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**STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONS IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES
IN UKRAINE**

***Abstract.** The article examines issues related to the development of the organizational component of agricultural cooperatives' policy in Ukraine amid digitalization and the transformation of economic relations in the agricultural sector. The relevance of the research topic is обусловлена by the growing role of cooperation as an institutional mechanism for ensuring the competitiveness of small and medium-sized producers, the need to improve the efficiency of managerial processes, and the growing importance of digital technologies in the formation of modern agri-food systems. In this regard, the study aims to analyze, systematize, and improve the theoretical and methodological foundations, and to develop recommendations for the development of organizational relations in the activities of agricultural cooperatives in Ukraine under conditions of digitalization and transformation of communication*

processes in the agricultural sector. To achieve this goal, the article examines the role of agricultural cooperation as a multifunctional mechanism of economic, social, and organizational integration of producers. The importance of organizational relations in ensuring the effective functioning of cooperative structures, developing partnerships, building trust, and reducing information asymmetry among participants in the agricultural market is substantiated. Modern approaches to the digitalization of cooperative structures and their integration into regional and national agri-food networks are generalized. Key problems in the development of cooperatives in Ukraine have been identified, including fragmented information flows, low levels of digitalization in managerial processes, insufficient integration with digital platforms, limited development of advisory systems, weak interaction with external stakeholders, and insufficient digital competencies among cooperative participants. Conceptual provisions for the formation of organizational support for cooperatives as an integrated multi-level system of organizational, digital, informational, and communication tools are substantiated.

A step-by-step process for forming support for organizational relations in an agricultural service cooperative has been developed, which, compared to existing approaches, ensures a logical sequence in the formation of a communication system: from identifying information needs and assessing the digital readiness of participants to integrating digital platforms, monitoring communication effectiveness, and strategically adjusting the management system. This approach minimizes information asymmetry, improves coordination among cooperative participants, ensures transparency in managerial processes, and strengthens the integration of cooperatives into modern digital agri-food networks.

Keywords: *agricultural cooperation, agricultural cooperatives, support of organizational relations, enterprise adaptation policy, digitalization, cooperation, agricultural sector.*

Problem statement and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks. The current development of Ukraine's agricultural sector is characterized by significant transformations in economic, organizational, and information processes driven by globalization, the digitalization of the economy, increasing competition in agri-food markets, and the need to ensure national food security. In this context, the development of agricultural cooperation is particularly important as a mechanism to integrate small- and medium-sized producers into modern production and marketing

systems, improve resource efficiency, and foster sustainable models of rural development.

Agricultural service cooperatives are currently important instruments for consolidating material, technical, financial, labor, and information resources, as they facilitate the development of partnership relations among producers, optimize logistics processes, establish efficient distribution channels, and enhance the competitiveness of agricultural production. At the same time, the effectiveness of cooperatives in contemporary conditions is determined not only by the level of resource provision but also by the quality of organizational relations between cooperative members, their ability to integrate digital technologies, and the level of development of communication policy.

Digital transformation of the economy has made organizational processes essential for ensuring the effectiveness of managerial decisions, coordinating joint activities, integrating cooperatives into digital agri-food platforms, and developing network forms of interaction among economic entities. Therefore, the organizational relations of agricultural cooperatives are of strategic importance, as they establish internal and external information linkages, reduce information asymmetry, increase management transparency, and strengthen trust among cooperative participants.

Thus, the relevance of this study is primarily driven by the need to improve the theoretical and methodological foundations for the development and modernization of organizational relations in agricultural cooperatives in Ukraine, aimed at enhancing communication efficiency, modernizing cooperative management systems, strengthening digital integration of agricultural actors, and ensuring sustainable development of the agricultural sector.

Analysis of recent publications on the problem. Contemporary studies on organizational relations in agricultural cooperatives are primarily examined within the contexts of cooperative development, agricultural digitalization, and information systems.

Researchers Mirakin V. [1], Malik M. [2], Kalchenko S. V. [3], Didivska L. [4], and co-authors have demonstrated that cooperation is an important mechanism for improving the competitiveness of small producers, developing rural areas, and strengthening food security. In their works, they substantiate the role of cooperatives in consolidating resources, developing partnership relations, and integrating producers into modern market systems.

