



STATEMENT

on a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education and Science in field of higher education 3.0 Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty: organization and management of production (agriculture and sub-sectors).

The author of the dissertation is **Tihomira Yordanova Radeva** – full-time PhD student at the Department of Management and Marketing, Agrarian University, Sofia, Bulgaria. Plovdiv

Dissertation topic: Joint marketing activities to manage the production and sale of vegetables

Reviewer: **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violeta Dinkova Dirimanova**, Agricultural University, Plovdiv, Higher Education Area: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional field: 3.7 Administration and management, Scientific specialty. She is appointed by the Rector of the Agricultural University as a member of the scientific jury with Order No. RD-16-780/05.07.202.

1. Brief introduction of the candidate

Tihomira Yordanova Radeva was born on 16.01.1985. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Regional Development Management at the Faculty of Economics, Agricultural University of Plovdiv in 2017. She graduated in 2018 with a Master's degree in Economics and management of European Agricultural and Rural Development at the same faculty and university as her Bachelor's degree. She is fluent in English and Spanish. Tihomira Radeva was a full-time PhD student at the Department of Management and Marketing at the Agricultural University, Plovdiv. She was a PhD student at Agricultural University of Plovdiv for the period 2019-2022.

2. Relevance of the problem

The topic of the dissertation is related to the examination of the production and economic potential of the "Vegetable production" sector in the country under the Common Agricultural Policy of the EU. It examines the role of the changed economic environment of farms growing vegetable crops and the influence the main factors of high competition in the domestic and foreign market in the sector. To solve these problems requires the use of state-of-the-art economic principles and management tools, the application of strategic thinking and a market-oriented approach to resource management.

The dissertation addresses issues related to modern marketing activities in the management of both production and marketing of vegetables. For this aim,

the PhD student attempts to clarify the organizational behaviour of business organizations in this sector, to determine the factors and potential determining production activities in vegetable production, to clarify modern marketing activities and to develop a model for the formulation of the implementation and control of marketing strategy in vegetable production.

3. Aim, objectives, hypotheses and research methods

The aim of the dissertation is clearly stated and aims to establish the impact of joint marketing activities in managing the production and marketing of vegetable products. Achievement of the objective is realized by (1) clarifying the place and importance of organizational behaviour in the management of business organizations; (2) clarifying the nature of joint marketing activities and justify their importance in the management of production and marketing of vegetables; (3) developing a methodology for studying the impact of joint marketing activities on the production and marketing of vegetables; (4) defining the factors determining the production activities of the study sites and its results; (5) identifying the potential of joint implementation of activities by vegetable producers; (6) identifying recommendations for improving farm management based on joint marketing activities; and (7) developing a model for the formulation, implementation and monitoring of a marketing strategy for joint marketing activities.

The object of the scientific research are agricultural farms growing vegetables on the territory of Southern Bulgaria, and the subject of the scientific research are the management (marketing) activities in planning, implementation and control of economic activity of agricultural farms.

The scientific thesis of the research is focused on the joint marketing activities in the modern market conditions and increasing competition as a prerequisite for the development of vegetable farms. The sub-theses of the research are related to the implementation of marketing activities in the business organization; strategic management of business organizations; the specifics of organizational behaviour of business organizations and the implementation of joint marketing activities requiring coordination and centralization of activities that lead to improved financial performance and market positions.

In conducting the research, the PhD student has applied the systematic approach, retrospective analysis, situational analysis, comparative analysis, statistical methods, diagnostic analysis, predictive analysis, etc.

4. Illustration and presentation of the results

The PhD student has used various ways to illustrate and summarize the obtained results through figures, tables and diagrams, which allow him to

correctly systematize and objectively present the results obtained. The dissertation consists of 174 pages including 154 pages of exposition, 32 tables and 46 figures. In the thesis, it is used 78 literature sources mainly in Bulgarian and English.

