

AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY PLOVDIV  
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**JOINT MARKETING ACTIVITIES TO MANAGE THE PRODUCTION  
AND SALE OF VEGETABLES**

**ABSTRACT**

of a dissertation for awarding an educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in  
scientific specialty "Organization and Management (by industry)"

Supervisor:  
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The dissertation consists of 174 pages, of which 154 pages are an exposition, 32 tables and 46 figures. 78 literature sources were used.

The dissertation was discussed and directed for defense by the Department of Management and Marketing at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv.

The defense of the dissertation will take place on ..... year from ..... hours in the hall ..... of Agraren University of Plovdiv.

The materials on the defense are available to those interested in the library of the University of Plovdiv.

# **I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION**

## **1. Relevance of the topic**

In the context of the EU CAP, the vegetable sector is extremely difficult to develop its production and economic potential. In the changed economic environment, agricultural farms do not have the resources to neutralize the impact of natural and climatic conditions, to withstand competitive pressure and market conditions. The main reasons for this are:

- the lack of preparation of the sector for strong competition in the common European market;
- the predominant share of small and small agricultural holdings;
- unfair competition from neighboring countries;
- lack of associations;
- the depopulation of the regions and the unattractive working conditions
  - caused by the labor-intensive nature of production and the low degree of mechanization.

Today, the sector faces many problems, the solution of which requires the use of the most modern economic principles and management tools. The need to apply the principles of strategic thinking and market-oriented approach to management is due to the specifics of the sector requires many resources that are difficult to provide in modern socio-economic conditions.

## **2. Aim and tasks of the dissertation**

**The goal** of the present dissertation is to establish the influence of joint marketing activities in managing the production and sale of vegetables.

In order to achieve the set goal, the following tasks will be solved:

1. The place and importance of organizational behavior in the management of business organizations will be clarified.

2. The essence of the joint marketing activities will be clarified and their importance for the management of the production and sale of vegetables will be substantiated.

3. A methodology for studying the impact of joint marketing activities on the production and sale of vegetables will be developed.

4. The factors determining the production activity of the studied sites and its results will be determined.

5. The potential for joint implementation of activities by vegetable producers will be identified.

6. Recommendations will be made to improve the management of agricultural holdings on the basis of joint marketing activities.

7. A model for formulating, implementing and controlling a marketing strategy for joint marketing activities (joint marketing) will be developed.

### **3. Subject and object of the dissertation**

**Object of scientific research** are agricultural farms growing vegetables on the territory of Southern Bulgaria.

The subject of the research is the management (marketing) activities in planning, implementation and control of the economic activity of agricultural holdings.

### **4. Thesis thesis**

**Main research thesis:** Joint marketing activities in modern market conditions and increasing competition is a prerequisite for the development of agricultural holdings engaged in the production and sale of vegetables.

### **5. Leading sub-theses in the research**

- Marketing activities are a tool for strategic management of business organizations, ie they are a management process. The implementation of this process requires taking into account the specifics of the organizational behavior of business organizations.

- The implementation of marketing activities is determined to the greatest extent by the organizational form of the business organization.

- The cost of production of vegetable producers is high in its independent implementation.

- There is a market potential for offering Bulgarian vegetables on the national market.

- The implementation of joint marketing activities requires coordination and centralization of activities and leads to (in order to) improve financial performance and market position.

### **6. Research methods**

The systematic approach, retrospective analysis, situational analysis, comparative analysis, statistical methods, diagnostic analysis, prognostic analysis, etc. were applied during the research.

## **7. Structure of the work**

The dissertation consists of an introduction, presentation in three sections, conclusion, and a list of references - a total of 174 standard typewritten pages.

In accordance with the main tasks set in the research, the exposition in the dissertation is developed according to the following structure:

Introduction

Chapter I Management of business organizations

Chapter II Analysis of joint marketing activities on the production and sale of vegetables

Chapter III Improving marketing on vegetable farms

Conclusion

Literature

Appendixes

## **II. MAIN CONTENT**

### **Chapter One**

#### **MANAGEMENT OF BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS**

The successful operation of the business is possible by applying different approaches in the management of agricultural holdings and taking into account the understanding (Angelov, 2018) that management is not a passive response to reality, but is an active intervention in the process to achieve certain goals. This intervention is carried out through management decisions that have a strong impact on the organizational behavior of the business organization. On the other hand, the decisions themselves may be subject to influence and their decision may be the result of the specifics of the organization.

