

International Marketing Diversification: A Path to Sustainable Enterprise Development

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ABSTRACT

This study demonstrates the critical importance of international marketing diversification during wartime, particularly for Ukrainian businesses seeking to expand their sales markets and mitigate risks associated with specific markets. By adopting this strategy, businesses can better withstand conflict-induced challenges and remain resilient in difficult circumstances. The article explores strategies for international marketing diversification that can help companies maintain competitiveness during wartime conditions. Drawing on a synthesis of domestic and international scholarly perspectives, the study positions international marketing diversification as a forward-looking approach to securing enterprises' sustainable development in global markets. The strategy emphasizes the selection of optimal development trajectories while accounting for various influencing factors and indicators.

Given Ukraine's significant role in the European apple market, its advantageous geographical location, and its annual apple production of approximately 700,000 tons – of which only 250,000 tons are high-quality apples for fresh consumption – it is concluded that Ukrainian apple producers have opportunities to export to new international markets. Investing in apple processing technologies, such as apple chips and apple powder production, could enhance export potential.

An analysis of export-import operations for the product group "0813 Dried Fruits," which includes apple chips and powder, from 2021 to 2023 identifies the United States, Germany, China, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Canada, Spain, and Poland as the leading markets. These countries account for 55% of global imports in this product category. Ukrainian companies involved in apple cultivation and processing are advised to target these markets, where demand for dried fruit is evident.

Expanding export geography can enable Ukrainian fruit producers and processors to grow their businesses and increase production volumes. Diversifying customer bases through market expansion can secure stable revenues and foster sustainable growth, contributing to the broader development of the Ukrainian economy.

The study underscores the importance of high-quality apple cultivation for several reasons. First, it ensures the production of premium dried fruit that meets high consumer standards. Second, diversifying apple processing into value-added products like chips and powders can expand product portfolios, align with food industry trends, and enhance competitiveness in international markets.

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Thus, supporting high-quality cultivation not only ensures the quality of processed products but also fosters industry development and product diversification.

The convergence of new international markets for Ukrainian producers of the product group “0813 Dried fruits” is assessed, and it is determined which of them are the most attractive for the development of an international marketing diversification strategy by Ukrainian producers of the product group “0813 Dried fruits”. The markets of the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain showed higher scores, which indicates their convergence and readiness of conditions for the successful development of a strategy for international marketing diversification of Ukrainian producers in the product group “0813 Dried fruits”.

It is substantiated that the implementation of the international marketing strategy of diversification by Ukrainian producers of the product group “0813 Dried fruits” in the markets of Great Britain, Italy, and Spain will allow to intensify the sale of dried apple slices and apple powder, which will become a promising direction of sustainable development.

Keywords: International marketing diversification, sustainable development, enterprises, form, provision, internationalization, export, import, risk, strategy, competitiveness, markets, research, development, globalization, business, innovation.

1. Introduction

International marketing diversification in the context of sustainable development is becoming increasingly important in the modern world. Ukrainian companies seeking to expand their operations internationally should consider not only financial and economic aspects but also the environmental impact of their activities. Sustainable development involves providing for the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Therefore, it is important for Ukrainian businesses, even in the difficult conditions of war, to take into account environmental, social, and economic aspects in their international marketing diversification strategy.

International marketing diversification in times of war is critical, as it will allow Ukrainian businesses to expand their audience and reduce the risks associated with specific markets, withstand the challenges of the conflict, and remain resilient in difficult times.

By entering different markets, companies will be able to reduce their dependence on a single region or country, which helps mitigate risks in the event of economic or political changes. This approach will expand the capabilities of enterprises and ensure long-term stability, provided that they undergo a period of adaptation to the promotion of goods in foreign markets.

International marketing diversification involves the process of deploying marketing efforts in different markets and countries in order to attract new customers, increase sales, expand business, and reduce risks.

The strategy of international marketing diversification of enterprises includes a number of areas that can help companies maintain their competitiveness and international activities even in difficult war conditions. Some of the possible aspects of such diversification include finding new markets outside the country, developing cooperation with partners from other countries, and expanding the range of products or services to adapt to new conditions. An essential element of such a strategy may also be the use of digital technologies to ensure communication with customers and partners regardless of geographical restrictions (Fig. 1.) [2024].

Expanding the geography of markets: enterprises can develop relationships with foreign partners to ensure the sustainability of circulation and sales of products

Diversification of goods and services: developing new products or entering new markets will help reduce dependence on internal factors that may affect the business

Risk management: enterprises should carefully analyze economic and political risks in foreign markets and take appropriate measures to limit them

Use of innovations: applying digital technologies and marketing approaches will allow businesses to remain competitive even in difficult conditions

Figure 1: Directions for the development of the international marketing diversification strategy of enterprises

By exploring new international markets that are not directly affected by the conflict in their country, Ukrainian businesses will be able to spread risks and ensure continuous growth despite local problems. Businesses will also be able to expand their product range to cater to different market segments or meet demand in other markets. This can help to compensate for any decrease in domestic sales due to the armed conflict. Cooperation with international partners will open up access to new resources, markets, and technologies that can help Ukrainian businesses remain competitive and sustain growth in turbulent times. The use of digital technologies and marketing approaches will allow Ukrainian businesses to reach a global audience and attract customers from around the world, reducing their dependence on the domestic market. By developing a strategy of international marketing diversification, Ukrainian businesses can not only mitigate the impact of the war on their operations but also achieve sustainable growth and development in the long run.

