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COMPETITIVENESS OF UKRAINIAN FOOD ENTERPRISES. FEATURES OF ASSESSMENT.

Competitiveness of a product is a main factor for its commercial success in the market with a large number of manufacturers of similar products. The article describes features of assessment and analysis of food enterprises products. It offers an evaluation algorithm and the ways of competitiveness improvement.

Keywords: competitiveness; analysis; evaluation; production; food industry.



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Statement of the problem and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks. One of the main trends of 21st century beginning is the rising attention to protection, preservation and improvement of environment. Protection of environment is tightly connected with the health of the population and social well-being of society. Growth of the global industry and increasing consumption of natural resources occurs against the backdrop of a global economic and environmental crisis.

Competitiveness of a product is a main factor for its commercial success in the market with a large number of manufacturers of similar products. This is a multilateral concept, which means that the product must meet the requirements of the market and specific requirements of consumers. Quality, technical, economic, aesthetic characteristics are important, but factors such as price, delivery terms, sales channels, service, and advertising are also very significant.

In other words, we need to understand competitiveness as a set of consumer and price characteristics that determine product success in the market. Namely, the advantage of this product over goods-analogs in a highly competitive environment. Products competitiveness is an indicator of the enterprise competitiveness, group of enterprises and the country in which production is located. It should be noted that under factors affecting competitiveness we understand reasons (essential circumstances), which partially affect or completely determine the level and nature of the enterprise competitiveness. The most common method of competitiveness factors identifying is based on classification features. When researching the competitiveness of products, it is necessary to select characteristics that should be compared after studying. They will include not only the characteristics of the product and the benefits for consumers, but also the characteristics of the product application method and its users.

The analysis of the latest publications on the problem. The development of market economy has caused the growing interest to products competitiveness improving. A large number of economic researches on this topic have appeared. Methods of product competitiveness estimate were described in publications of foreign and domestic leading economists, including M. Porter [10], D. Fox, R. Gregory [12], R. Fatkhudinov [11], I. Boichik [4], I. Dolzhansky, T. Zagorna [6] and others. Currently, there is no single method of product competitiveness assessment. However, most methods involve the use of a complex approach for such an assessment.

Forming of the aims of the research. The main research goal is to work out recommendations for improving of the food industry products evaluation method in the current economic environment.

Giving an account of the main results and their substantiation. In scientific works on the competitiveness of enterprises, various calculations and calculation-graphical methods are used. Each method has its own features. With the help of these features, authors argue about the effectiveness of their approach or the need of certain factors consideration. Depending on the enterprise and industry branch, methods may have unique features. However, the majority of methods are based on:

- identifying of the detailed list of factors that determine the competitiveness of the enterprise;
- approximate estimates and "expert methods" are used by researchers to assess competitiveness factors. Such assessments and methods are mainly subjective and conventional;
- a number of methods in assessing the competitiveness of enterprises are based on complicated logic structures, idealized models, new definitions and indicators for economic science. Different matrices can be constructed, new systems of coordinations can be built. In terms of logic, such models can look quite convincing,

but for real economic conditions such models are often too abstract;

- some methods involve combining of different in their nature technical and economic indicators into a single indicator of the enterprise's competitiveness. It is difficult to agree with such an approach. The same indicators can have different effects on different enterprises, depending on industry and economic situation.

Reviewing the methods of assessing competitiveness, it becomes clear that this problem has not been sufficiently studied. It is necessary to find the ways to describe real competitiveness of an enterprise more accurately and ways of proper comparison of competitors operating at the same market.

An important indicator of competitiveness is the quality of products. To determine this indicator, we suggest using the following components (attributes): - product designation (functionality, compliance

with the latest achievements of science and technology, consumer demand, fashion, etc.);

- reliability;
- economical use of materials, energy and human resources;
- ergonomics (convenience and ease of use);
- aesthetic;
- ecological;
- juridical (compliance with patent law, protection of intellectual property);
- standardization and unification;
- ease of transportation;
- recycling or ease of disposal;
- after-sales service.

These attributes show conformity of products quality to the market leaders quality level.

The system of quality attributes is shown in table 1.