Business organizations are created to achieve certain goals, for the achievement of which it is necessary to perform certain functions and specific activities (Kalinov, 2017). Providing them requires building a structure that has the appropriate potential and develops it over time. An important feature of the structure is its autonomy. Agricultural holdings are the most diverse in type and have a high degree of autonomy, ie. they set their own goals (Doichinova, 2018). Their organizational nature determines the boundaries of the management process, which is defined as the formation of certain behavior in relation to the market environment.

Marketing activities are considered as a way to improve the market position of agricultural producers producing vegetables in a dynamic business environment. Basically, marketing is a tool for strategic business management.

From these starting points in the first section of the study are considered: organizational behavior, as well as opportunities for applying a marketing approach in production management. The inherent dimensions of planning joint marketing activities are analyzed. Based on the theoretical analysis, a methodology for assessing the impact of joint marketing activities on the production and sale of vegetables has been developed.

Based on the understanding that the organization is a complex system of relationships (Lambovska, 2018), organizational behavior affects the activities of people and the result of the implementation of processes. Each farm can be considered as a system with the following 3 important characteristics:

1. Agriculture is a goal-oriented system. Its functioning is based on certain goals. They determine the priorities and guidelines for its development.

2. Agriculture is a social system. People are the most important factor in it. The household has a leading role in the functioning of agricultural holdings.
3. Agriculture is a technical and technological system. The labor process uses technical means and equipment that ensure the production and sale of products. Their effective management is a paramount task for any manager.

Every farm has a variety of complex processes that change the goals and approaches to their implementation. This is a process that takes place through human intervention and shapes the organizational behavior of the farm.

This gives us reason to consider organizational behavior at three levels: 1) Individual level; 2) Group level; 3) Organizational level. At the individual level, the behavior of the individual and his personal characteristics are studied. Many farms (especially those engaged in the production and sale of vegetables) are individual farmers, which means that one person makes business decisions and manages (and often implements) all processes and activities. These farms are often small in size and have the character of sole (family) structures. At the group level, the behavior of people in a group and their interaction are studied. Large and diversified farms attract more labor, which requires the use of effective methods and approaches for their management. This level is also relevant for small farms, which are individual in nature, but maintain contacts with various partners and structures (suppliers, intermediaries, administrative structures, competitors, etc.) whereby certain relationships are established. When structuring and developing these relationships, difficulties arise from reconciling different value systems, leadership styles, business policies and strategies. At the organizational level, the management policy and the organization of the environment are studied. Farms have the opportunity to participate in producer groups, pooling their potential but reducing their degree of autonomy. In order to achieve their personal goals, it is necessary to develop strategies for organizational culture and climate for the realization of economic and social resources and (in) formal communication between them. The management of joint business processes requires optimization of system variables, both to achieve individual goals and to maintain the sustainability of the group.

Farm management needs to address two main challenges. The first is to adapt the organization to the external (environment) environment. Agriculture is an "open" system that interacts with the elements of the external environment. The economy through its structure and strategy is looking for a way to optimize these relationships (business relationships) to achieve its organizational goals. This brings us to the second challenge, concerning the internal integration of the

processes that take place in the organization itself. This is about making decisions about production, marketing, staff, finance. The two challenges are constantly interacting with each other, as changes in the external environment reflect on what is happening in the organization.

Taking into account the specifics of the organizational behavior of each agricultural producer, the cooperation between them turns out to be a complex process (Nikolov, 1997). Managers have the task of overcoming the mistrust that has arisen as a result of many unsuccessful attempts to work together and to create motivational incentives and enthusiasm for adopting new management approaches. Management approaches that enable the farmer to adapt to the environment and maintain his positions. The application of these approaches is related to the reconsideration of the values of the organization and confrontation with conflicts caused by the individual and group development.

**Table 1 Characteristics of individual and group development**

<b>Individual development</b>	<b>Group development</b>
Stability	Risk
Autonomy	Addiction
Results orientation	Task orientation
Formal structure	Informal structure
Motivation through values	Motivation through administration
Long-term goals	Short-term goals
Belief in one's own abilities	Trust
	Ethical policy

Source: Brooks, 2018

"The marketing concept of management is the constant search for the best balance between customer requirements, on the one hand, and the company's desire to make higher profits, on the other."<sup>1</sup>

"The marketing concept is not a second definition of marketing. It is a way of thinking - a managerial philosophy for the overall activities of the organization. This philosophy influences the overall activities of the organization, not just the marketing activities."<sup>2</sup>

