Tomsk region to achieve the goals of the ACC development. Improved mechanism of the state grant support for ACCs in the Tomsk region

Aside from the existing measures of the state support for agricultural producers stipulated by the current legislation, the authors improved and tested the mechanism of grant support for ACCs, according to which the ACC obtains support as a grant for the logistics production support (Figure 2).

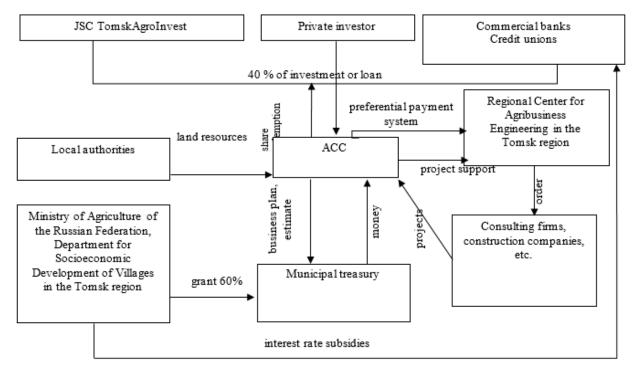


Fig. 2.Mechanism of state grant support for the development of ACCs in the Tomsk region Source: compiled by the authors.

After one year of operation, the established cooperative can apply for a grant of up to 40 mln rubles. The grant amount is not more than 60 % of the total project amount. The ACC can get the remaining 40 % of investments using the following options:

(i)From a private investor. The private investor interested in increasing the supply of agricultural products (raw materials) for the own production or trade is involved in the project. The project is introduced for a tender, and in case of win, the further financial scheme is as follows: the private investor invests 40 % required for the project, becomes a shareholder of the cooperative, and sells its shares to the members of the cooperative after the production launch, keeping the least of voting rights. At the same time, members of the cooperative acquire a share worth 2,500 rubles by buying shares in the amount of 1,000 rubles (1,000 rubles from a private

investor + 1,500 rubles from the state investment in the form of a grant).

(ii)From the funding of JSC TomskAgroInvest, which, like the private investor in the previous case, becomes a shareholder of the cooperative.

(iii)From a preferential loan taken from JSC TomskAgroInvest:

-JSC TomskAgroInvest takes a loan from JSC Rosselkhozbank at a rate of 12.65 % with a subsidy of refinancing rate plus 3 %;

-the cooperative submits an application for a loan and a business plan to JSC TomskAgroInvest;

-the cooperative provides mortgage property or a guarantee from the Guarantee Fund of the Tomsk region to JSC TomskAgroInvest. The cost of the guarantee is reduced for agricultural cooperatives and their members (shareholders). It is 0.5 % per annum of the amount of the provided guarantee, and is paid

as a lump sum for the entire period, or 1 % per annum of the amount of the guarantee, and is paid annually in equal parts. The Guarantee Fund of the Tomsk region sets a for guarantees to agricultural quota cooperatives and their members (shareholders) in the amount of not less than 15 % of the total volume of the issued guarantees:

-JSC TomskAgroInvest provides a loan to the cooperative at 5.25 % per annum, the loan term is 1 year;

-the cooperative must pay a 4 % interest rate immediately, and the remaining 1.25 % during the year. The interest is paid only in cash, and the loan principal can be paid with agricultural products or money.

(iv)From a preferential loan from a commercial bank or credit unions at an interest rate of 5 %.

(v)From the own funds.

The grant funds (60 % of the value of the entire project) to the cooperative transferred only through the treasury and only after the cooperative has provided estimates of all necessary expenses and a business plan. The ACC can get a grant only if there is a business plan implemented with the assistance of the Regional Center for Agribusiness Engineering of the Tomsk region, an operational and financial plan for 3 years ahead, and a commitment to operate for at least 5 years after receiving the grant, an expenditure plan indicating the names of the purchased property, works, services rendered, their quantity, price, sources of financing (subsidies, own funds).