2. Literature Review

The theoretical and scientific-methodological foundations of activity diversification have been explored in the works of foreign scholars such as I. Ansoff, M. Porter, A. Thompson, and R. Fatkhutdinov. However, as practice shows, unresolved issues remain regarding the scientific justification and creation of a management system for international diversification strategies adapted to domestic economic conditions. This includes considering the state and trends of market environment development as well as the strategic potential of enterprises.

The issue of developing an international marketing strategy has been extensively covered in the works of foreign scholars like Bedenkov A. [1998], Kotler F. [2021], Lambin J.-J. [1996], and, among others. In-depth studies of the essence of an enterprise's international marketing strategy are presented in the works of domestic researchers, including Kanishchenko O. [2024], Korzh M. [2019], Kudenko N. [1998].

M. Cantrill, D. Donnelly, and K. Mingion have devoted their works to the problems of forming an international marketing diversification strategy. Their research

helps to understand the complexity of developing this strategy, which is a prerequisite for the sustainable development of enterprises [1998].

Having become acquainted with the scientific developments of foreign and domestic scientists, we can conclude that international marketing diversification plays a crucial role in enhancing the growth of enterprises in global markets. The problem of forming this strategy is recommended to be solved by choosing the optimal direction of development, taking into account various factors, such as cultural and economic differences between countries, competition in foreign markets, and changes in consumer demand.

Understanding the problem of forming an international marketing diversification strategy will help businesses develop an effective strategy that will contribute to their sustainable development. It is important to analyze and predict risks, evaluate potential opportunities, and adapt the strategy to market changes. This approach will allow companies to successfully compete in international markets and ensure sustainable growth of their business.

3. Results of the Study

A properly formulated international marketing diversification strategy will ensure the successful development of Ukrainian enterprises abroad, help them adapt to the diversity of cultures, languages, and legal conditions in different countries, create a positive brand impression internationally, and establish competitive advantages in the global market.

For the successful development and implementation of an international marketing diversification strategy, an enterprise, first of all, needs to expand its presence globally by aligning with the current trends in the global market, as well as leveraging insights into the requirements and preferences of international customers. Through the utilization of diverse international marketing strategies, companies can enhance their outreach and achieve success on a global scale [Tanasiichuk A. 2023].

A prerequisite for implementing a strategy for international marketing diversification of an enterprise in times of war is knowledge of the markets in which it plans to operate, analysis of competitors and opportunities, development of goods or services that meet the needs of that market, knowledge of changes in geopolitical conditions that may affect new international markets, understanding how the specifics of military operations may affect the production, supply, and consumption of goods, as well as the establishment of an effective system of management and control over the implementation of the strategy. It is also important to have a flexible organizational structure that can quickly adapt to changes in the international environment [Lukianenko, D.H. 2011].

The notion of developing a plan for broadening international marketing efforts of a company entails a series of overarching steps where well-informed choices are taken (Fig. 2.) [Tanasiichuk A. 2023]. Therefore, the strategy of expanding marketing initiatives across international borders can be broadly described as an outline of the company's forthcoming actions in global markets aimed at securing long-term growth.



Figure 2: The concept a expanding global marketing efforts of an enterprise

We will demonstrate how the international marketing diversification strategy can be used by Ukrainian companies. We will evaluate how they operate in the domestic market, explore trends in the foreign market, and consider opportunities for their development in different markets and countries to attract new customers, increase sales, expand business, and reduce risks.

Ukraine grows a wide range of products, such as berries, vegetables, and fruits, and has a long tradition of processing them. This helps to develop the food and processing industry and ensure that Ukraine has a strong place in the global market. However, at present, the main types of agricultural exports from Ukraine are raw materials and basic processing products. Many of the food products produced in Ukraine come from small and medium-sized farms. These farms typically do not cooperate with each other to guarantee the consistent quality and volume of supply needed to do business in international markets.

Let's look at the production structure of the food and processing industry in Ukraine (Table 1).

