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L.V. KOZAK, candidate of economic sciences, associate professor (docent),
dean of the faculty of economics
National University "Ostroh Academy"

Modern Approach to the Formation of the Concepts of Customer Value

Scientific problem. The vast majority of experts refer the market for agricultural products to the category of industrial relations. This is because farmers directly cooperate with the trade facilitation and production structures, rather than consumers. The fundamental difference of this market is the complexity of decision-making of buyers and sellers, and, therefore, their motivation in making these decisions. In the consumer market, buyers subjectively assess actual and associative attributes of the goods in order to determine the benefits of its acquisition, and subjectively assess the significance of these benefits for themselves and feeling satisfaction / dissatisfaction of their needs.

The sequence of thoughts of business customers is similar to that of individual consumers, but they apply professional and formal approach to their decision making. Competence and rationality of business customers lies in shaping the purchases of raw materials, while taking into account the values and needs of end users. This fact is extremely important in shaping the concept of competitive advantage of agricultural production farms, however, the existing requirements and quality standards of agricultural products do not take into account this factor. Thus, the improvement of the modern approaches to the formation of the concept of customer value of goods offered on the agricultural produce market has stipulated the meaning and direction of this research.

Analysis of recent researches and publications. The scientific basis for the solution of the problem is the theory of the behaviour of buyers in the consumer and business markets, and the research of the agricultural and industrial complex. Among the many publications on the abovementioned issues we identified the following works of domestic and foreign scholars: R. Blackwell [1], P. Doyle [3], J. Engel [1], N. Goncharova [6], A. Yerankin [4], Kotler [15],W., Koester [14], E. Krykavsky [6], J.J. Lambe [16], P. Miniard [1], S. Minett [7], V. Nordhauz [18], E. Rice [17], P. Samuelson [18], J. Trout [16], A. Starostina [6]. These authors and many scientists, who are not mentioned in this paper, have created a solid theoretical and methodological foundation for the abovementioned issues. However, applied research on the characteristics of the market positioning of agricultural products is not sufficient, which determines the relevance of the study.

The objective of the article. The study aims to substantiate the methodological and practical approaches to the concept of customer value and positioning in the markets of agricultural products with the account of the requirements of industrial customers and values / needs of end users.

Statement of the main results of the study. Effective cooperation between business and consumer markets can be explained by the presence of so-called resonating values in the behaviour of buyers and sellers. In the domestic theory and practice of strategic management, particularly in shaping strategies for positioning products and services, this phenomenon is relatively new. Basing one's communication programs on symbols and images of the "excellent corporate behaviour", which corresponds to the modern principles of ethical and social responsibility of enterprises (e.g. concern for environmental protection, social disadvantaged groups, etc.) has become a common practice. However, in contrast to the excellent corporate behaviour "the level of resonating values is related to how companies manage vendor ex-

press the values which a particular individual consumer is trying to embody in his own way of life," as one of the renowned experts of B2B Marketing S. Minett has noted [7, p. 113]. This means the extent to which the production of resources is associated with the values and approaches to life of the end users.

An increasing number of international scientists recognize the importance of resonating values for efficiency of both market positioning strategies of enterprise, and communication programs used for their implementation. Discussions are continuing mainly on the role of this factor in the market positioning of the "fashionable" and "technological" products. At first glance, one can assume that resonating values have a greater influence in positioning of the groups with a high level of emotional complexity, the demand for which largely depends on dominating in a certain period of time stereotypes of consumer behaviour and fashion.

However, due to the development of information technology, there is a rapid increase of the awareness of end-users of the technologies and approaches to the fundamental business strategies which are used by enterprises. Every year there is increasing number of consumers who refuse to consume products from manufacturers that work with suppliers whose behaviour in their view is unethical. Therefore, the factor of this study is gaining weight in the implementation of the effective business strategies used by the enterprises that produce goods. Thus, sellers in the market of the goods targeted at business consumers need to understand and be able to anticipate the interests of both business partners and end users. For example, for the agricultural enterprise, the professional approach in the formulation of the concept of agricultural products determines the understanding of causes and motivations of the processing enterprises in the purchases of raw materials and in the sense of 'tribal' needs and motivations of food purchases by the end users (Figure 1).