Scholars Cherevko H. [5], Honcharenko O. V. [6], and Bohdanov O. O. [7] identify the cooperative movement as a key factor in ensuring the economic resilience of the agricultural sector, especially under crisis conditions and wartime challenges.

Issues of digitalization and the development of organizational technologies in agriculture have been studied by Kamilaris A. [8], Duckett T. [9], and co-authors. They emphasize the importance of digital platforms, blockchain technologies, and digital management systems for modernizing agricultural cooperatives.

The theoretical and methodological foundations of organizational processes have also been shaped by the works of Etzkowitz, H., and Leydesdorff, L. [10–12], who developed the Triple Helix concept and demonstrated the role of organizational relations in facilitating interaction among government, business, and academia. Researchers Kostyrko I. G. and co-authors [13], Masin V. M. [14], Yarema L. V. [15], and Bezus R. M., Kryuchko L. S. [16] focus on the development of organizational relations` support for cooperatives in Ukraine.

Highlighting previously unresolved parts of the overall problem. Despite numerous studies and the depth of existing results, issues related to the strategic development of organizational policy in agricultural cooperatives remain insufficiently systematized and require further theoretical and methodological justification, particularly in the context of the digital transformation of the agricultural sector.

The purpose of research. The aim of the study is to analyze, systematize, and improve the theoretical and methodological foundations, and to develop recommendations for the development of organizational aspects of agricultural cooperatives in Ukraine under conditions of agricultural digitalization and the transformation of information and communication processes.

To achieve this aim, the following research objectives are defined:

to study modern approaches to the development of organizational processes in agricultural cooperation systems;

to determine the role of organizational policy in ensuring the effective functioning of agricultural cooperatives;

to identify existing organizational problems in the development of agricultural cooperatives in Ukraine;

to substantiate a step-by-step process for forming organizational relations` support for agricultural service cooperatives;

to define strategic directions for modernizing the organizational relations policy of cooperatives in the context of the digital economy.

Presentation of the main research material. The current state of the agricultural sector is characterized by a significant strengthening of cooperation to ensure the competitiveness of small and medium-sized producers, to form efficient value chains, to develop rural areas, and to strengthen national food security [1].

In the context of transforming economic relations, market globalization, digitalization of production processes, and increasing global food challenges, cooperative forms of organization are gaining particular importance, as they enable the integration of small-scale producers into the modern agri-food space, enhance their adaptability to external changes, and create prerequisites for sustainable agricultural development [2].

The scientific community [3, 4] predominantly views agricultural cooperation not only as an organizational form of producers' association but also as an important institutional instrument for ensuring the economic resilience of the agricultural sector. Researchers Kalchenko S. V. et al. [3] note that cooperative associations facilitate the consolidation of material, technical, financial, labor, and information resources of small producers, thereby reducing transaction costs, optimizing production processes, improving marketing efficiency, and strengthening the market position of agricultural enterprises. According to Didivska L. et al. [4], cooperation is particularly important for small farms and household producers, who, due to limited resource capacity, often cannot ensure competitive performance under increasing domestic and international competition.

The consolidation of producers into cooperatives enables the comprehensive execution of production, logistics, processing, marketing, and sales functions, thereby increasing the share of value added remaining with primary producers. Cherevko H. [5] noted that cooperation provides small producers with access to modern storage, processing, and distribution infrastructure, as well as opportunities for integration into regional and international food markets. Malik M. et al. [2] argue that, under conditions of high agribusiness concentration and the dominance of large agroholdings, the need to develop self-organizing mechanisms for small producers is increasing.

The functioning of agricultural service cooperatives contributes to the creation of additional jobs, increased rural employment, higher household incomes, and the development of local infrastructure [1]. Cooperatives ensure not only the economic integration of producers but also the formation of social capital, partnership relations, trust, and mutual support among agricultural market participants. Therefore, in many countries, the cooperative movement is regarded as an important factor in ensuring balanced rural development and food stability [2].

The growing importance of cooperation is also driven by the need to ensure national food security. Contemporary challenges and rising production costs underscore the need to develop resilient agricultural production models [6]. In this context, cooperatives enhance the adaptability of small producers, help stabilize the food supply, develop local food systems, and strengthen regional economic security. The development of cooperative forms of organization becomes particularly important

in Ukraine's post-war economic recovery [7], when effective integration of small producers into agricultural recovery and food supply chains is required.