Table 1: Structure of production volumes in Ukraine by product group, NACE-2010, 2020-2023.

| Product group | Group share in the total number of products produced, %. | | | |
|--|--|-------|-------|------|
| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| A Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries | 9,31 | 10,69 | 9,53 | 8,86 |
| B Mining and quarrying | 4,99 | 5,99 | 6 | 5,23 |
| C Processing industry | 27,84 | 27,6 | 23,98 | 25,8 |

| | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| D Supply of electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning | 6,38 | 7,76 | 12,41 | 8,82 |
| E Water supply; sewerage, waste treatment | 0,58 | 0,54 | 0,59 | 0,59 |
| F Construction | 6,29 | 5,58 | 3,36 | 4,08 |
| G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles | 19,01 | 18,06 | 23,64 | 24,52 |
| H Transportation, warehousing, postal and courier activities | 7,31 | 6,47 | 6,9 | 6,94 |
| I Temporary accommodation and catering | 0,71 | 0,86 | 0,39 | 0,46 |
| J Information and telecommunications | 5,42 | 5,43 | 3,77 | 3,89 |
| K Financial and insurance activities | 1,59 | 1,33 | 1,43 | 1,92 |
| L Real estate transactions | 2,35 | 1,98 | 1,57 | 1,82 |
| M Professional, scientific and technical activities | 3,82 | 3,22 | 2,34 | 2,61 |
| N Activities in the field of administrative and support services | 1,75 | 1,58 | 1,34 | 1,36 |
| O Education | 0,16 | 0,17 | 0,08 | 0,09 |
| Q Health care and social assistance | 1,92 | 2,14 | 2,5 | 2,25 |
| R Arts, sports, entertainment and recreation | 0,22 | 0,23 | 0,13 | 0,71 |
| S Other types of services | 0,36 | 0,37 | 0,06 | 0,07 |
| Total output (goods, services) of business entities, UAH | 7294447325 | 9639308360 | 7712477551 | 8978746879 |

Source: generated based on State Statistics Service of Ukraine [2024]

Based on the data for 2020-2023, it can be determined that the leaders in the total amount of manufactured products in Ukraine are the processing industry – 25.8%, wholesale and retail trade – 24.52%, agriculture, forestry and fisheries – 8.86%, supply of electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning – 8.82%, transport, warehousing, postal and courier activities – 6.94%, mining and quarrying – 5.23%. Other product groups account for about 20% of total production (Fig. 3).

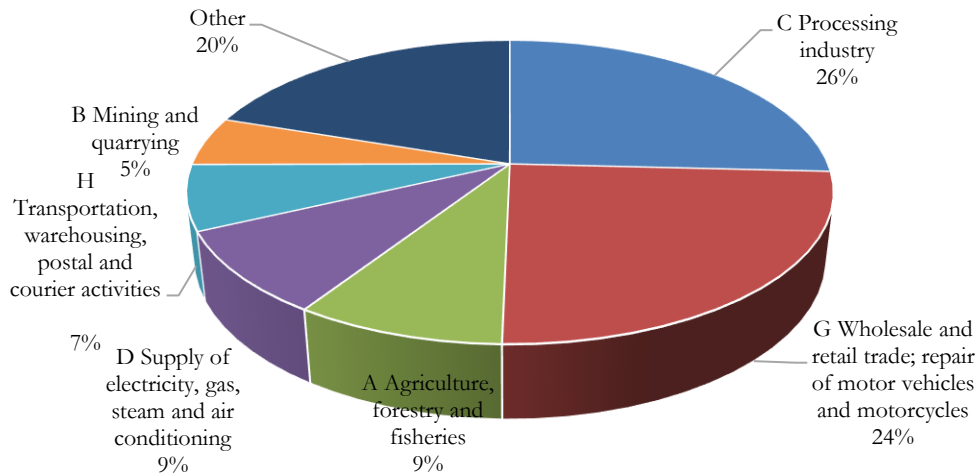


Figure 3: Structure of production volumes in Ukraine by product group, 2023

Source: generated based on State Statistics Service of Ukraine [2024]

Based on this information, we can conclude that agriculture is important in the Ukrainian economy. The three leaders among all product classes produced in Ukraine are “Processing industry”, “Wholesale trade” and “Agriculture”, with their share of production volumes being 26%, 24%, and 9%, respectively. Next, we will consider the dynamics of production volumes of the “Processing industry” and “Agriculture” commodity classes to identify commodity subgroups that can become Ukrainian exports if they are in excess in the domestic market (Table 2).

Table 2: Structure of the dynamics of production volumes of the product classes “Processing industry” and “Agriculture”, 2021-2023.