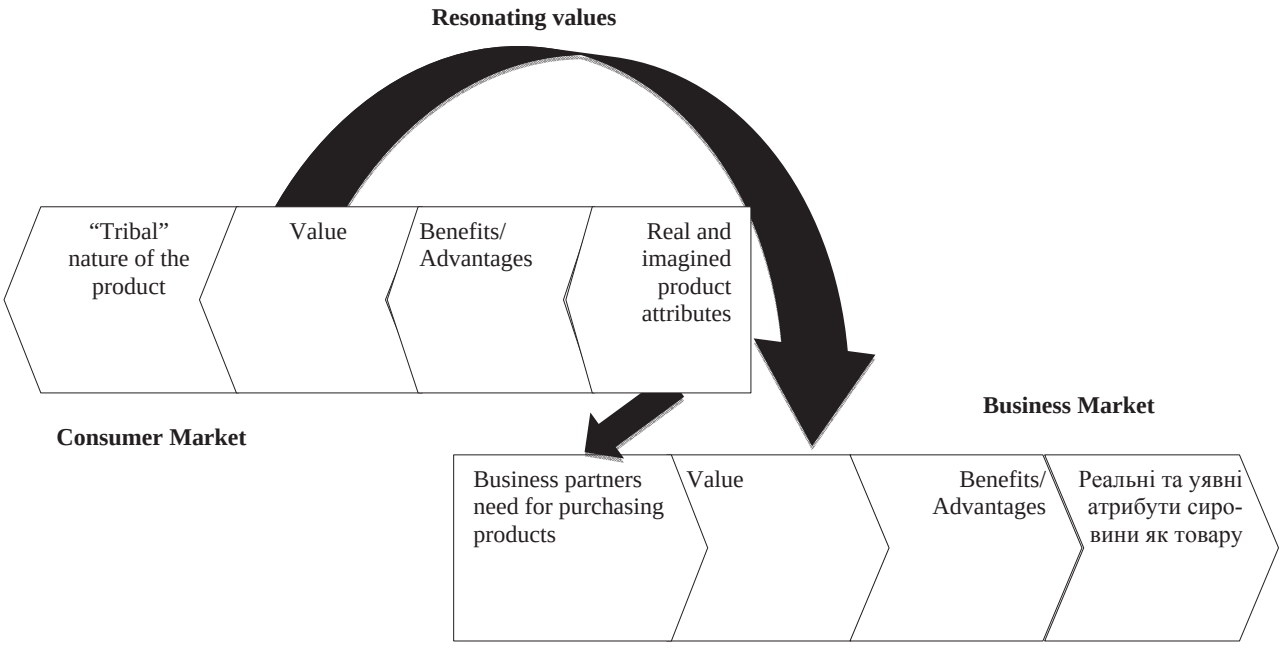

Figure 1. Correlation of Values and Needs of Business and Consumer Markets

*Developed by the author

In our view, this factor is also important in the positioning of products of agricultural enterprises in Ukraine appointed factor, moreover, its role will continually increase in the future. Agricultural products are standard goods with a low degree of functional and emotional complexity. Because of this, is difficult to differentiate the external attributes of products' **resonating values, but it can be achieved through the formation of trust of the end users in the applicable production technology**. The main indicators of the formation of this trust should be: firstly, a sufficient amount of information about the technology and compli-

ance with ethical standards of values in its consumer choice; secondly, the accuracy of the information that is necessary to convince consumers that they are not mislead; thirdly, in the business process, it is necessary to convince consumers that the chosen direction is continuing. We believe that this factor will result in a significant positive effect in the market positioning of products of agricultural enterprises, as they are the raw material for the production of goods with a high degree of emotional complexity.

That is why the development of effective strategies for market positioning of farms and processing enterprises should be based on a detailed study of consumers' views on the level and criteria of assessing the food quality. Taking into consideration these arguments, we conducted market research to determine the real and emotional attributes of agricultural products and raw materials that are meaningful to consumers. For selective market research we selected the least researched consumer segment, namely young people aged 19 to 22 years, which is called generation Y according to the American classification cohorts [5, p. 183]. However, they were born in a period of generation change; their views were formed in the Information Technology era, the beginning of the 21st century, and can also reflect the stereotypes of the next generation Z. This factor determines the particular relevance of the study. The study involved 1270 individuals in ten regions of Ukraine, including 540 men and 730 women. In planning representativeness and sample size, we used was methodical approach of Paniotto Maksymenko [8, p. 117-122].