At the same time, the modern development of the cooperative movement is impossible without the active implementation of digital technologies and the development of information and communication support systems for cooperatives [8, 9]. Digitalization of the agricultural sector contributes to optimizing production processes, improving management systems, developing e-commerce, integrating cooperative members into digital sales platforms, and ensuring transparency of interactions among market participants. Thus, the current stage of agricultural sector development is characterized by the transformation of cooperation into a multifunctional mechanism that integrates the economic, social, and informational needs of small and medium-sized producers. Cooperative organizational forms create prerequisites for increasing agricultural competitiveness, developing rural areas, ensuring food security, and establishing a sustainable model for the agricultural sector amid global economic transformations. The structural and functional role of agricultural cooperation in the agri-food system is presented in Figure 1.

At the same time, we fully agree with researchers [8, 9] that the effectiveness of agricultural service cooperatives largely depends not only on material or financial resources but also on the level of organizational relations` support, the ability of cooperative members to exchange information, integrate digital technologies, and develop effective communication networks.

In the context of rapid economic digitalization, organizational relations` support for the cooperative movement acquires strategic importance, as it ensures timely managerial decision-making, increased transparency in interactions among cooperative members, the development of marketing channels, the formation of trust among economic actors, and the integration of small producers into regional and international markets.

Within the framework of this study, particular attention is given to the views of foreign scholars on the role of organizational technologies in the development of innovation systems, network economies, and cooperative structures [10–12]. They generally consider organizational processes as a fundamental basis for the functioning of the modern knowledge-based society.

After analyzing works [13–17], it was found that agricultural service cooperatives in Ukraine currently face certain organizational constraints that hinder their institutional development and reduce the efficiency of their economic activities.

Researchers Kostyrko I. H. et al. [13] identified fragmentation of information flows among cooperative members, public authorities, and market institutions as a key

communication problem, leading to information asymmetry and complicating managerial decision-making.