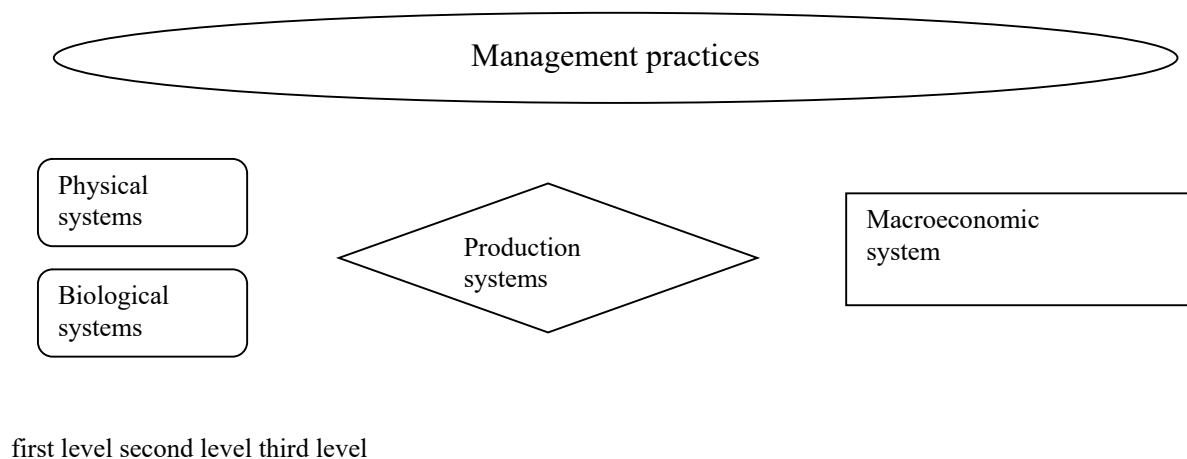
The main advantage of marketing management is the focus on the processes of market positions in order to maximize compliance with its requirements. Such conscious coordination and coordination of business with the activities of surrounding businesses can increase its effectiveness. For an organization to succeed, its managers must know these external forces, cover the relationships between them and understand their real and potential impact. on the organization. Above all, managers must manage the organization so as to minimize the negative

<sup>1</sup>Trendafilov, R., A. Simova. Agromarketing. Bolid, 2000. p.29

<sup>2</sup>Pride, W. Marketing: Concepts and Strategies. Farcom, 1994. p.13



impact of environmental factors and maximize their positive effect on the organization. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to adopt a systematic approach. It is a working concept, through which we can understand how something works. This approach takes us away from the idea that things in our lives are separate, isolated objects and directs us to look at them as a set of interconnected components working together to support each other and achieve different goals. The closest example of a system is the human body, which is composed of various interacting organs. When all the organs work together, we are healthy. But if the interaction between them is disrupted, we get sick. " which is composed of different interacting bodies. When all the organs work together, we are healthy. But if the interaction between them is disrupted, we get sick. " which is composed of different interacting bodies. When all the organs work together, we are healthy. But if the interaction between them is disrupted, we get sick. " <sup>3</sup>



**Figure 1 System levels**

Source: own

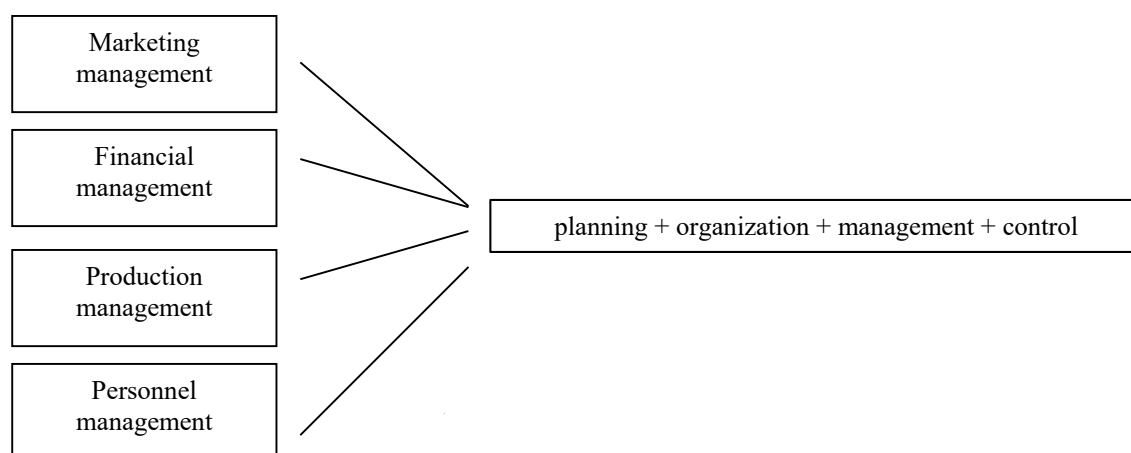
A management process takes place in each business unit, ie. "A series of continuous and interconnected actions. We call these actions managerial functions. These are planning, organizing, leading and controlling." <sup>4</sup> These functions are performed in each element of the internal environment of the business organization, which we define using the functional approach. The main advantage of this approach is that each functional area has its own specific characteristics and features, which requires knowledge and competencies in the