The business project must be implemented within 18 months, and it should involve the creation of new jobs — at least one new permanent job for every 3 mln rubles of subsidies in the year when the grant is received. Cooperatives participating in the tender should combine at least 10 agricultural producers as members, and the share of the products purchased from shareholders should be at least 50 %. All assets acquired through subsidies must be in the indivisible fund of the ACC.

The grant is provided according to the decision of the competition commission of the

Department of Socioeconomic Development of Villages in the Tomsk region for the selection of cooperatives receiving grants. The commission is chaired by the Head of the Department of Socioeconomic Development of Villages, includes specialists from the Department, as well as the regional Veterinary trade Administration, the union agribusiness, the Agrarian Center of the Tomsk region, the Center for Innovative Development of the Agribusiness of the Tomsk region, and the administrations of municipalities.

Seven ACCs from Kolpashevsky, Shegarsky, Bakcharsky, Molchanovsky, Tomsky, and Pervomaisky districts claimed regional grants in 2017, 4 of which received grants in the amount of 4.2 to 17.8 mln rubles.

It must be noted that a total of 49 mln rubles were allocated from the regional and federal budgets for grant support of agricultural cooperatives in 2017, 39.6 mln rubles – in 2016, and 26.5 mln rubles – in 2015.

Use of the mechanism of the state grant support for ACCs in the Tomsk region

ACPC Monastyrsky from the Molchanovsky district, engaged in the processing and marketing of agricultural products, namely raw milk obtained from the cooperative members and the local population, can be given as an example of the successful implementation of the mechanism developed by the authors in the Tomsk region.

A grant in the amount of 4.2 mln rubles was received for the development of the logistics support of the ACPC to implement the project for milk processing. The own funds in the amount of 700 thous. rubles were also invested in the project, along with the borrowed funds with the interest rate compensation in the amount of 2,100 thous. rubles from JSC Rosselkhozbank. Table 2 presents the prospective financial and economic indicators of the cooperative through to 2020.

The revenue growth from the sale of processed products in ACPC Monastyrsky from 2016 to 2020 will amount to 81.8 %. This will contribute to an increase in the sales volume of milk, kefir and sour cream by 81.8 % as well.

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At the same time, due to a gradual reduction in the production cost, there will be an increase in the profits from sales almost 2.5 times, up to 10,492 thous. rubles in 2020. The increase in the return on sales will amount to 9.6 percentage points, up to 36.2 %.

Table 2. Estimation of the main financial and economic indicators of ACPC Monastyrsky

Indicators	Year							2020/
Indicators	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2016, %
Proceeds from sales, thous. Rubles	5,843	6,784	15,939	20,286	24,633	28,980	28,980	181.8
Sales volume, kg								
Milk	-	-	285,120	362,880	440,640	518,400	518,400	181.8
Kefir	-	-	99,000	126,000	153,000	180,000	180,000	181.8
Sour cream	-	-	11,880	15,120	18,360	21,600	21,600	181.8
State support (grant), thous. Rubles	-	-	4,200	-	-	-	-	
Profit from sales, thous. Rubles	537	973	4,233	6,280	8,386	10,492	10,492	247.9
Return on sales, %	9.2	14.3	26.6	31.0	34.0	36.2	36.2	-

Source: compiled by the authors.

Prospects for the state support for ACCs in the Tomsk region

The creation of a regional system of agricultural cooperation should be regulated and controlled through the implementation of the Program for the Development of ACCs in the Tomsk region for 2017 – 2020 (hereinafter – the Program).

The goal of the Program is to develop an efficient multilevel system of agricultural cooperation in the Tomsk region, securing competitiveness of the participants in the cooperation.