Table 1

The system of quality attributes *

Indicators groups		Individual group indicators
Indicator	Description	
1.Designation	Describes useful work (the carried-out function)	- Productivity - Power - Saving useful properties - caloric content
2. Reliability, durability and safety	Describes the degree of durability of use, safety for human health and life.	- Probability of failure - Expected lifetime - Technical resource - The term of trouble-free work - Deadline for storage
3. Ecological	Describes the damage degree to the environment and human health.	- Products toxicity - Harmful substances containment - Volume of harmful emissions in the atmosphere per time unit.
4. Economic	Describes the degree of economic benefits to the producer and consumer.	- Price per product unit. - Profit per product unit. - Operational level, expenses of time and money
5. Ergonomic	Describes compliance with the anthropometric and psychological requirements of the consumer.	- Operation convenience - Ability to simultaneously cover controlled performance - The amount of noise, vibration, etc.
6. Aesthetic	Determine the aesthetic properties (design) of the product	- Attractive and original shape. - Color design. - Package design.
7. Juridical	Describes, how innovative the enterprise is.	- Intellectual property protection index.

* developed by the author

Factors affecting the enterprise can also be divided into external and internal. The appearance of internal factors and intensity of its influence depends on enterprise activity, state of its resource base, features of strategic management system, features of general management, etc. To increase the competitiveness, enterprises have to be focused mainly on this group of factors abroad or purchasing imported resources. The main political factors of competitiveness are the general political climate and the state of international relations, foreign policy towards social, economic and political reforms in Ukraine.

It should be noted, that enterprises cannot influence external factors, they are determined by the state of the external environment. External factors are extremely heterogeneous, as they are the results of different levels systems activity.

Political factors have a great impact on competitiveness. It is clearly seen when selling products

Next are scientific and technical factors. They display the state and dynamics of scientific and technological progress, technological level, productivity and reliability of equipment, flexibility of production processes, etc.

Economic and organizational factors. From one side they display the stage of economic development cycle, development of integration processes in the economic space, general and sectorial conjuncture, methods and mechanisms of economic regulation activity at the level of the state, regions and branches. From the other side these factors display the structure and efficiency of enterprise management system, level of organization of its marketing and financial and economic activity, nature of the organization of production processes and labor organization, degree of effectiveness of the forecasting systems, strategic and current planning, monitoring and operational regulation set up at the enterprise etc.

Social factors that affect the competitiveness of enterprises reflect the state and dynamics of processes occurring at macro and micro levels. The influence of these factors group on the enterprise competitiveness is two-sided. From one side they have a significant impact on the level, dynamics and specific features of demand in the market of products, and therefore affect the competitiveness of products produced by the enterprise. From the other side these factors affect enterprise level of production efficiency and economic activity.

The group of environmental factors characterizes the relationship of production and economic activity of the processing enterprise with the state of the environment. This group of factors should include the requirements of environmental legislation, costs arising from the utilization of waste products, maintenance of environmental facilities, etc.

Temporary and permanent factors. Permanent factors determine the overall level of enterprise competitiveness, temporary - change this level due to certain events. Most factors for processing enterprises are permanent, because the period of their operation and enterprise operational time are comparable. The number of factors of temporary influence is relatively small; they are usually associated with changes in consumer demand or determined by the seasonal features of production. In addition, the factors of temporary influence include random factors, the occurrence of which is rather difficult or impossible to predict (for example, an industrial accident, economic crisis or epidemic).

Independent (primary) and derivative (secondary) factors. They are determined by interdependence degree that affects competitiveness of processing enterprises. Independent (primary) factors themselves are the result of certain events or trend. Derivatives (secondary) are an indirect result of the action of the primary factors. For managers of processing enterprises it is important to influence primary factors and take into account the possible consequences for secondary factors.

The stimulating and discouraging factors. Stimulating are the factors that stimulate the improvement of the company's competitive position in the market. Discouraging - factors that have a negative impact on the company competitive position and restrain the process of increasing its competitiveness. Examples of discouraging factors are the low level of raw materials or entry into the World Trade Organization. WTO entry led to the loss of

foreign markets and decrease of Ukrainian products share in the domestic market. Factors influencing competitiveness operate in a complex. They form a system in which the operation of one factor can enhance the action of others.

The decision of the quality problem in Ukraine under the new conditions depends on the creation of an appropriate legislative framework. Important elements of legislative framework: the Law on Consumer Rights Protection; Laws on standardization and certification; Law on state supervision of standards, norms and rules; The Law on Metrology. They are closely connected to other "related" legislative acts (for example the Law "On Enterprises and Entrepreneurship", the Law "On Environmental Protection").