<sup>3</sup>Bound, G. Management. South-Western College, 1995. p.16

<sup>4</sup>Angelov, A. Fundamentals of management. Trakia M, 2018. p.39

field in the implementation of management functions. The control elements and functions are presented in fig. 2.

control elements control functions



**Figure 2 Elements and functions of management**

Source: Blagoev (6)

Joint marketing activities must be in line with the marketing strategies of individual manufacturers. According to F. Kotler, “marketing strategy defines the broad principles by which a business unit expects to achieve its marketing goals in the target market. It consists of basic solutions for total marketing costs, marketing mix and marketing distribution.”<sup>5</sup>. According to other authors, J. Evans and B. Berman "The marketing strategy determines how to use the marketing structure to attract and satisfy target markets and achieve the organization's goals."<sup>6</sup>. For his part, Armin Seiler points out that "the marketing strategy describes how the company can use its resources and strengths to take advantage of established market opportunities and achieve separate and lasting competitive advantages."<sup>7</sup>

The listed definitions highlight two main key concepts: target market and marketing goals of the organization. On this basis, we can define joint marketing activities as a way to use the potential of each organization to satisfy consumers, which will lead to the achievement of its goals. These activities, according to V. Savov (46) and V. Blagoev (7) relate to formulate strategic decisions in each of the four main areas of marketing known as elements of the marketing mix - product, price, distribution and promotion.

<sup>5</sup>Kotler, Ph.D. Marketing Management 7th ed. Prentice-Hall International, 1991. p.71

<sup>6</sup>Velev, M. Marketing Management. Softrade, 2005. p.54

<sup>7</sup>Zeiler, Ar. Marketing: Successful implementation in practice, volume 2. Informa, 1991. p.15

Based on the discussed definitions, we formulate our understanding that: joint marketing activities are a means to maintain long-term compliance between the dynamic external environment and the internal company environment, by building and using competitive advantages. Their implementation is part of the strategic process of business management and leads to formulated strategic decisions on the elements of the marketing mix in order for the business organization to achieve its long-term goals. In this way, marketing activities guide the behavior of the entire organization and cover all its elements.

**Table 2 Applicability of approaches to joint marketing activities by vegetable producers**

<b>Approaches to marketing activities</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Perspective</b>
Ansoff's matrix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- easy to understand;</li> <li>- clearly defines the guidelines for development;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- does not specify activities;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- customer analysis;</li> <li>- product analysis;</li> <li>- distribution;</li> <li>- image building</li> </ul>	Baseline for formulating joint marketing activities
M. Porter's Competitive Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- goal oriented;</li> <li>- clearly define the emphasis in the work;</li> <li>- competition-oriented;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- independent conduct (difficult to replace);</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- analysis of competitors;</li> <li>- analysis of the company's potential;</li> <li>- production;</li> <li>- innovations;</li> </ul>	Defining the competitive area
Military strategies of F. Kotler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- competition-oriented;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- do not specify activities;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- analysis of competitors;</li> <li>- analysis of the company's potential;</li> </ul>	Limited application possibilities
Market segmentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- easy to understand;</li> <li>- clearly define the guidelines for development;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- do not specify activities;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Market Analysis;</li> <li>- production;</li> <li>- image building</li> </ul>	Concretization of the field for joint marketing activities
Market presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- take into account the competitive position;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- independent conduct (difficult to replace);</li> <li>- difficult coordination;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- analysis of the company's potential;</li> <li>- building an image;</li> </ul>	Limited application possibilities

Source: own

The planning of joint marketing activities is based on clearly defined goals, accurate assessment of the external business environment and realistic analysis of the internal capabilities of farmers (Boevsky, 2020). These three elements are essential for the successful implementation of the activities because:

1. Activities must be realistically selected on the basis of the domestic available and potential resources and capabilities of farmers. In other words, the pursuit and achievement of goals should be based on key strengths.

2. The activities must correspond to the external environment, as the sector operates in a highly dynamic, competitive environment. In particular, they must build on their strengths and / or opportunities to predict, anticipate and minimize the adverse effects of external factors.