Tasks of the program are the following:

- -high-quality development (improvement) of the infrastructure system for supporting agricultural cooperation,
- -improving the competitiveness of small businesses in the agricultural market through the access of agricultural producers to modern technologies of storage, processing and marketing of these products,
- -increasing the number of ACCs in various areas of activity and an increase in the share of the operating cooperatives,
- -full and high-quality provision of services to agricultural producers and the rural population,

- -increasing the profitability of agricultural producers and the rural population,
- -increasing the employment rate for the rural population in small businesses, including in PSFs,
- -changing the dynamics of rural residents' migration from negative to positive.

The implementation of this program is possible with a combination of state support measures (Figure 3).

Legislative measures [4, 19]:

- -simplified taxation system,
- -patent system of taxation,
- -zero tax rate,
- -property support,
- -land support, and
- -reduction of administrative barriers.

Financial support:

- -Guarantee fund of the Tomsk region,
- -provision of microloans to ACCs,
- -provision of subsidies to ACCs,
- -provision of subsidies for reimbursement of costs under a leasing agreement, and
- -grant for the development of the logistics support of ACCs.

Organizational support measures:

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- -noncommercial partnership Center for Innovative Development of Agribusiness in the Tomsk region,
- -Regional Center for Agribusiness Engineering in the Tomsk region,
- -Agrarian Center of the Tomsk region,
- -Fund for Support and Development of Small and Medium-Sized Businesses of the Tomsk region, and
- -municipal business development centers.

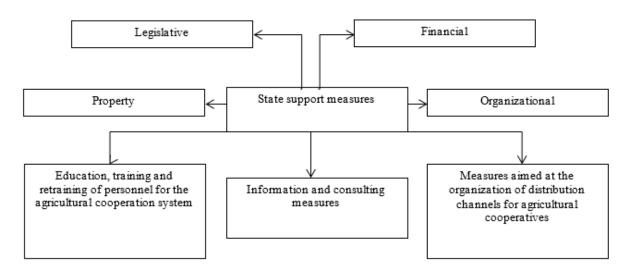


Fig. 3. State support measures for the development of ACCs in the Tomsk region Source: compiled by the authors.

Property support measures:

- -centers of collective use (access) to specialized equipment for processing of agricultural products,
- -agroindustrial parks, and
- -agroindustrial business incubators.

Information and consulting activities [7, 16]:

- -information system for ACCs, and
- -increase in the prestige of agricultural cooperation.

Education, training and retraining of personnel for the system of agricultural cooperation:

- -personnel support of the agribusiness, and
- -formation of the educational system.

Measures aimed at the organization of distribution channels for ACC products:

- -regional information resources,
- -exhibition fairs and trading places in municipal and district markets for agricultural producers, and
- -independent trading network of ACCs.

Implementation of the Program for the ACC Development in the Tomsk region for 2017 - 2020

Implementation of the above measures will allow the Tomsk region to achieve the Program indicators by 2020 (Table 3).

The number of ACCs in the region will increase by 27 % over 4 years, and will amount to 70 by 2020. 60 % of all cooperatives will receive the state support by 2020, and at least 85 % of them will continue their activities after receiving support.

The agricultural cooperation infrastructure in the Tomsk region will develop: the number of organizations forming the support infrastructure for small and medium-sized businesses that provide priority support to agricultural cooperatives will increase 1.5 times, up to 9.

The revenue from the sale of products by ACCs will grow by 10 % per year in 2017 - 2018, but in 2019 - 2020 it will be as much as 15 %.

The profitability of agricultural producers that are members of ACCs will increase at a respective pace.