| Product group/subgroup | 2021 | | 2022 | | 2023 | |
|---|-------------------|--|-------------------|--|-------------------|--|
| | Production volume | Share in total production of the subgroup, % | Production volume | Share in total production of the subgroup, % | Production volume | Share in total production of the subgroup, % |
| Total for the “Agriculture, forestry and fisheries” group | 1030312101 | 100 | 734909176,9 | 100 | 795136026,4 | 100 |
| Crop production | 890605144,8 | 86,44 | 608127422,9 | 82,75 | 638196687,1 | 80,26 |
| Animal husbandry | 79183960,7 | 7,69 | 75475880,7 | 10,27 | 99936045,3 | 12,57 |
| Mixed agriculture | 6672450 | 0,65 | 5150169,6 | 0,70 | 4839503 | 0,61 |
| Support activities in agriculture | 20400833,7 | 1,98 | 16165482,8 | 2,20 | 19834350 | 2,49 |
| Hunting, trapping, and related service activities | 107007,5 | 0,01 | 50251,1 | 0,01 | 66731,2 | 0,01 |
| Forestry and logging | 31242565,5 | 3,03 | 28414608,2 | 3,87 | 30626195,2 | 3,85 |
| Forestry and other forestry activities | 7167145 | 0,70 | 7354774,4 | 1,00 | 27208600,1 | 3,42 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| Logging | 22014883,8 | 2,14 | 20233869,8 | 2,75 | 2655483,1 | 0,33 |
| Gathering of wild growing non-wood products | 1102488,1 | 0,11 | 290255,3 | 0,04 | 99254,3 | 0,01 |
| Support services to forestry | 958048,6 | 0,09 | 535708,7 | 0,07 | 662857,7 | 0,08 |
| Fish farming | 2100139,2 | 0,20 | 1525361,6 | 0,21 | 1636514,6 | 0,21 |
| Fisheries | 1168055,7 | 0,11 | 1084790,5 | 0,15 | 685794 | 0,09 |
| Aquaculture | 932083,5 | 0,09 | 440571,1 | 0,06 | 950720,6 | 0,12 |
| Total for the group “Processing industry” | 2660364215 | 100 | 1849102918 | 100 | 2316159832 | 100 |
| Production of food, beverages, and tobacco products | 795281124,5 | 29,89 | 711460525,1 | 38,48 | 886788232,8 | 38,29 |
| Textile production, production of clothing, leather, leather goods, and other materials | 49276713,9 | 1,85 | 43608778,2 | 2,36 | 65875197 | 7,43 |
| Production of wood, paper products, and printing activities | 154080481 | 5,79 | 124998445,9 | 6,76 | 150927602 | 6,52 |
| Production of coke and petroleum products | κ/c | | 49171585,7 | 2,66 | κ/c | |
| Production of chemicals and chemical products | 122354935,5 | 4,6 | 71174407,3 | 3,85 | 89317428,5 | 3,86 |
| Production of basic pharmaceutical products and pharmaceuticals | κ/c | | 44050110,4 | 2,38 | κ/c | |
| Production of rubber and plastic products, other non-metallic mineral products | 274374273,2 | 10,31 | 164846553,1 | 8,91 | 238006793,4 | 10,28 |
| Metallurgical production, manufacture of finished metal products, except machinery and equipment | 747872058,8 | 28,11 | 358647994,4 | 19,4 | 367149380,6 | 15,85 |
| Mechanical engineering | 250750637 | 9,43 | 205352049,8 | 11,11 | 319484238,6 | 13,79 |
| Production of furniture and other products, repair, and installation of machinery and equipment | 115056723,2 | 4,32 | 75792468,1 | 4,1 | 100902972,4 | 4,36 |

Source: generated based on State Statistics Service of Ukraine [2024]

The structure of production in the “Agriculture, forestry and fisheries” group showed that 80% of the production is accounted for by growing plants (Fig. 4).

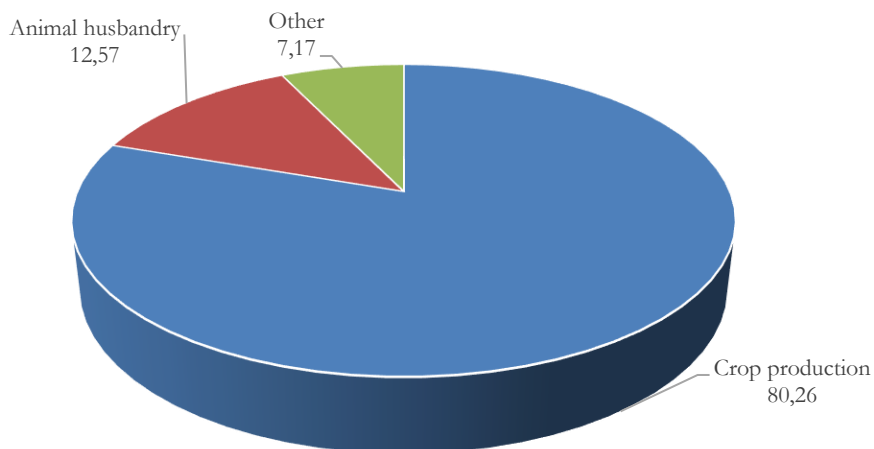


Figure 4: Structure of production by the group "Agriculture, forestry and fisheries", %, 2023
Source: generated based on State Statistics Service of Ukraine [2024]

The focus on crop production may indicate the significant potential of agriculture in Ukraine. The development of this sector could lead to an increase in domestic production, reduce dependence on food imports, and stimulate economic growth. It is also important to consider the need to modernize and improve production efficiency to ensure the sustainable development of domestic agricultural enterprises.