3. The activities require to be carefully planned and executed accurately.

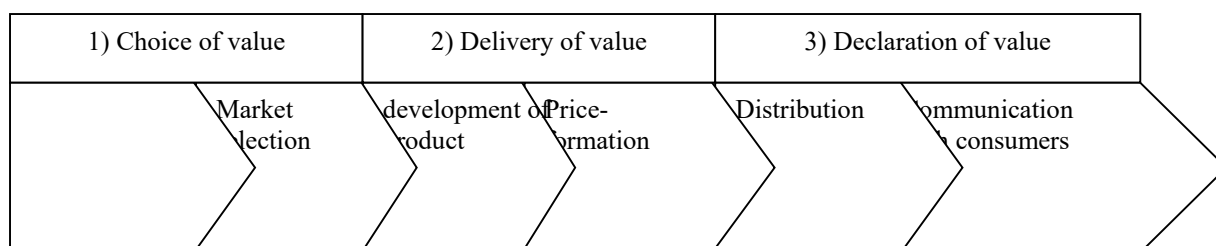
The joint marketing activities require the development of a marketing strategy that will determine the main directions in serving the target market. For this purpose, a marketing mix is developed and implemented, which on the one hand is addressed to the needs of consumers, and on the other hand to achieve long-term competitive advantages based on resources and competencies of agricultural holdings. In this sense, the use of regional characteristics of economic activity in the development of marketing strategy can be considered as a means of absorbing market potential. Mladenova (38) states that each marketing strategy addresses three issues:

-where the company can compete, ie clear definition of the company market;

-on what basis to compete, ie. to develop its proposal for the respective market, integrating it into a connected and balanced complex of the elements of the marketing mix;

-when to compete, ie. choosing the appropriate time for the implementation of the planned measures and anticipating the sequence of marketing actions.

The marketing strategy emphasizes on what basis the business will compete, ie. what will be the specific dimensions of the marketing mix. The use of regional characteristics of vegetable producers in the development of the marketing mix can contribute to the formation of value for the customer. Kotler (28) defines this process as a sequence of three phases (Fig. 3).



**Figure 3 Delivering value to consumers**

Source: Adapted from Kotler

Marketing activities can inherently be considered as a management tool aimed at increasing the ability of the farm to meet the external business conditions. In order for marketing activities to be complete, they must be based on an extensive analysis of the internal and external business environment, be provided with the necessary resources and be consistent with other business activities, etc.

The marketing management concept requires the implementation of certain marketing activities that help to improve the management of agricultural holdings. The main marketing activities in management areas are presented in table. 6. Based on the performed marketing activities we form a rating for the degree of application of the marketing approach in the management of agricultural holdings.

**Table 3 Marketing activities by management areas**

<b>Management area</b>	<b>Marketing activities</b>
1. Information	Search for market information
	Interest in innovation
2. Resources	Acquisition of resources
	Business relationships with suppliers
	Quality of resources
3. Product	Variety for cultivation
	Product features
	Product brand
	Product packaging
4. Price	Pricing
	Price discrimination
5. Promotion	Communication with buyers
	Management of communication channels
	Communication strategy
6. Distribution	Organizing the distribution
	Business relationships with intermediaries
7. Control	System for control of the implementation of marketing activities

The second pillar of the developed methodology presents the state of the productions in the researched object, by analyzing the costs related to the production. In this respect, the gross margin method, which belongs to the

economic group, can be useful. The method is used mainly for the needs of analysis and planning in agricultural management.

#### *Research methodology*

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

The analysis of the results of the research is performed in two main directions - the distribution of the answers received for each question and the relationship between the company's strategic marketing activities and the indicators characterizing the individual business units.

The analysis of the distribution of the received answers aims to present the state, problems and prospects for the development of the sector as a whole, revealing the general, typical between the farms.

The analysis in the second direction, unlike the previous one, looks for those specific moments that affect the individual company. For the purposes of this analysis, a statistical method for information processing was used.

## **Chapter two**

### **ANALYSIS OF JOINT MARKETING ACTIVITIES ON THE PRODUCTION AND SALE OF VEGETABLES**

The obtained frequency distributions, applying the Chi-square method, reveal those factors that have a non-random (objective) connection with the result indicator (marketing activities performed), ie. determine their implementation. It should be noted that in addition to the studied factors, the indicator-result is influenced by many other factors that are not studied here due to the impossibility to cover them in just one study. The results of the applied Chi-square method are presented in Table 4.