Table 3. Sources and volumes of financing and the expected results of the implementation of the Program of the ACC Development in the Tomsk region for 2017 - 2020

Y 12		Year			
Indicators	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Program funding, total, mln rubles, of which:	107.4	282.2	329.2	366.2	
federal budget (grants)	40.2	40.2	40.2	40.2	
regional budget (grants)	8.2	40.0	50.0	60.0	
regional budget (funding of other measures, except for grants)	10.0	12.0	14.0	16.0	
extrabudgetary sources	49	190	225	250	
Number of ACCs	55	60	65	70	
Share of ACCs that received support from the state, %	33	40	50	60	
Number of ACCs that received financial support from organizations that form the support infrastructure for small rural businesses	4	6	8	10	
Number of ACCs that received support from the state	80	80	82	85	
Number of organizations that form the support infrastructure for small rural businesses providing priority support to ACCs	6	7	8	9	
Share of operating ACCs in the total number of agricultural cooperatives registered in the Tomsk region, %	85	86	87	88	
Increase in the number of members of ACCs, % relative to 2016	10	20	30	40	
Share of small businesses in the rural economy involved in the ACC operation, % relative to 2016	4	6	8	15	
Increase in revenue from product sales by ACCs, % relative to 2016	10	20	35	45	
Annual profitability growth of agricultural producers that are members of ACCs, p.p.	10	10	15	15	

Source: compiled by the authors.

CONCLUSIONS

(i)In order to shape and develop ACCs, the authors have developed and tested an algorithm of the state support for their creation and operation in the Tomsk region. The main role in the creation and maintenance of these cooperatives is assigned to the Regional Center for Agribusiness Engineering in the Tomsk region established on the basis of the Center for Support of Small and Medium-Sized Businesses of the Tomsk region. Its main functions are to provide financial support to cooperatives through consulting centers, training centers agribusiness, and municipal business support centers in the formation of competences in cooperative creation, business planning and engineering, marketing and sales, and management of investment project production systems. Sixteen new first level cooperatives were created in the Tomsk region in 2014 - 2016, 7 of them became winners of the "Development of agricultural cooperation" competition, received grants totaling 64 mln rubles, and raised more than 70 mln rubles additionally to develop their cooperatives.

(ii)The mechanism of grant support for ACCs improved by the authors is based on the provision of a grant to the ACC in the amount of 60 % of the total project amount up to 40 mln rubles for the logistics support of production on terms of co-financing the remaining 40 % from the own or borrowed funds. This could be private investor's funds, an investment or a preferential loan from the state-owned JSC TomskAgroInvest at 5.25 % per annum with the option to repay the debt with the cooperative production, or a preferential loan from a commercial bank or credit unions with a subsidized interest rate. The investor sells its shares to the members of the cooperative after the production launch, keeping the least of voting rights. At the same time, members of the cooperative acquire a share worth 2,500 rubles by buying shares in the amount of 1,000 rubles: 1,000 rubles from a private investor + 1,500 rubles from the state investment in the form of a grant.

(iii)The grant is provided if there is a business plan ordered at the Regional Center for

Agribusiness Engineering in the Tomsk region, a financial and operational plan for 3 years ahead, and a commitment to operate for at least 5 years after receiving a grant, as well as an expenditure plan. The business project must be implemented within 18 months, and it should involve the creation of new jobs – at least one new permanent job for every 3 mln rubles of subsidies in the year when the grant is received. Cooperatives participating in the tender should combine at least 10 agricultural producers as members, and the share of the products purchased from shareholders should be at least 50 %. All assets acquired through subsidies must be in the indivisible fund of the ACC. 26.5 mln rubles were allocated for the grant support for agricultural cooperatives from the regional and federal budgets in 2015, 39.6 mln rubles – in 2016, and 49 mln rubles - in 2017.

(iv)The authors have developed the Program for the Development of ACCs in the Tomsk region for 2017 - 2020, including the set of legislative, organizational, property, financial support measures, information and consultation measures, measures aimed at arranging sales channels for products, as well as education, training and retraining of personnel. Their implementation will require financing from budgets of all levels in the amount of 371 mln rubles, and 714 mln rubles from extrabudgetary sources by 2020. The number of ACCs in the region will increase by 27 % in 4 years and amount to 70 by 2020, and the members of cooperatives will increase by 40 %. 60 % of all cooperatives will receive the state support by 2020, and at least 85 % of them will continue their operation after receiving support. Annual growth in revenue and profitability of agricultural producers will be at least 15 %.

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