As it is shown in the Table 1, baseline value and the main criterion in the purchasing behaviour of Generation Y in Ukraine appears the health and environment safety; hence, the real main attribute in positioning food is the content of harmful additives.

Table 1. Elements of the concept of customer value in the market of food for members of Generation Y in Ukraine*

Concept Elements	The Essential Characteristic of the Segment
"Tribal" essence of a product	**Catering for explicit needs:** maintain vital body - 64,7%; ** maintain the level of physical activity - 54.6%; freedom of choice - 21.7%; own safety - 16.5%; expression of own lifestyle - 12.9%; social contacts - to 3.5%. **Catering for emotional needs:** the desire to take pleasure in the taste of food - 71.7%; desire to get a sense of usefulness for health - 51.3%; desire to feel confident in the correctness of the choice of - 21.7%; desire to meet the caloric intake of -21.3%; desire of a sense of caring for themselves - 20.5%; desire of satisfaction in the appearance of food - 16.9%; desire of a sense of family comfort - 14.3%; desireof the pleasure of novelty and unusual food -11.8%.
Value	**Value purchase criteria:** health safety - 73.0%; family traditions - 38.0%; environmental security - 28.0%; science-based nutrition standards - 14.5%; national traditions - 13.0%; values of reference of the groups' influence - to 10.0%.
Advantages/Benefits	A combination of factors of price / quality - 69.0%; acceptable quality level - 27.7%.
Real and associated benefits	**Real attributes:** 1) content of food additives (the most important of which are GM (66.8%), synthetic chemicals (54.6%), nitrates, nitrites and pesticide residues (54.3%), preservatives and chemical dyes (50.6%), growth hormones and antibiotics (44.1%), radionuclides (39.2%) 2) taste, consistent with national traditions; 3) calorie ratio and micro and macro elements. **Associated attributes:** 1) rational consumers' feelings that cause emotions about the health safety; 2) patriotism, urging compliance with the flavor of food and family traditions of national consumer; 3) rational consumers' feelings that cause emotions of fullness and convince the ability of food to maintain a high level of physical activity.

*Author's analysis on the basis of the own market research.

** percentage of importance among respondents.

However, the vast majority of domestic enterprises, in their positioning strategies, prefer characteristics such food calorie ratio and micro and macro elements, linking their consumption to two important associations: consumer needs for expression of their lifestyle and social contact. We do not deny the importance of these attributes for other age cohorts (at least because they were not investigated), but positioning data strategy for Generation Y in Ukraine appears to be obsolete and no longer relevant.

Therefore, for the studied consumer age group, positioning strategy of food products requires revision , which, in turn, will lead to a multiplier effect on the market positioning of raw materials for food production. In our view,

the elements of the concept of customer value of agricultural products as raw materials for food production, which is corresponding the reasonable views of Generation Y in Ukraine, are given in the Table 2.

Table 2. Elements of the concept of customer value of agricultural products as raw materials for food production, corresponding to the reasonable views of representatives of Generation Y in Ukraine*

Concept elements	The essential characteristic elements important for trade transactions in the industrial market
"Tribal" essence of a product	**Catering for explicit needs of industrial customers:** compliance with the requirements of end users over the content or absence of food additives; compliance with the requirements of end users in the ratio of micro and macro elements; suitability for industrial processing. **Catering for emotional needs of industrial customers:** the ability to form associations, important for end users.
Value	**Value purchase criteria:** evidence-based standards of safety to human health; science-based standards of environmental safety; national traditions of eating behavior.
Advantages/Benefits	A combination of factors of price / quality criteria that are appropriate for both processors and end users; a voluntary commitment of agricultural enterprises for higher quality of agricultural products than evidence-based standards of safety and environmental performance.
Real and associated attributes	**Real attributes:** 1) indicators of harmful additives relevant for end-users; 2) the performance of micro-content and macro elements important for end users; 3) technical and technological parameters important for industry buyers. **Associated attributes:** safety for human health, positive impact on the environment and national traditions.