The values of  $\chi^2$  empirical and  $\chi^2$  theoretical distribution are reflected in Annex 3, and the estimates are made at  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

**Table 4 Results of a statistical check for the existence of a connection between the performed marketing activities and the characteristics of the agricultural producers**

<b>marketing activities</b>	<b>area</b>	<b>age</b>	<b>education</b>	<b>membership</b>	<b>income</b>	<b>RDP</b>	<b>experience</b>	<b>plans</b>
Obtaining information through colleagues	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	<b>presence of a connection</b>	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection
Interest in marketing innovations	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>
Independent determination of the variety for cultivation	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	<b>presence of a connection</b>
Self-determination of product packaging	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	<b>presence of a connection</b>
Pricing based on product characteristics	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	<b>presence of a connection</b>	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	missing connection
Joint communication	<b>presence of a connection</b>	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	<b>presence of a connection</b>
Participation in long supply chains	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	missing connection	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection
Independent analysis of the results	missing connection	missing connection	missing connection	missing connection	missing connection	<b>presence of a connection</b>	missing connection	missing connection

Source: own calculations

Table 4 shows that the performance of each marketing activity is related to at least one of the studied factors. Therefore, we believe that the statistical analysis allows us to create a profile of the agricultural producer who would participate in joint marketing activities with his colleagues. The profile for each marketing

activity is presented in table. 5. The profiles thus formed provide an opportunity to determine how each of the identified marketing activities can be implemented through appropriate marketing strategies. For each marketing strategy will be provided this form of implementation of activities, which corresponds to the profiles of the farmer. Of course, an important part of this process is its organizational development, which requires the establishment of certain basic rules,

**Table 5 Profile of the farmer for participation in joint marketing activities**

marketing activities	characteristics
Obtaining information through colleagues	small farm; secondary agricultural education; basic income; participates in the RDP; experience up to 5 years
Interest in marketing innovations	age up to 40 years; higher agricultural education; single income; participates in the RDP; long-term plans
Independent determination of the variety for cultivation	age over 60 years; basic income; experience over 11 years; long-term plans
Self-determination of product packaging	age over 60 years; basic income; long-term plans
Pricing based on product characteristics	small farm; member of a professional organization; single income; participates in the RDP;
Joint communication	small farm; age up to 40 years; member of a professional organization; experience between 6 and 10 years; long-term plans
Participation in long supply chains	small farm; is not basic income; experience between 6 and 10 years
Independent analysis of the results	participates in the RDP

Source: own

On the other hand, not all factors are equally proportional to marketing activities. The factors "education" and "membership in professional organizations" establish a statistically significant relationship with only 2 marketing activities, while "income" determines the attitude of farmers to as many as 6 marketing activities, ie. only in 2 no dependence was found.

All these findings give us reason to believe that the analysis confirms the research thesis that vegetable growers have the potential to carry out joint marketing activities taking into account the specific characteristics of their farms.

### **Determining the strength of established relationships**

The values of the Kramer coefficient, referring to the established presence of a connection between the performed marketing activities and the characteristics



of the farmers are presented in Table 6. The obtained results show that out of the 31 connections established, in 11 cases or nearly 1/3 of the total number its strength is significant ( $V2 > 0.5$ ). It is noteworthy that in the interest in marketing innovations, all connections have significant value, and in education and plans it is even strong.

**Table 6 Results of a study of the strength of the relationship between marketing activities and indicators**

<b>performed marketing activities</b>	<b>indicator factor</b>	<b>odds of Kramer V2</b>
Obtaining information through colleagues	area	0.57
Obtaining information through colleagues	education	0.26
Obtaining information through colleagues	income	0.39
Obtaining information through colleagues	RDP	0.44
Obtaining information through colleagues	experience	0.53
Interest in marketing innovations	age	0.67
Interest in marketing innovations	education	0.73
Interest in marketing innovations	income	0.67
Interest in marketing innovations	RDP	0.61
Interest in marketing innovations	plans	0.72
Independent determination of the variety for cultivation	age	0.55
Independent determination of the variety for cultivation	income	0.38
Independent determination of the variety for cultivation	experience	0.38
Independent determination of the variety for cultivation	plans	0.42
Self-determination of product packaging	age	0.47
Self-determination of product packaging	income	0.34
Self-determination of product packaging	experience	0.49
Self-determination of product packaging	plans	0.43
Pricing based on product characteristics	area	0.64
Pricing based on product characteristics	membership	0.42
Pricing based on product characteristics	income	0.40
Pricing based on product characteristics	RDP	0.36
Joint communication	area	0.40
Joint communication	age	0.45
Joint communication	membership	0.68
Joint communication	experience	0.43
Joint communication	plans	0.49
Participation in long supply chains	area	0.42
Participation in long supply chains	income	0.34
Participation in long supply chains	experience	0.38
Independent analysis of the results	RDP	0.54