When producing crop products that would be in demand in international markets, it is important to use modern agricultural technologies, such as precision farming, green technologies, and energy efficiency programs, which will help reduce the environmental impact of agricultural activities, create added value, and increase the profitability of Ukrainian farmers.

Obviously, the increase in the profitability and competitiveness of the agricultural sector is due to the processing industry in Ukraine, which accounts for 26% of total production (Fig. 5).

Ukraine's processing industry is developing in ten areas (Table 2), with food and beverage production leading the way, accounting for 38% of total production in this product category. Thus, this segment may be in high demand in foreign markets if the products meet international quality and competitiveness standards. Therefore, it is important for Ukrainian agricultural producers to invest in the development of technologies to improve the processing of their products.

Ukraine's strong position in agricultural exports, especially of grain crops, is a promising opportunity to develop a strategy for international marketing diversification of Ukrainian enterprises.

Ukraine is a major player in the European apple market and has a favorable geographical location. The annual production of apples in Ukraine is about 700 thousand tons, of which only 250 thousand tons are high-quality apples for fresh consumption.

Hence, Ukrainian producers can consider focusing on apple production and processing as a viable marketing aspect when developing an international diversification strategy. Hence, Ukrainian producers can consider focusing on apple production and processing as a viable marketing aspect when developing an international diversification strategy.

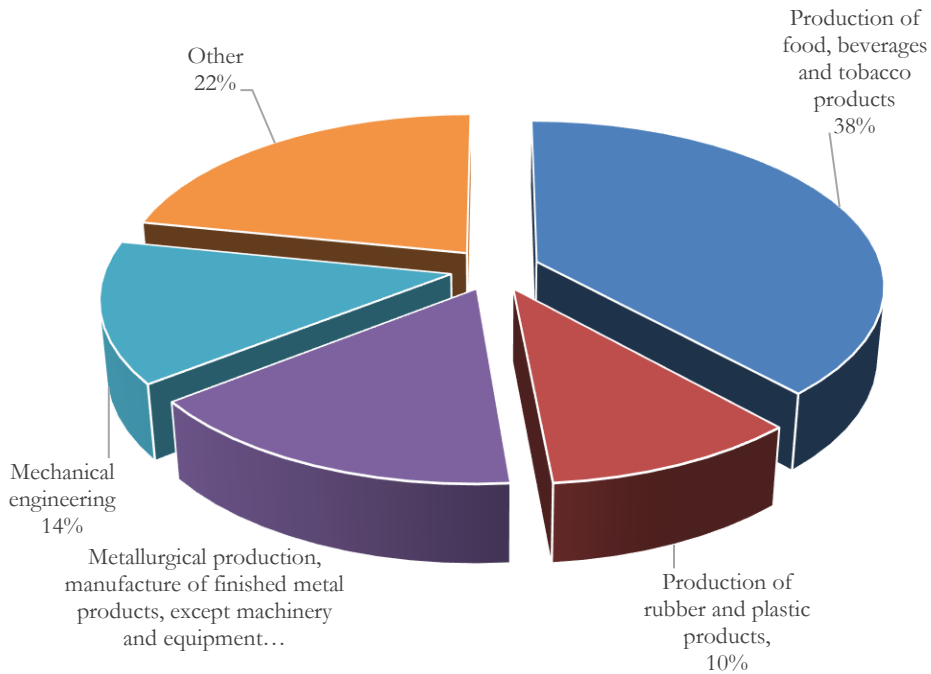


Figure 5: Structure of production by the "Processing industry" group, %, 2023
 Source: generated based on State Statistics Service of Ukraine [2024]

One of the important aspects to consider when entering international markets with apple products is ensuring compliance with quality standards, packaging rules, and export requirements of the target markets. Conducting market research to identify demand trends, consumer preferences, and potential competitors in targeted international markets will help Ukrainian producers develop a successful strategy for the international diversification of apple products.

In order for Ukrainian apple producers to export to markets that were not previously their importing partners, it is important to invest in the development of technologies for processing apples into apple chips and apple powder. Apple chips and apple powder are popular and highly respected products in international markets for those looking for convenient ways to incorporate the flavor and nutrients of apples into their diets. Therefore, introducing them to foreign markets can be successful. It is important for Ukrainian producers to conduct research on the demand for these products, study the competition, and develop an effective strategy for entering new international markets.

To successfully develop an international marketing strategy for Ukrainian companies, it is crucial to carry out global market research. In particular, we can analyze Ukraine's exports for the product group under study using digital tools and compare them with global exporters with whom Ukrainian companies have not yet worked. Such an analysis can provide valuable information to identify potential opportunities for entering new markets and partnerships (Table 3).