*Developed by author.

As it can be seen from the table, the basic need of food producers to provide agricultural raw materials is its compliance with the requirements of end users for the content of harmful additives and the ratio of micro and macro elements, on the one hand; and the suitability for industrial processing (for water supply, debris, etc.), on the other hand. In addition, for the industrial buyers, the ability of farms to create associative attributes of their products which are important for end users should be a major concern. This criterion should be taken into consideration along with specific quantitative technical and technological parameters of agricultural products in the process of making decisions by the agricultural enterprises.

Because the consumers of food in the tested segment evaluate the competitive advantage of the food products by a combination of factors of price / quality, similar behaviour of industrial buyers of agricultural products is justified. In our view, specific indicators of competitiveness of the agricultural enterprises depend on assumed voluntary commitments on the level of quality of agricultural products over evidence-based standards of safety and environmental performance. This way of seeing the competitiveness of agricultural production parameters provide agricultural enterprises with the sustainable advantage in the long run, and will allow to differentiate from competitors, which is the main criterion of efficient positioning strategies.

Agricultural enterprises are significantly diverse as per organizational and technological approaches to their productive activities that affect the quality of their products. Content or absence of harmful additives in agricultural production is closely associated with the level of fertilizers and other modern means of agricultural, animal farming and veterinary nature by a number of local scientists. Despite the developed legislation on maximum allowable norms of these substances in most countries, including Ukraine, there is an urgent need to improve the state control over compliance. An equally important task is to develop **a transparent and coherent system of informing the public about the safety of technology used by farmers**. This system can serve not only for the improvements of the control of ecological agricultural technologies in order to reduce their negative impact on the environment, but also for solving a number of problems in the market positioning of agricultural products.

To demonstrate this issue, the example of fertilizers which balance the level of nitrates and nitrites in the agricultural plants. According to official statistics, the use of fertilizers in the 2012-2013 is almost twice lower than in 1990

and is characterized by the relatively moderate growth rates [9, p. 109]. The reason that hinders farmers from the application of the more intensive technologies is disparity in prices between agricultural products and resources for its production. Hence, it can be assumed that, in the future, the use of fertilizers per hectare of crops will not increase significantly. Thus, by this criterion, level of ecological agricultural products has improved, but in the market positioning of agricultural enterprises products this factor is not used.

The level of fertilizers' application is also a significant factor of not only better performance of the domestic agricultural sector, but also an indicator of the higher quality of the Ukrainian agricultural production as compared to the number of foreign competitors. As per the average fertilizer use per hectare of crops in 2005, Ukraine was 4.3 times behind the EU and almost 6 times behind from Poland. Despite the tendency to reduce the use of fertilizers in the EU, now the gap is almost doubled. The current leader in terms of fertilizing is Belarus, where 230-240 kg of nutrients is found per hectare. Thus, according to this criterion, Belarus was ahead of Ukraine by 7.2 times, and in 2012 by 3.3 times [10]. Despite the established stereotypes in our society, the thesis about the most safe for human health agricultural products of Belarus is debatable.

One more aspect of the abovementioned issue is worth to consider. According to official statistics, it can be ascertained that there is a wide variation in the level of fertilizer use by region of Ukraine. Thus, the rate of fertilization on the farms, during the 2012 harvest, ranged from 40-50 kg (Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Lugansk, Odessa and Kherson region.) to 110-130 kg per hectare (Vinnytsia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Ternopil Rivne, Khmelnytsky and Cherkasy region.). Oscillation index factor analyzed by region of Ukraine is 128%, and the difference between the lowest (Kherson region.) and the highest (Lviv region.) is 3.2 times [2, p. 20].

It is clear that such variation in the use of fertilizers is largely related to the climate and soil type. In addition, fertilizers can be different as per the content of harmful substances, and more or less adapted to specific soil and climatic conditions which affects both the quality of agricultural products and environmental pollution. For the identification and analysis of the real state of affairs, specialists and scientists of various branches of the national economy should be involved, including those dealing with environmental research and quality of agricultural products. However, the analysed facts and numerous publications done by economists and environmentalists indicate the need for the introduction of measures that would stimulate farmers to reduce the use of fertilizers, and their transition to the use of tools to improve crop yields, created by modern environmentally friendly technologies. This equally relates to the mineral fertilizers and the other chemicals that are used in crop production.