Source: own calculations

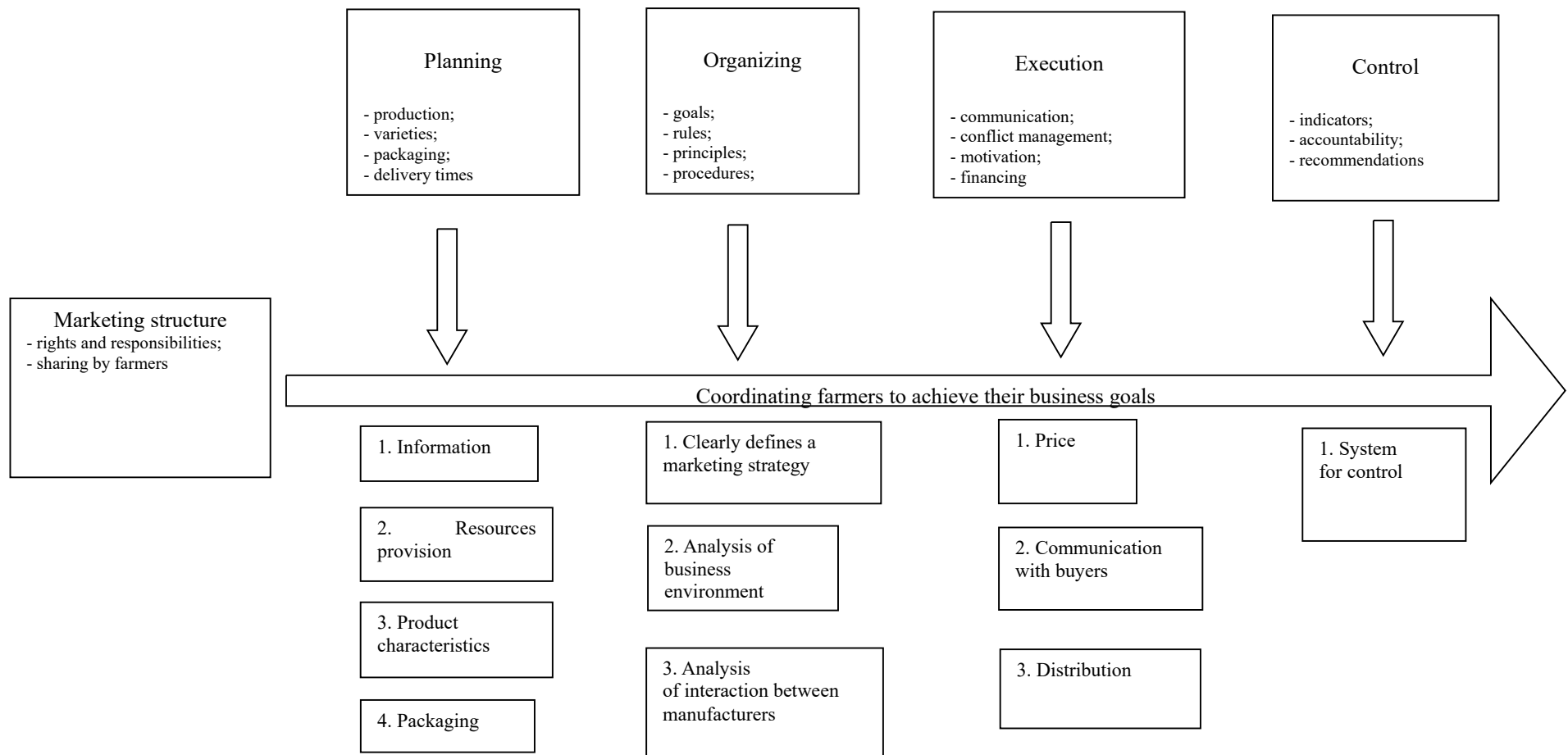
## Chapter three

### IMPROVING MARKETING ON VEGETABLE FARMS

Recommendations have been made that relate to specific strategic marketing activities and cover both activities that are not implemented and those whose implementation is weak and needs to be improved. The main place here is occupied by the management of information flows for the needs of strategic

analysis, by improving its information and documentary basis. The use of ready-made forms would facilitate the process of processing information and improve its visibility. At this point in the dissertation, samples of such forms are proposed, and it is recommended that they be completed in years, after which they should be stored for a longer period of time (7-8 years). The developed forms refer to all elements of the external micro-environment and the internal environment.

In addition to the recommendations made, a model has been developed for the organization and implementation of joint marketing activities by vegetable producers. The model is presented in fig. 46. The individual activities are divided into stages, based on internal logic, completeness of procedures and continuity of decisions.



**Figure 46 Model for organizing and conducting joint marketing activities**

## CONCLUSION

Vegetable producers face many problems to solve, which in the diversity of their origin imply the development of complex solutions with a view to solving them in unity and creating conditions for the development of these agricultural productions in the long run.

