



Отримано: 30 серпня 2026 р.

Прорецензовано: 02 вересня 2026 р.

Прийнято до друку: 03 вересня 2026 р.

Email: tanya.galetska@oa.edu.ua

ORCID-ідентифікатор: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0795-008X>

Email: natalya.topishko@oa.edu.ua

ORCID-ідентифікатор: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9823-0805>

Email: sergii.galetskyi@oa.edu.ua

ORCID-ідентифікатор: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6532-3108>DOI: [http://doi.org/10.25264/2311-5149-2026-42\(70\)-40-50](http://doi.org/10.25264/2311-5149-2026-42(70)-40-50)

Galetska T. I., Topishko N. P., Galetskyi S. M. China's food security in times of crisis: transformations in import policy and prospects for the development of Ukraine's agricultural exports. *Наукові записки Національного університету «Острозька академія» : серія «Економіка»*. Острог : Вид-во НаУОА, вересень 2026. № 42(70). С. 40–50.

UDC: 338.43:339.5(510:477)

JEL-Classification: F13; Q17; Q18; F14

Tetiana Galetska,

*PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Department of Management, and Marketing,
National University of Ostroh Academy*

Nataliia Topishko,

*PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Department of Management, and Marketing,
National University of Ostroh Academy*

Sergii Galetskyi,

*PhD in Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor, Department of Language Mediation,
National University of Ostroh Academy*

CHINA'S FOOD SECURITY IN TIMES OF CRISIS: TRANSFORMATIONS IN IMPORT POLICY AND PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINE'S AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

The study examines China's food security in the context of contemporary geopolitical and economic crises, focusing on transformations in the country's agricultural import policy and the prospects for developing Ukraine's agricultural exports to the Chinese market. The relevance of the study is determined by the growing importance of food security as a component of national security, China's efforts to strengthen domestic food self-sufficiency, and the simultaneous need to maintain diversified and reliable sources of imported agricultural products. Against this background, Ukraine, with its fertile chernozem soils, substantial agricultural production capacity, developed grain and oilseed sectors, and growing technological potential, may represent a significant prospective partner for China.

The purpose of the study is to assess the agricultural potential of Ukraine in the context of China's food security, identify promising areas of bilateral agricultural cooperation, analyze the structure of Ukrainian agricultural production and export-import operations, and examine the transformation of China's food policy under contemporary geopolitical challenges. The research applies general scientific methods, including analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, a systematic approach, comparative and historical analysis, as well as statistical methods.

The results demonstrate that Ukraine retains significant competitive advantages in agricultural production despite the military and geopolitical challenges. These include highly fertile soils, substantial crop yields, scientific developments in plant breeding, and the increasing adoption of precision agriculture, drones, automation, and other innovative technologies. At the same time authors state that, China's agricultural trade policy is increasingly shaped by the pursuit of food self-sufficiency, diversification of import sources, food reserves, and the reduction of dependence on politically vulnerable suppliers. Special attention is placed on the transformations that have contributed to changes in the scale and structure of Ukrainian agricultural exports to China.

The study concludes that Ukraine's future role in China's food security will depend not only on its ability to supply grain and oilseeds but also on the development of higher-value agricultural products, including dairy, meat, processed and organic food. Strengthening Ukraine-China agricultural cooperation requires export diversification, technological modernization, stable and predictable supply chains, and greater flexibility in responding to geopolitical and market transformations. It highlights that such measures could enhance Ukraine's long-term competitiveness and contribute to a more diversified and resilient food supply system for China.

Keywords: food security, agricultural exports, China, Ukraine, geopolitical challenges; agricultural trade; food self-sufficiency.



Галецька Тетяна Іванівна,
кандидатка економічних наук, доцентка,
доцентка кафедри менеджменту і маркетингу
Національного університету «Острозька академія»

Топішко Наталія Петрівна,
кандидатка економічних наук, доцентка,
доцентка кафедри менеджменту і маркетингу
Національного університету «Острозька академія»

Галецький Сергій Миколайович,
кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент, доцент кафедри міжнародної мовної комунікації
Національного університету «Острозька академія»

ПРОДОВОЛЬЧА БЕЗПЕКА КИТАЮ В УМОВАХ КРИЗИ: ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЇ В ІМПОРТНІЙ ПОЛІТИЦІ ТА ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ РОЗВИТКУ АГРАРНОГО ЕКСПОРТУ УКРАЇНИ

Дослідження присвячено аналізу продовольчої безпеки Китаю в контексті сучасних геополітичних та економічних криз, з особливою увагою до трансформації імпоротної політики країни у сфері сільського господарства та перспектив розвитку українського агроекспорту на китайський ринок. Актуальність теми зумовлена зростанням ролі продовольчої безпеки як складника національної безпеки, прагненням Китаю зміцнити внутрішню самозабезпеченість продовольством та водночас потребою зберігати диверсифіковані й надійні джерела імпорту. На цьому тлі Україна з її родючими чорноземами, значним виробничим потенціалом в аграрному секторі, розвиненим виробництвом зернових і олійних культур та зростаючим технологічним потенціалом постає перспективним партнером для КНР.

Метою дослідження є оцінка аграрного потенціалу України у розрізі продовольчої безпеки Китаю, визначення перспективних напрямів двостороннього співробітництва, аналіз структури українського сільськогосподарського виробництва й експортно-імпортних операцій, а також дослідження трансформації продовольчої політики КНР під впливом сучасних геополітичних викликів. У роботі застосовано загальнонаукові методи аналізу та синтезу, індукції та дедукції, системний, порівняльний і історичний підходи, а також статистичні методи.