Table 3: Analysis of world imports of product group 0813 “Dried fruits”, TOP-10 importers, 2023

| Importers | Import volume, thousand dollars | Trade balance, thousand dollars | Share in world imports of this product group, % | Concentration of competitors/suppliers in the market, % |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The whole world | 2887159 | 178044 | 100 | 0,07 |
| United States of America | 359760 | -146095 | 12,5 | 0,14 |
| Germany | 261593 | -22664 | 9,1 | 0,12 |
| China | 251035 | -462 | 8,7 | 0,39 |
| United Kingdom | 155972 | -146941 | 5,4 | 0,13 |
| France | 116151 | -17917 | 4 | 0,23 |
| Netherlands | 111192 | -10804 | 3,9 | 0,14 |
| Italy | 93347 | -49039 | 3,2 | 0,11 |
| Canada | 89855 | -81229 | 3,1 | 0,19 |
| Spain | 75252 | 123542 | 2,6 | 0,12 |
| Poland | 71491 | -6479 | 2,5 | 0,15 |
| Other markets | 1301511 | | 45 | |

Source: generated based on TRADE MAP [2024]

Analyzing the results of export-import operations for the product group “0813 Dried fruits”, which includes apple chips and apple powder for 2021-2023, it was determined that the leaders in the consumption of this product group are the markets of the United States of America, Germany, China, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Canada, Spain, Poland, the share of their imports in the world imports of the product group “0813 Dried fruits” is 55%.

The low level of competition in the markets of the United States of America, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, and Poland indicates a low saturation of the markets for this product group, where buyers are ready to accept new suppliers and producers. Given these opportunities, it is worth conducting an additional analysis of the demand for different types of dried fruit, as well as considering the possibility of launching new products under the product group “0813 Dried fruits”, such as apple chips and apple powder.

Companies in Ukraine that grow apples and process them into dried products can be advised to pay attention to the above-dried fruit importing markets, which are the world leaders in the consumption of this product group. Ukrainian entrepreneurs can focus their efforts on finding opportunities to export dried fruit to the markets of these countries, where there is a clear demand for dried fruit. The low concentration of competition in the product group “0813 Dried fruits” in these markets indicates that there are opportunities for Ukrainian farmers and processing companies to bring their dried fruits to the markets.

However, some of these markets may already be importing partners of Ukrainian businesses, so in order to develop an effective international marketing diversification strategy, a detailed analysis of the market of importers of Ukrainian products, in particular importers of the product group “0813 Dried fruits”, is required. This analysis will include the study of the markets of importers of Ukrainian dried fruits, analysis of trends and potential demand for the Ukrainian product group “0813 Dried fruits”, assessment of the level of competition with other suppliers in these markets, and identification of competitive advantages of Ukrainian enterprises. This analysis will help Ukrainian enterprises to understand the potential of markets for the product group “0813 Dried fruits” and develop an effective strategy for international marketing diversification (Table 4).

Table 4: Analysis of Ukraine's exports by product group 0813 “Dried fruits”, TOP-10 markets of importers of Ukrainian products, 2023

| Importers | Import volume, thousand dollars | Trade balance, thousand dollars | Share in world imports of this product group, % | Concentration of competitors/suppliers in the market, % |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The whole world | 5498 | -4528 | 100 | |
| Poland | 1523 | 1303 | 27,7 | 0,15 |
| Germany | 953 | 943 | 17,3 | 0,12 |
| United States of America | 555 | 386 | 10,1 | 0,14 |
| Croatia | 356 | 356 | 6,5 | 0,13 |
| Bulgaria | 286 | 271 | 5,2 | 0,14 |
| Austria | 258 | 258 | 4,7 | 0,14 |
| Latvia | 248 | 248 | 4,5 | |
| Netherlands | 242 | 240 | 4,4 | 0,14 |
| Belgium | 150 | 147 | 2,7 | 0,13 |
| China | 137 | 33 | 2,5 | 0,39 |
| Other markets | 790 | | 14,4 | |

Source: generated based on TRADE MAP [2024]

Ukraine is ranked 42nd in world exports of “0813 Dried fruits”, which is 0.2% of total world exports of this product group. This may indicate that Ukraine has an insignificant share of the world market for dried fruit and may find it difficult to compete with other markets that export this product more intensively. However, the markets of

importing partners Poland, Germany, the United States of America, Croatia, Bulgaria, Austria, Latvia, the Netherlands, Belgium, and China consume 85.6% of the overall Ukrainian exports of the product category “0813 Dried fruits”.

This analysis shows the importance of meeting the needs of consumers in these markets with Ukrainian dried fruit. Ukrainian fruit producers and processors can use this information to further develop and deepen cooperation with these markets, which could lead to an increase in exports and improve the economic situation of the Ukrainian dried fruit sector.

Expanding the geography of exports can help Ukrainian fruit producers and processors develop their businesses and increase production volumes. Conquering new markets can help the Ukrainian dried fruit sector to diversify its customer base and secure sustainable revenues. In addition, the development of new markets can help improve the economic situation in this sector and contribute to the sustainable development of the Ukrainian economy.