Animal farming in Ukraine is focused on large farms applying modern intensive technologies, to a great extent. In our view, poultry and pig production are the most environmentally hazardous among the animal farming industries. The intention of many manufacturers to accelerate time of the animals' growth through the use of chemical additives adversely affects the quality of meat products. For example, according to official statistics, an average of 8,13-8,31 feeding units per one hundredweight growth of pigs is used in the small animal farming, while in commercial animal farming the same index is 5,37-5,98 feeding units. [11, p. 35], and in the top twenty largest pig farms in Ukraine it constitutes 2, 5-2, 8 feeding units. [8]. This situation is primarily due to the use of different systems of animal feeding.

Thus, in the present conditions the recognition of the technologies used in the food and agricultural products production is needed to complement the existing system of standardization and certification. Current standards for agricultural products rather describe its suitability for industrial processing, transportation and durability than serve as an indicator of quality characteristics which are important to consumers. Detection of harmful additives in the products requires considerable investments of time and laboratory studies and they are difficult for the understanding of the ordinary consumers. That is, even if the implementation of information of these studies' results, from our point of view, would not lead to a significant increase in consumer confidence in the quality of agricul-

tural products and, consequently, to food products. A vivid illustration of this is the social pressure on the use of GMOs which has not reduced as a result of the introduction of appropriate food labeling.

That said, the conclusion can be made that there is an urgent need to develop a transparent and simple system of classification and identification of the technologies farms that would serve as an indicator of environmental performance and safety of agricultural products be for all interested social groups and market forces. **Such system, if voluntarily adopted by a specific agricultural enterprise, will better position it on the market.** In addition, such system will significantly reduce the cost of quality control of agricultural products and, under the conditions of its thorough organisation, significantly increase the level of consumer awareness and, as a result, confidence in domestic food production. It is this factor (i.e. confidence in the technology of agricultural production), as shown by the results of our market research, is one of the main incentives for the purchasing of food products.

In theory and practice of business, it is fairly common that by analyzing the organizational structures of enterprises lead to conclusions about the level of quality of goods or services offered by them at the market. For a better perception of such information, there are different ways of simple and symbolic notation. It is often used for the quality assessment of food products which requires special training, and their intangible attributes are transmitted through relevant associations. Examples include a variety of rating used for businesses that operate in the financial markets. The most famous of them is the system of assigning ratings to the commercial banks, which are often linked to the system developed by three of the world's leading rating agencies Standard & Poor's, Moody's and Fitch Ratings. Credit rating intends to give a comprehensive and systematic representation of the bank's ability to timely pay all assumed financial obligations to all depositors and creditors, which is the main indicator of the quality of services provided. To calculate this rate, a thorough retrospective analysis of the bank's activities and the forecast of its future solvency needs to be conducted, which is the power of financial professionals only. The results of the study carried by the detached party (the influential rating agency) corresponds more confidence; and the simplified notation system by the letters of the alphabet (e.g. according to Standard & Poor's: AAA - the highest level of solvency, D - default) provides better understanding of commercial banks to the ordinary customers.

With the aim of differentiation of the agricultural enterprises, an introduction of the ranking system is proposed in terms of environmental safety of products they offer to the market. This ranking can be established by analysing the mandatory statistical reporting of the farms as per the use of agricultural, animal farming and veterinary data to establish those which increase certain contaminants in agricultural products. The above rating system may be performed by the authorized government agencies, companies involved in agribusiness market research, education institutions on the supply and demand study, and others. New elements need to be introduced to provide more information on the existing system of rating procedures to the statistical reporting of the farms on the volume of mineral and organic fertilizers. An equally important task is the scientific study of methodological approaches to determining the environmental safety of products of agricultural enterprises. Considering the above, a methodological approach for the introduction of rating farms by definition criteria is proposed by the author of this paper (Table 3).