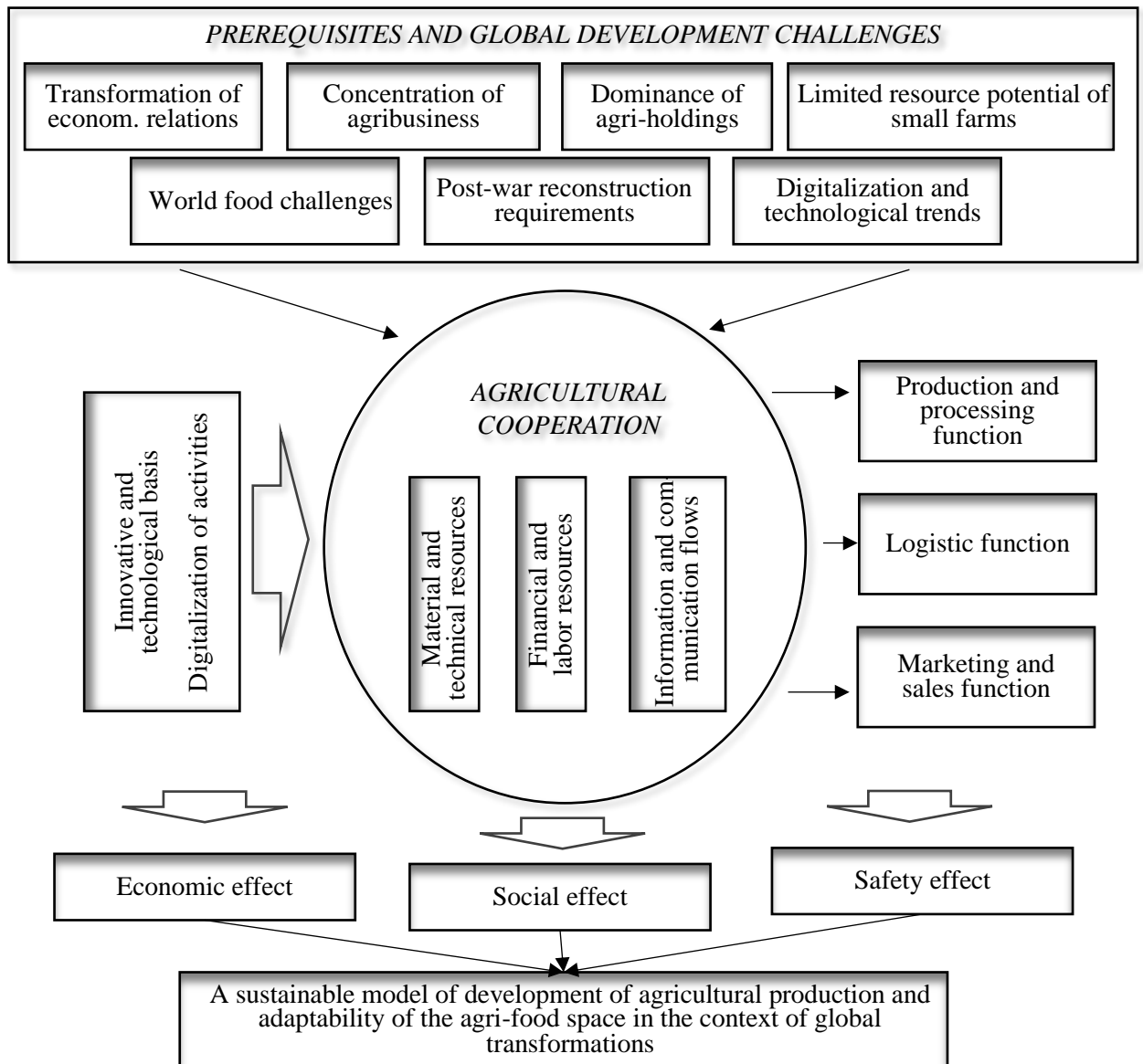


Fig. 1. Structural and functional role of agricultural cooperation in the agri-food system

Source: developed by authors

The authors emphasized that weak information exchange and insufficient digitalization in cooperatives are among the main barriers to their development in Ukraine.

Masin V. [14] highlighted the insufficient development of agricultural advisory systems and organizational infrastructure at the regional level. According to the author, advisory services in Ukraine do not provide adequate information support for cooperatives, limiting small producers' access to modern knowledge, technologies, and market information. The researcher recommends modernizing the agricultural advisory system to ensure effective cooperation and development, and to improve the quality of organizational communication among agricultural market participants.

Ukrainian cooperatives are insufficiently integrated into national and regional information platforms. Most cooperatives do not fully utilize CRM systems, electronic document management, digital marketing platforms, and analytical tools, which limits their ability to coordinate internal processes effectively. As a result, organizational relations among cooperative members are carried out through informal or outdated channels, reducing management efficiency and increasing transaction costs.

It should also be noted that there is a problem of weak interaction between cooperatives and external stakeholders (public authorities, financial institutions, market intermediaries, etc.), as outlined in Yarema L. V.'s study [15]. In many cases, unified digital platforms are lacking, complicating access to state support programs, grants, and market opportunities. We believe this issue is particularly critical for small cooperatives that lack sufficient resources for independent information support of their activities.

Researchers Bezus R. M. and Kryuchko L. S. [16] point to limited digital literacy among cooperative members and a low level of implementation of cybersecurity practices. The lack of proper training of personnel and cooperative members in digital technologies leads to inefficient use of even existing organizational systems, thereby reducing overall cooperative performance.

In addition to the above, military actions significantly complicate organizational relations in Ukraine's agricultural sector. The destruction of communication infrastructure, disruptions to mobile internet connectivity, and failures of digital services result in the loss of operational control over production processes and logistics, directly affecting the stability of agricultural enterprises and cooperatives [17].

Summarizing the above, the main organizational problems of agricultural cooperatives in Ukraine include: low level of digitalization of managerial processes, fragmentation of information flows, insufficient development of advisory and consulting systems, weak integration into digital platforms, limited interaction with external stakeholders, insufficient digital competencies, and the impact of crisis factors on the stability of organizational infrastructure. The combination of these problems necessitates the development of a theoretical and methodological framework for modernizing the organizational relations of agricultural cooperatives in Ukraine.