To identify new import markets for Ukrainian dried fruit, it is necessary to compare the data from column 1 of Tables 3 and 4. After comparison, we obtained a list of importing markets that could become new partner markets for Ukrainian dried fruit exports. These markets, such as the UK, France, Italy, Canada, and Spain, may have the potential to become new partners for Ukrainian dried fruit producers. If we take into account the fact (Table 3) the French and Canadian markets have a significant number of rival importing partners, 0,23 and 0,19, respectively, this can be assessed as both positive and negative for Ukrainian dried fruit producers. On the one hand, this may indicate a high demand for products in these countries, which may be beneficial for Ukrainian dried fruit exports. On the other hand, high competition may make it difficult to enter these markets and compete with other suppliers.

Therefore, Ukraine can grow its share of global dried fruit exports by focusing on quality and innovation. First, it is important to support the cultivation of high-quality apples, which allows for the production of tasty and juicy dried fruit. In addition, the development of apple processing into apple chips and powder could expand the product range. To be competitive in international markets, Ukraine could also focus on building an attractive brand. It is also important to establish reliable supply chains to ensure a stable and fast supply of products. Optimization of production processes and the use of modern technologies, such as mechanized apple picking and automation of processing lines, can also improve productivity and product quality. All these measures will help Ukraine to take a more confident position in the global dried fruit market.

In order to develop an international marketing diversification strategy to ensure the sustainable development of Ukrainian fruit and dried fruit producers, it is important to analyze the convergence of the markets of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Canada, and Spain. Assessment of market convergence will reveal similarities in the business environment, which may be useful for Ukrainian dried fruit producers. It highlights opportunities for successful expansion into new markets and consumer segments, while mitigating risks and optimizing resource utilization to support effective international development.

By selecting a number of global indicators and indicators, we will assess the convergence of new markets, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Canada, and Spain, for

Ukrainian producers of the product group “0813 Dried fruits” (Table 5). This set of indicators will take into account the requirements that will ensure the sustainability of their business in international diversification.

Table 5: Assessment of the convergence of new international markets for Ukrainian producers of the product group “0813 Dried fruits”, 2022-2023.

| Indicator / international market | United Kingdom | France | Italy | Canada | Spain |
|--|----------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| GDP per capita, purchasing power parity, 2023 | 54542 | 55441 | 53312 | 55919 | 47142 |
| Household consumption as a percentage of GDP, 2023 | 61,08 | 53,36 | 58,36 | 55,16 | 54,27 |
| Inflation: percentage change in the consumer price index, 2023 | 6,8 | 4,9 | 5,6 | 3,9 | 3,5 |
| Crop production index (2004-2006 = 100), 2022 | 94,3 | 94,7 | 93,9 | 108 | 87 |
| Food production index (2004-2006 = 100), 2022 | 101,2 | 94 | 97 | 111,6 | 98,8 |
| Innovation index (0-100), 2023 | 62,44 | 56,02 | 46,61 | 53,79 | 45,93 |
| Index of business freedom (0-100), 2023 | 79 | 78 | 74 | 88 | 75 |
| Index of trade freedom (0-100), 2023 | 82 | 79 | 79 | 83 | 84 |
| Index of investment freedom (0-100), 2023 | 80 | 75 | 80 | 80 | 85 |
| Average distance to supplier countries, km | 4871 | 2473 | 3644 | 6634 | 4562 |
| Distance from importing countries to Ukraine, km | 3203 | 2692 | 2393 | 7740 | 3767 |
| The concentration of competitors/suppliers in the market, % | 0,13 | 0,23 | 0,11 | 0,19 | 0,12 |

Source: generated based on *Global Economy* [2024]

To assess global indicators of convergence of new international markets for Ukrainian producers of the product group “0813 Dried fruits”, it is necessary to convert all indicator values into a single scoring system, as the use of a scoring system will help to normalize the data and simplify market comparisons (Table 6).

Table 6: Normalization of data for the comparison of new international markets for Ukrainian producers of the product group “0813 Dried fruits”

| Indicator / international market | United Kingdom | France | Italy | Canada | Spain |
|--|----------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| GDP per capita, purchasing power parity, 2023 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Household consumption as a percentage of GDP, 2023 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 |

| | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|
| Inflation: percentage change in the consumer price index, 2023 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| Crop production index (2004-2006 = 100), 2022 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| Food production index (2004-2006 = 100), 2022 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| Innovation index (0-100), 2023 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| Index of business freedom (0-100), 2023 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| Index of trade freedom (0-100), 2023 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| Index of investment freedom (0-100), 2023 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Distance from importing countries to Ukraine, km | 2 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 5 |
| The concentration of competitors/suppliers in the market, % | 5 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 5 |
| The whole | 48 | 45 | 49 | 44 | 51 |

Source: generated based on *Global Economy* [2024]

Through expert assessment, scores were computed for each of these potential markets for Ukrainian businessmen, enabling the identification of the most appealing one for development of an international marketing diversification strategy by Ukrainian producers of the product group “0813 Dried fruits”.