Table 3. Methodological approach to the introduction of agricultural enterprises ranking in terms of environmental safety of agricultural products *

Classes of environmental safety of agricultural products	Level of the dangerous to humans and the environment technological substances, as% of scientifically based calculation rules			Symbolic notation
	A**	B**	C**	
First class	0 - 25	0 - 25	0 - 25	AgroEcoClass-111
Second class	26 - 50	26 - 50	26 - 50	AgroEcoClass -222
Third class	51 - 75	51 - 75	51 - 75	AgroEcoClass -333

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Fourth class	76 - 100	76 - 100	76 - 100	AgroEcoClass -444
Fifth class	100-125	100-125	100-125	AgroEcoClass -555
Sixth class	Over 126	Over 126	Over 126	AgroEcoClass -666
Example of mixed model	0 - 25	26 - 50	51 - 75	AgroEcoClass -123
Example of mixed model	26 - 50	51 - 75	76 - 100	AgroEcoClass -234

*Developed by Author.

**A, B, C– means (substances) in agricultural, animal farming and veterinary nature that give rise to contaminants in agricultural products.

The basic principle of the classification of agricultural products is the degree of use of products of agricultural, animal farming and veterinary nature that give rise to certain contaminants. In memorizing these classification approaches by the ordinary consumers it is better to combine, or group them. For example, in Table 3 of our group proposed three specific terms listed for crop production: A – Fertilizers, B – Agrochemicals and Pesticides, B – adjuvants and plant growth stimulants; and for livestock products: A – feed additives of chemical origin, B – antibiotics, B – adjuvants and growth promoters of animals. In symbolic notation of the ecological safety of agricultural products, the slogan "AgroEkoclass" and the corresponding number of its levels transcription is offered.

For the improved perception, the main quantitative criteria proposed to define classes of the environmental safety of products of agricultural enterprises is the degree of use of means of agricultural, animal and veterinary nature products which are dangerous to humans and the environment, and cause deterioration of agricultural products' quality. The proposed method is distinguishing six classes of environmental safety of agricultural products: the first - the absence or minimal use of these additives; the following five classes are defined depending on the level that an agricultural enterprise applies the listed additives, calculated as a percentage of the scientifically based standards for their use.

Since the current rates of consumption of fertilizers and other farming accelerators per 1 ton of crops of primary production may increase or decrease within 25 per cent, depending on the content of mobile forms in soil nutrient pollution level acreage weeds, fifth grade environmental safety of agricultural products can be considered as acceptable, and the sixth as a potential threat to the environment and human health. The practical value of this approach is that it allows agribusinesses choose mixed model of the level of environmental performance of its products, taking into account the specific conditions of their management (climate, soil type, etc.). In addition, this approach will help to distinguish farms that are excessively using agro-chemical means.

The practical value of this approach is that it allows agricultural businesses to choose mixed patterns of environmental performance of its products, taking into account the specific conditions of their management (climate, soil type, etc.).

The introduction of such ranking gives agricultural enterprises some advantages in the market positioning of their products. First of all, this classification system is not denying the existing approaches to standardization and certification of agricultural products, but complements and extends their capabilities. Agricultural enterprises acquire opened up possibility of being "distinguished" by its own model of environmental technologies applied without violating the current legislation on product quality. Secondly, the introduction of control over the use of dangerous to humans and the environment meansof agricultural, animal and veterinary origin, including evidence-based norms, is important in the present conditions of constantly growing pollution. The exercise of such control is more simple and economical compared with laboratory tests of every batch of sales of agricultural products. In addition, strengthening control functions at the stage of agricultural production and the timely publication of the results greatly enhance the market image of domestic agricultural enterprises both in domestic and foreign markets. The positive result of this process will be the improvement of the financial performance of farms due to better positioning of their price. Also, this system completes the vision of the concept of strategic positioning of products of agricultural en-

terprises. Producing standardized products, farmers get an efficient and effective mechanism for protecting its own concept of customer value as intellectual property.

Conclusions. On the basis of the study it can be argued that the effective interaction of buyers and sellers in the market for agricultural products is largely conditioned by the presence of resonating values in shaping concepts of marketing products. Since agricultural products are standardized commodity, agricultural enterprises have difficulty to distinguish by the external attributes of products. According to the author, the resonating values can be achieved through the formation of trust of the end users in the applied production technology. In order to ensure their recognition, it is proposed to introduce ranking of the agricultural enterprises in terms of environmental safety of products they offer to the market.

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