The aspiration of agricultural holdings to impose their products on the market has been achieved to varying degrees in the individual implementation of business activities. Some of them develop and implement successful production strategies, but there are problematic fields in the field of marketing. The author seeks an answer to the question of the extent to which the marketing approach of agricultural holdings is based on modern methods and methodology.

The formulation, implementation and control of joint marketing activities is a sign of the implementation of the marketing management approach. Thus, marketing activities are a real means to achieve market orientation of the business and increase the competitiveness of products. This is a process of separate stages, and at each of them relevant strategic marketing activities are performed. The quality of the joint marketing activities and the differences in the results depend on their strictly consistent implementation and on the methods used, determining their content.

The conducted marketing activities, such as clearly defining the mission of the organization, segmenting the company markets, building an information system, providing the marketing strategy with the necessary resources, clearly placing responsibilities of staff to implement the strategy, building a system to control its implementation and others, have influenced the results of the studied objects depending on:

- 1) the existence of a marketing unit, the responsibilities of which are charged and its provision with staff with the necessary competencies in matters of strategic marketing. The construction of such a unit is influenced by the size of the farm, the number of markets served, the attitude of the farmer to marketing, and the latter determines what rights and responsibilities are delegated to the members of the unit.

- 2) the efforts of marketing specialists combined with the actions of farmers involved in joint marketing activities. This is the manifestation of their coordinating function in the management of agricultural holdings, aimed at improving their efficiency.

The analysis related to determining which marketing activities have the potential to be carried out jointly shows that:

- Some of the surveyed sites do not fully perform the full range of marketing activities in the identified management areas, which does not allow them to implement convincing marketing strategies.

- The marketing unit is not recognized as an important part of the business structure of the surveyed farms. On the other hand, it is a common phenomenon for the functions of this unit (where it exists) to be limited to marketing and advertising of finished products.

The developed methodology and the selected system of indicators representing the condition of the business unit give a relatively complete assessment of the results of the use of joint marketing activities. With better indicators are agricultural holdings that have applied a marketing approach in the management of their business.

Based on the study, the main directions for improving the application of marketing activities in the surveyed farms can be systematized in the following areas:

- Understanding the essence of marketing and its perception as a philosophy of business management. Their achievement is based on in-house training and is aimed at the entire staff of the farm.

- Building a marketing unit. Its construction is based on granting rights and responsibilities to its members, in the formulation, implementation and control of marketing activities.

- Guidelines for improving joint marketing activities. Their improvement refers both to the implementation of strategic marketing activities that are not performed by the studied sites, and to the improvement of those performed.

The guidelines for improving the application of the marketing approach are summarized in a management model for organizing joint marketing activities by vegetable producers.

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The proposed study does not cover all aspects of the marketing approach in farm management. It answers many questions and approaches the answers of others, some questions remain unanswered and new ones are asked. At the same time, it is hoped that this dissertation presents a lot of evidence in support of the thesis that in modern market conditions and increasing competition, the implementation of joint marketing activities is a prerequisite for the development of agricultural holdings engaged in production and sale. of vegetables.

### III. REPORT ON CONTRIBUTIONS

The dissertation "Joint marketing activities for the management of production and sale of vegetables" contains the following more significant ideas and solutions for the theory and practice of corporate governance:

1. Based on an analysis of the organizational behavior of farmers, the main factors influencing the potential for cooperation between farmers have been identified.
2. Existing in theory and practice marketing strategies and approaches are adapted to the specifics of the agricultural sector, which is a prerequisite for their successful implementation.
3. A methodological framework for the implementation of joint marketing activities in the management of vegetable production and supply has been developed.
4. The main risks that accompany the implementation of joint marketing activities, as well as their benefits for farmers have been identified.
5. Practices of joint marketing and individual entry of agricultural holdings on the vegetable market are analyzed.
6. Proposals have been made to improve the information and documentary base in organizing and managing joint marketing activities.
7. Suggestions have been made to improve marketing in agricultural producers producing and offering vegetables.
8. A model for organization and implementation of joint marketing activities by vegetable producers has been developed.

### IV. LIST OF PUBLICATIONS ON THE TOPIC

1. **Radeva, T.**, Marketing activities of Bulgarian vegetable producers. Economics and management of agriculture. 2021, № 1
2. **Radeva, T.**, Prospects for adding value by Bulgarian vegetable producers. Economics and management of agriculture. 2021, № 2
3. **Radeva, T.**, Potential of Bulgarian vegetable producers for joint marketing activities. Economics and management of agriculture. 2021, № 3