World experience shows that countries tend to export the product for which they have a surplus of factors of production and have the lowest relative value; While they import products that require shortages of production and higher costs for its production. Therefore, the practical work on improving competitiveness has to be focused on production factors that can be used to develop the industry and create competitive advantages.

The analysis of Ukraine's production factors gives optimistic results. In comparison with the six most economically developed countries of the world (USA, Japan, Germany, France, England, Canada), our country has rather high rating. Ukraine holds 3rd place in the provision of agricultural land, 4th place in labor resources, 3rd place in scientific potential. However, realizing of this potential is a big problem for majority of Ukrainian enterprises. Comparing the efficiency of production factors use, we can see that Ukraine, Russia and other CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries take the last places, far behind the world leaders. The efficiency of agricultural land use in Ukraine is 10-12 times worse than in France. Use of labor resources is 7-15 times worse, fixed assets 2-3 times, scientific potential 20 times [1].

Different factors have different effects on competitive advantages. It is necessary to consider that they can be different in the nature of impact and the sources of renewal.

An important aspect of an enterprise competitiveness assessing is that all factors have different economic nature, different dimensions and vary in different ranges. For example, if the indicator "enterprise sum of assets" is changed for 1000 units, effect on competitiveness will be insignificant. However, the change in "absolute liquidity" for 0.1 unit can be critical. Therefore, it is necessary to bring all factors of competitiveness to a single form.

To determine the level of competitiveness in the food industry, we propose to use the following financial sustainability coefficients:

- 1) coefficient of autonomy, which displays the financial independence of the enterprise from external sources;
- 2) coefficient of debt and equity;
- 3) mobility factor;

4) coefficient of financial stability displays what part of long-term and current liabilities can be covered by own funds;

5) the ratio of borrowed and own funds;

6) equity multiplier;

7) financial leverage.

We propose to calculate these coefficients using the financial statements of the enterprise.

Currently, there are many methods for assessing competitiveness, some of them consider price factors, and some do not. Usually, when assessing competitiveness, the main attention is paid to the technical parameters analysis. Less attention is paid to economic indicators such as price, production costs, cost of consumption, export efficiency, etc. One of the methods considers the product competitiveness level, as the ratio of its price to

the price of the "etalon product". Where the products price is the selling price on foreign markets, etalon product price is the price of the most popular product in the given market.

In the practice of the world's leading experts, there are special methods and indicators for determining the price competitiveness for a given period. As usual, determination of price competitiveness in the domestic national market is carried out by comparing of domestic market prices and the prices of imported products, or world prices. In the foreign market, three indicators are compared: production costs in the national currency; exchange rates; profit (selling price minus costs of production). Fig. 1 shows the main competitiveness assessment methods.