The markets of the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain showed higher scores: 48, 49, and 51 points respectively. This shows the similarity of these markets and the preparedness of circumstances for creating an effective global marketing diversification plan for Ukrainian manufacturers of the product category "0813 Dried fruits". It is crucial for Ukrainian producers of this product group to take advantage of the readiness of these markets by investing strategic efforts in marketing, product adaptation, and distribution channels that take into account the preferences of consumers in these countries. In addition, conducting market research to identify local trends and preferences can further enhance the success of entering these markets.

According to the World Health Organization, everyone should consume at least 400 grams of berries, fruits, or vegetables daily, preferably in the form of five servings. This vitamin complex can be replaced with just 50 grams of dried fruit. However, it is difficult to fit fruit and vegetable consumption five times a day into the diet of consumers during the working day. That's why apple chips come to the rescue, as they are not only healthy to eat but also convenient in everyday life while working, studying, playing sports, or traveling. Industrial apple drying is dried fruit that contains 30-40% moisture, while apple chips can contain as little as 4% moisture. These two products cannot be compared in terms of quality and taste.

During the war, Ukrainian producers of the product group “0813 Dried fruits” started producing dried fruits for the needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, introducing technological innovations in fruit drying. So, they have already prepared to process the fruit into apple chips, which can later be exported to the markets of Great Britain, Italy, and Spain.

Another option for processing dried apples is apple powder, which has long been used in cooking and medicine. This unique product is very useful for children, workers in hazardous industries, and citizens suffering from poor environmental conditions. Its main value lies in pectin, which, in particular, removes various toxins from the body, lowers cholesterol, and normalizes digestion. To make apple powder, you first need to dry the

fruit to at least 4-8% moisture and only then crush it. In fact, apple powder is the same dried fruit but crushed. But for the machine to grind the dried fruit into a powder, it needs to be dried well, otherwise, with higher humidity, you can get “porridge”.

Apple powder is useful, it has functional properties, and its addition to bakery products allows the products not to become stale for a long time. In the food industry, apple powder is actively used as a thickener, as it quickly turns various masses into jelly (making marmalade and jelly). In pharmaceuticals and medicine, it is used to encapsulate drugs. Apple powder has been used in canned food for pets for a long time. Exports of dried apple slices and apple powder by Ukrainian producers of “0813 Dried fruits” can be a lucrative business opportunity, as these products are popular ingredients in a variety of food and beverages around the world.

4. Conclusion

Ukrainian companies intending to expand their operations abroad should consider not only financial and economic aspects but also the environmental impact of their activities. For sustainable development, it is important to meet current needs without compromising the opportunities of future generations. Therefore, it is important for Ukrainian companies, even in a difficult environment, to consider environmental, social, and economic aspects in their international business expansion strategy.

Despite the situation in Ukraine, the agricultural sector continues to grow a wide range of products, such as berries, vegetables, and fruits, and to maintain ancient traditions of processing them, which helps to develop the food and processing industry and ensure that Ukraine sells goods on the global market. Previously, the main types of agricultural exports from Ukraine were raw materials and basic processing products. Today, in order to successfully do business in international markets, it is worth paying more attention to the export of finished products or processed agricultural products.

The results of the market research allowed us to identify demand trends, consumer preferences, and the state of competition in the target international markets, which will help Ukrainian producers develop a successful strategy for international diversification of apple products by expanding the geography of exports and conquering new markets.

The analysis of the conditions for convergence of international markets was carried out by the following indicators: GDP per capita, household consumption indices, changes in consumer prices, crop production, food production, innovation, business freedom, trade freedom, investment freedom, the average distance to supplier countries, distance from importing countries to Ukraine, concentration of competitors/suppliers in the market, which indicated to us the level of convergence of the markets of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Canada, and Spain. The indicators selected for the analysis took into account the requirements that will ensure the stability of Ukrainian businesses in international diversification.

The Great Britain, Italy, and Spain markets emerged as the most appealing for Ukrainian producers in the “0813 Dried fruits” category. This signals the similarity markets and the favorable conditions for Ukrainian producers to effectively pursue an international marketing diversification strategy in the “0813 Dried fruits” category.

During the war, Ukrainian producers of the product group “0813 Dried fruits” started producing dried fruits for the needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, introducing technological innovations in fruit drying. Therefore, they have already prepared to process the fruit into apple chips, which can later be exported to the explored markets of the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain.

The implementation of an international marketing strategy for diversification of the “0813 Dried Fruit” product group by Ukrainian producers in the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain will help boost sales of dried apple slices and apple powder, which will become a promising area for sustainable development. Demand for such products is high worldwide as they are widely used in the food industry as ingredients for a variety of products. This will be an important step in business development and access to new international markets for Ukrainian dried fruit producers.

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