5. Discussion of results and literature used.

During her work on the dissertation, the doctoral candidate has studied a large part of the modern specialized scientific Bulgarian and foreign authors. In the theoretical part, a model related to joint marketing activities has been developed as a means of maintaining long-term compliance between the dynamic external environment and the internal corporate environment, by building and exploiting competitive advantages.

The analysis is based on a survey of 92 vegetable growers operating in the South Central region of Bulgaria. The respondents are owners of agricultural holdings. The questionnaire contains 47 questions grouped in 3 sections - general characteristics of the farm, prospects for farm development and marketing activities of the farm.

The analysis of the survey results is carried out in two main directions - on the distribution of the answers received for each question and on the relationship between the company strategic marketing activities and the indicators characterizing individual business units. The results of the analysis of the first strand aim to present the situation, problems and prospects for the development of the sector as a whole, revealing the commonalities between the farms. The analysis of the second strand looks for those specific points that affect the individual holding. For the purpose of this analysis, a statistical method was used to process the information.

In the last chapter, a management model is developed for the organisation and implementation of joint marketing activities by vegetable growers. The model represents individual activities based on internal logic, completeness of procedures and continuity of decisions.

6. Contributions of the dissertation.

The dissertation "Joint marketing activities to manage the production and sale of vegetables" contains the following contributions, ideas and solutions for the theory and practice of corporate management:

- An in-depth analysis of farmers' organizational behaviour has identified the main factors influencing the potential for cooperation among farmers.

- Adaptation of existing marketing strategies and approaches in theory and practice, tailored to the specificities of the agricultural sector, which is a prerequisite for their successful application.
- Develop a methodological framework for the implementation of collaborative marketing activities in vegetable production and supply management.
- Identified the main risks that accompany the implementation of joint marketing activities and their benefits for farmers.
- Practices of joint marketing and individual farm marketing of vegetables are analysed.
- Suggestions are made for improving the information and documentation basis for organising and managing joint marketing activities.
- Suggestions are made for improving marketing on farms producing and marketing vegetables.
- A model has been developed for the organisation and implementation of joint marketing activities by vegetable growers.

7. Critical comments and questions.

The methodological part is not very well argued in the study itself. The literature review is extensive and very well analysed and illustrated in the theoretical part. It would be good to highlight at the end of each chapter the scientific and applied contributions that can help to summarize the final part of the thesis. I have the following recommendations for the PhD candidate:

- To deepen his research in the field of applied marketing and management in the agricultural sector;
- I recommend publishing more scientific papers in a journal with a high impact factor, so that her scientific production will be appreciated by a wider range of scientific specialists in Bulgaria and abroad.

In spite of the above criticisms, the dissertation has its merits.

8. Published articles and citations.

On the topic of the dissertation, the PhD student has published three independent articles, which is the required minimum for obtaining the degree of PhD degree. They are:

- Radeva, T. Marketing activities of Bulgarian vegetable growers. *Journal of Economics and Management of Agriculture*, 2021, № 1
- Radeva, T. Perspectives on value addition by Bulgarian vegetable growers. *Journal of Economics and Management of Agriculture*. 2021, № 2

- Radeva, T. Potential of Bulgarian vegetable growers for joint marketing activities. *Journal of Economics and Management of Agriculture*. 2021, № 3

The presented abstract objectively reflects the structure and content of the dissertation.

CONCLUSIONS:

On the basis of the different research methods learned and applied by the PhD student, the correctly derived experiments, and generalizations and conclusions drawn, I consider that the presented dissertation meets the requirements of the Agricultural University Regulations for its application, which gives me the reason to evaluate it **POSITIVE**.

I take the liberty to propose to the esteemed Scientific Jury to also vote positively and to award **Tihomira Yordanova Radeva** the degree of Doctor of Education and Science in the scientific speciality of **Production Organization and Management**.

Date: 12.6.2022

Plovdiv

RESPONSE: 

/Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violeta Dirimanova/