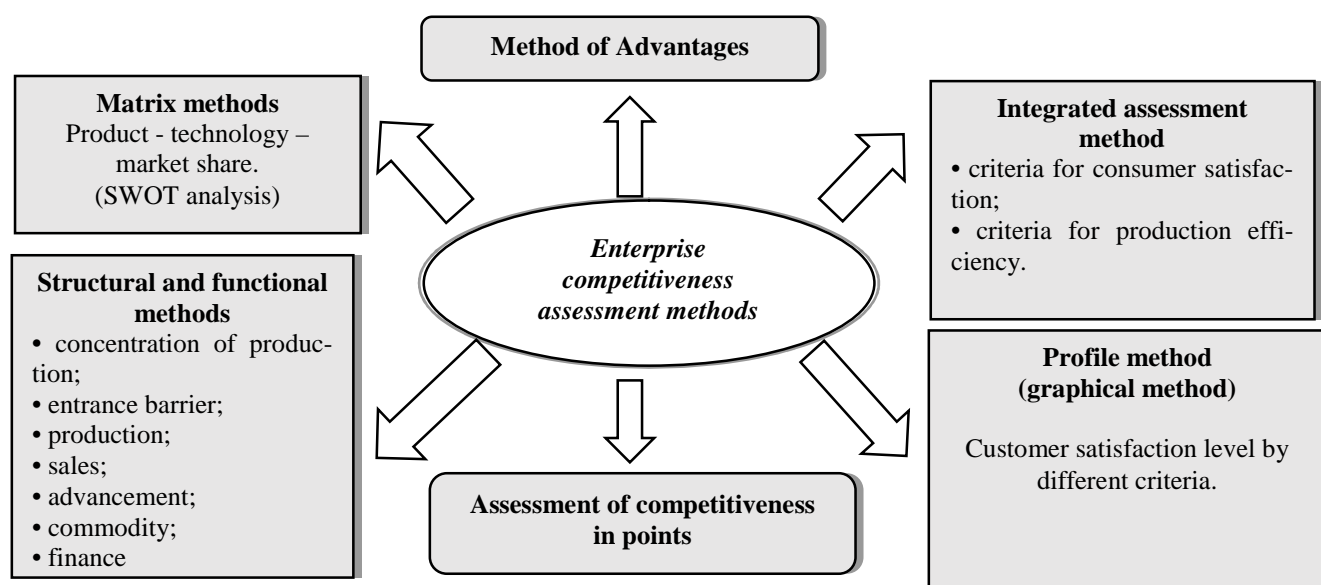


Fig. 1. Methods for assessing competitiveness *

* developed by the author using source [4]

One of the most advanced approaches of an enterprise competitiveness assessment is the benchmarking method. Benchmarking goal is to find out the probability of a company's success with high veracity.

Benchmarking is an extremely useful tool, especially during the revision the company's internal performance and setting new business priorities. Comparison of performance indicators makes possible to understand the vulnerabilities and rational aspects of the company's activity compared to competitors and world leaders. This allows to find empty market niches, partners for industrial and technical cooperation and figure out the benefits of companies merging. Such analysis can help to increase profit, establish useful competition and meet the needs of the buyers better.

Conclusions and prospects of the further investigations. During the research, we identified the fea-

tures of the assessment of the competitiveness of food industry enterprises and developed an algorithm for assessing competitiveness. Algorithm is presented in fig. 2.

The following main ways of an enterprise competitiveness increasing can be offered:

- improvement of products technical, economic and qualitative indicators;
- accounting of customer requirements when developing products;
- identify and ensure the benefits of the product compared with its substitutes;
- revealing the advantages and disadvantages of analogue products that are issued by competitors. Use of results in the company's activity;
- definition of possible modifications of the product;