Within the framework of this study, we propose a process to modernize the organizational relations policy of agricultural cooperatives in Ukraine. The proposed step-by-step process for establishing organizational relations that support agricultural service cooperatives ensures the effective generation, processing, exchange, and use of information resources among internal cooperative members and external stakeholders. The key objective is to improve the coherence of managerial decisions, reduce information asymmetry, strengthen coordination of joint activities, and ensure the integration of cooperatives into digital agri-food ecosystems. The detailed description and orientation of the process stages are presented in Table 1.

The improved staged process for forming organizational relations in support of an agricultural service cooperative, compared to existing approaches, ensures a logical sequence for building an organizational system: from identifying organizational needs and assessing participants' digital readiness to integrating digital platforms, monitoring organizational effectiveness, and strategically adjusting the management system.

Table 1

Staged process of forming organizational relations` support for an agricultural service cooperative

Stage	Content	Tools	Results
1. Diagnosis of the Cooperative's Organizational Needs	Identification of the information needs of the cooperative's production, managerial, marketing, and logistics subsystems. Determination of the sources, volumes, and frequency of information flows. Identification of information gaps and the level of information asymmetry among cooperative members.	SWOT analysis, surveys of cooperative members, analysis of information flows, and communication audit	Formation of a systemic understanding of the cooperative's information needs and identification of key communication support problems
2. Analysis of Participants' Digital Readiness	Assessment of the level of digital maturity of cooperative members, their digital competencies, and the available technical infrastructure. Identification of digitalization barriers and readiness for the implementation of information and communication technologies.	Digital audit, questionnaires, assessment of digital competencies, IT infrastructure analysis	Determination of the cooperative's level of digital readiness and potential risks associated with the implementation of digital solutions
3. Formation of Digital Organizational Infrastructure	Creation of the technical and technological basis for the cooperative's information and communication support. Implementation of digital management systems, electronic document management, and secure information exchange tools.	CRM systems, ERP systems, cloud services, electronic document management systems, and corporate platforms	Formation of a unified digital environment and ensuring transparency of information processes



4. Integration of Information Platforms	Integration of internal and external information systems into a unified digital ecosystem. Connection of cooperatives to state agricultural registers, marketplaces, logistics platforms, and analytical services.	API integration, digital platforms, agricultural registers, marketplaces, data exchange systems	Synchronization of information flows and integration of the cooperative into digital agri-food networks
5. Organization of Internal and External Communications	Development of regulations for information exchange within the cooperative and with external stakeholders. Ensuring the functioning of digital interaction channels and feedback mechanisms.	Corporate portals, messengers, e-mail platforms, notification systems, digital interaction platforms	Improvement of coordination among cooperative participants and development of partnership relations
6. Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Organization	Systematic assessment of the effectiveness of information and communication processes, speed of information transfer, level of digital tool usage, and their impact on managerial decision-making.	KPI analysis, BI analytics, digital dashboards, and monitoring systems	Improvement of managerial decision-making efficiency and timely identification of communication problems
7. Adjustment of the organizational Strategy	Adaptation of the information and communication support system to changes in the external and internal environments. Updating digital tools and optimizing communication channels.	Strategic analysis, digital modernization, process reengineering, and change management	Ensuring flexibility, adaptability, and continuous development of the cooperative's information and communication system

Source: developed by authors

This approach minimizes information asymmetry, enhances coordination among cooperative members, ensures transparency in managerial processes, and strengthens the integration of cooperatives into modern digital agri-food networks.

The practical implementation of the proposed approach contributes to increasing the competitiveness of agricultural service cooperatives, fostering partnership interactions, improving the managerial decision-making system, and forming stable network relationships among producers, public institutions, advisory structures, and market actors. This, in turn, creates prerequisites for sustainable development of the agricultural sector and the integration of small producers into the digital economy.

Conclusions. In the context of the digital transformation of the agricultural sector, the organizational relations in agricultural cooperatives become a strategic priority and a key factor in ensuring their efficient functioning. Modern cooperative structures are complex and multi-level in terms of interactions; their effectiveness depends not only on resource potential but also on the level of development of organizational infrastructure, the quality of information flows, and the ability to integrate into modern digital agri-food networks.

The main organizational problems of agricultural cooperatives in Ukraine remain the fragmentation of information flows, insufficient digitalization of managerial

processes, limited integration into digital platforms, weak development of advisory and consulting systems, low levels of digital competencies among cooperative members, and insufficient effectiveness in interactions with external stakeholders. The combination of these problems limits the competitiveness of cooperatives and constrains the development of modern network forms of agricultural interaction.

We are convinced that organizational relations' support for cooperatives should be considered a system of organizational, digital, information, and communication tools aimed at ensuring effective interaction between internal cooperative members and external institutional stakeholders. The proposed step-by-step process for forming organizational relations' support of an agricultural service cooperative, unlike existing approaches, provides a logical sequence for developing an organizational relations' system: from diagnosing organizational needs and assessing the digital readiness of participants to integrating digital platforms, monitoring organizational effectiveness, and strategically adjusting the management system, which allows minimizing information asymmetry, increasing coordination among cooperative members, ensuring transparency of managerial processes, and strengthening the integration of cooperatives into modern digital agri-food networks.

Prospects for further research in this context are directly related to the development of applied methodological tools for accurate quantitative assessment of the level of digital maturity and readiness of agricultural cooperatives for integration into platform ecosystems. A relevant vector for future scientific explorations is econometric modeling of cause-and-effect relationships between the quality of implemented information and communication tools and the economic efficiency indicators of cooperative associations. Special attention in future work should be paid to the analysis of institutional cybersecurity risks in agricultural digital networks and to the substantiation of models for developing specific digital competencies among employees and members of cooperatives in the context of Industry 4.0 deployment.

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**СТРАТЕГІЧНІ НАПРЯМИ РОЗВИТКУ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЙНИХ
ВІДНОСИН В СІЛЬСЬКОГОСПОДАРСЬКИХ КООПЕРАТИВАХ В
УКРАЇНІ**

Анотація. Статтю присвячено вивченню питань щодо розвитку організаційної складової політики сільськогосподарських кооперативів в Україні в умовах цифровізації аграрного сектору та трансформації економічних відносин. Актуальність тематики дослідження зумовлена посиленням ролі кооперації як інституційного механізму забезпечення конкурентоспроможності малих і середніх товаровиробників, необхідністю підвищення ефективності управлінських процесів, а також зростаючою значущістю цифрових технологій у формуванні сучасних агропродовольчих систем. У зв'язку з цим, дослідження

має на меті проаналізувати, систематизувати та удосконалити теоретико-методичні засади та розробити рекомендації щодо розвитку організаційних відносин в діяльності сільськогосподарських кооперативів в Україні в умовах цифровізації аграрного сектору та трансформації комунікаційних процесів.

Для досягнення поставленої мети в статті вивчено роль сільськогосподарської кооперації як багатофункціонального механізму економічної, соціальної та організаційної інтеграції виробників. Обґрунтовано значення організаційних відносин для забезпечення ефективного функціонування кооперативних структур, розвитку партнерських зв'язків, формування довіри та зниження інформаційної асиметрії між учасниками аграрного ринку. Узагальнено сучасні підходи до засад цифровізації кооперативних структур та їх інтеграції у регіональні й національні агропродовольчі мережі. Виявлено ключові проблеми розвитку кооперативів в Україні, серед яких: фрагментарність інформаційних потоків, низький рівень цифровізації управлінських процесів, недостатня інтеграція в цифрові платформи, обмежений розвиток дорадчих систем, слабка взаємодія із зовнішніми стейкхолдерами та недостатній рівень цифрових компетентностей учасників кооперації. Обґрунтовано концептуальні положення формування організаційної підтримки кооперативів як інтегрованої багаторівневої системи організаційних, цифрових, інформаційних та комунікаційних інструментів. Розроблено поетапний процес формування підтримки організаційних відносин в сільськогосподарському обслуговуючому кооперативі, який у порівнянні з існуючими, забезпечує логічну послідовність формування комунікаційної системи: від виявлення інформаційних потреб та оцінювання цифрової готовності учасників до інтеграції цифрових платформ, моніторингу ефективності комунікацій і стратегічного коригування системи управління, що дозволяє мінімізувати інформаційну асиметрію, підвищити рівень координації між учасниками кооперації, забезпечити прозорість управлінських процесів та посилити інтеграцію кооперативів у сучасні цифрові агропродовольчі мережі.

Ключові слова: кооперація в сільському господарстві, сільськогосподарські кооперативи, підтримка організаційних відносин, адаптаційна політика підприємства, цифровізація, кооперація, аграрний сектор.

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