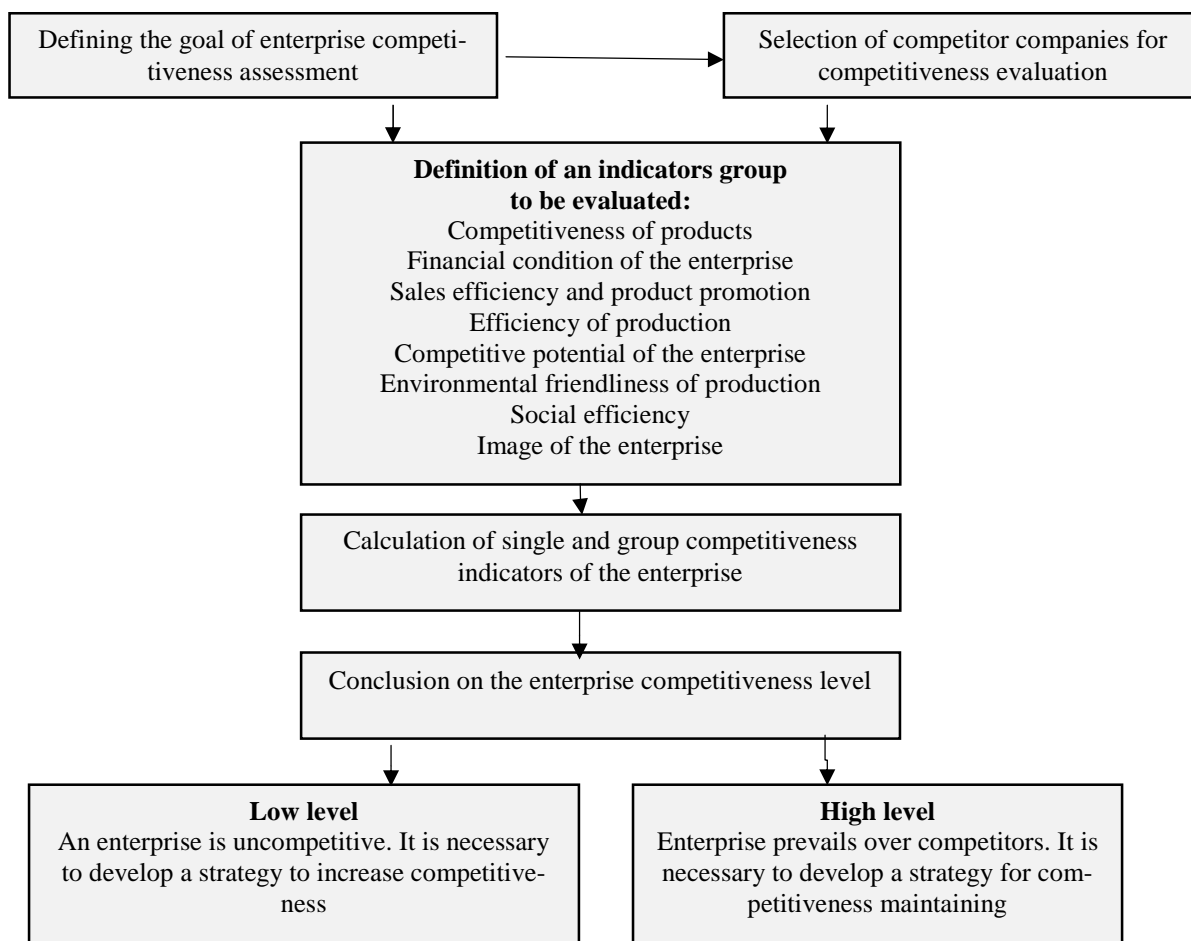


Fig.2. Algorithm for assessing enterprise competitiveness*

* developed by the author

- work on increasing the price competitiveness of products;
- search and use of new priority product use areas;
- product differentiation;
- increase of influence on consumers (promotion).

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ОСОБЕННОСТИ ОЦЕНКИ КОНКУРЕНТОСПОСОБНОСТИ ПРЕДПРИЯТИЙ ПИЩЕВОЙ ПРОМЫШЛЕННОСТИ УКРАИНЫ

Вступление Украины во Всемирную торговую организацию требует от экономистов осознания связей между конкурентоспособностью товаров и конкурентоспособностью предприятий, а от ученых - разработки современных методов управления уровнем конкурентоспособности товаров и предприятий.

Конкурентоспособность товара - решающий фактор его коммерческого успеха на развитом конкурентном рынке.

В статье показаны проблемы анализа и оценки продукции пищевой промышленности. Разработан алгоритм оценки конкурентоспособности продукции. Предлагаемые меры, которые будут способствовать ее дальнейшему повышению:

- повышение технико-экономических и качественных показателей продукции предприятия;
- ориентация качества и технико-экономических параметров продукции на требования потребителей;
- выявление и обеспечение преимуществ продукта по сравнению с его заменителями;
- выявление преимуществ и недостатков товаров-аналогов, выпускаемых конкурентами и использования полученных результатов в деятельности фирмы;
- определение возможных модификаций продукта;
- выявление и использование ценовых факторов повышения конкурентоспособности продукции;
- изобретение и использование новых приоритетных сфер использования продукции;
- дифференциация продукции;
- усиление влияния на потребителей (продвижение).

Ключевые слова: конкурентоспособность, анализ, оценка, производство продукции, пищевая промышленность.

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ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ОЦІНКИ КОНКУРЕНТОЗДАТНОСТІ ПІДПРИЄМСТВ ХАРЧОВОЇ ПРОМИСЛОВОСТІ УКРАЇНИ

Вступ України до Світової організації торгівлі потребує від економістів усвідомлення зв'язків між конкурентоздатністю товарів та конкурентоздатністю підприємств, а від науковців – розробки сучасних методів управління рівнем конкурентоздатності товарів та підприємств.

Конкурентоздатність товару - вирішальний фактор його комерційного успіху на розвиненому конкурентному ринку.

В статті показані проблеми аналізу та оцінки продукції харчової промисловості. Розроблено алгоритм оцінки конкурентоздатності продукції. Запропоновані заходи, які сприятимуть її подальшому підвищенню:

- підвищення техніко-економічних і якісних показників продукції підприємства;
- орієнтація якості та техніко-економічних параметрів продукції на вимоги споживачів;
- виявлення і забезпечення переваг продукту порівняно з його замінниками;
- виявлення переваг і недоліків товарів-аналогів, які випускаються конкурентами і використання одержаних результатів у діяльності фірми;
- визначення можливих модифікацій продукту;

- виявлення і використання цінових факторів підвищення конкурентоздатності продукції;
- винаходження і використання нових пріоритетних сфер використання продукції;
- диференціація продукції;
- посилення впливу на споживачів (просування).

Ключові слова: конкурентоздатність, аналіз, оцінка, виробництво продукції, харчова промисловість.

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