Результати дослідження свідчать, що, попри військові та геополітичні виклики, Україна зберігає суттєві конкурентні переваги в аграрному секторі. До них належать висока родючість ґрунтів, значна врожайність основних культур, наукові досягнення у селекції рослин, а також активне впровадження точного землеробства, безпілотних літальних апаратів, автоматизації та інших інноваційних технологій. Водночас агроторговельна політика Китаю дедалі більше орієнтується на продовольчу самозабезпеченість, диверсифікацію імпорту, формування стратегічних резервів і зниження залежності від політично вразливих постачальників. Окрему увагу приділено трансформаційним процесам, що вплинули на обсяги та структуру українського агроекспорту до Китаю.

У висновках наголошується, що майбутня роль України в забезпеченні продовольчої безпеки Китаю залежатиме не лише від постачання зернових та олійних культур, а й від розвитку виробництва продукції з високою доданою вартістю (молочної та м'ясної продукції, перероблених і органічних продуктів харчування). Зміцнення українсько-китайського аграрного співробітництва потребує диверсифікації експорту, технологічної модернізації, забезпечення стабільності ланцюгів постачання та гнучкості до геополітичних і ринкових змін. Це сприятиме підвищенню довгострокової конкурентоспроможності України та формуванню більш диверсифікованої й стійкої системи продовольчого постачання Китаю.

Ключові слова: продовольча безпека, аграрний експорт, Китай, Україна, геополітичні виклики, торгівля сільськогосподарською продукцією, продовольча самозабезпеченість.

Relevance. Over the past four years, China's food supply has become an urgent issue for scientific consideration due to rapidly changing geopolitical realities and the redistribution of global resources. At a time when the global economy is undergoing significant transformations driven by political alliances, among which the Russian-American one is becoming prominent, China, as one of the world's leading economies, is in a difficult situation in terms of shaping its national security. China's food security is an important component of national security because of its large population and limited land resources that could theoretically be used for agriculture. The implementation of tariff barriers as a result of trade wars, in particular with the United States, requires Beijing to rethink traditional supply chains and search for new reliable sources of agricultural products.

This, in turn, increases the need to expand international relations and form new strategic alliances. China is actively looking for alternatives to reduce its dependence on traditional exporters, especially in the context of growing geopolitical tensions. In this context, Ukraine can play a key role as a potential partner in the agricultural sector. Due to its considerable resources and geostrategic location, Ukraine is theoretically able to ensure a stable supply of grain and other agricultural products that are critical to China's food security (in the context of a settled conflict with Russia). At the same time, there is a great need for Ukraine to receive Chinese high-tech agricultural innovations and technologies in order to rebuild and develop the country's agriculture.



Therefore, the relevance of the study is to examine the potential and opportunities for strategic cooperation between China and Ukraine in the context of food supply. The main hypothesis is that deepening trade and economic relations between these countries can help strengthen China's food security and stimulate the development of the Ukrainian agricultural sector. Given global challenges and the redistribution of global resources, the development of mutually beneficial strategies is becoming a crucial factor in ensuring stability and progress of countries in the international arena.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The issue of ensuring China's food security through the import of agri-food products from Ukraine is currently not sufficiently covered in the scientific literature. There is a shortage of specialized scientific research devoted directly to this topic, which makes it necessary to turn to a comprehensive analysis of data from various sources (statistical, expert, analytical, and journalistic). The information collected is based primarily on statistics published by reputable international sources, such as the FAO GIEWS [10], the Foreign Agricultural Service of the US Department of Agriculture [9], and the statistical authorities of Ukraine [25]. Additional information was obtained from numerous publications in foreign expert sources on China's agricultural policy. In particular, we are talking about materials from such resources as the Asia Times [6], Reuters [5], the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences [14], as well as publications on the websites of the FAO [10] and the US Department of Agriculture [29].

Ukrainian sources such as NISS reports [18; 16], publications on Latifundist [17], Ahropolit [1], and the analytical review of the Ukrainian Agribusiness Club (UCAB) [27] became the basis for understanding and assessing the dynamics of agricultural production, export potential, and trade cooperation with China. Based on the sources [17; 1; 27], the trends in exports of crop production (grains, oilseeds), livestock and processed agri-food products are analyzed.

The purpose of the study is to examine the transformation of China's food security and import policy in response to contemporary geopolitical and economic crises and to assess the prospects for the development of Ukraine's agricultural exports to the Chinese market.

Main Body of the Research. Food policy is the basis of national economic policy and is designed to ensure the socio-economic stability of the country. China's food security was developed and guaranteed for the period of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025). The main focus is on cereals, potatoes, and pulses. China has made significant progress in improving its food security. The situation with food availability and affordability and the sustainability of the food system as a whole has improved. However, there are a number of related problems and risks. In particular, the need to reform inefficient agricultural production methods, significant changes in consumer demand, uncertainty in international trade, instability of supply chains, geopolitical challenges, environmental problems, etc.

China is trying to increase its influence on global food security and governance. The country has held the position of Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) since August 2019 and holds a position on the Executive Board of the World Food Program (WFP). Since 2016, China has hosted the WFP's Center of Excellence, which leverages the country's experience in fighting poverty and hunger to promote activities related to the Sustainable Development Goals through training, policy dialogue and capacity building.

Agriculture is an important sector of China's national economy for ensuring the country's food security. It is based on the production of grains (corn, wheat, rice) and legumes. Over the past decade, grains have accounted for more than 90% of total food production, and the three main crops (rice, wheat, and corn) have accounted for more than 98% of all grains. This indicates a shift from a model of extensive development with high resource dependence to a model of sustainable intensification.

During 1991-2023, the production of major agricultural products in China increased significantly. Among cereals, corn production increased the most (from 98773.00 thousand tons in 1991 to 288842.00 thousand tons in 2023 (2.9 times)), while wheat production increased by 40% and rice by 20%. One of the key crops in China is soybeans. In 2023, its production reached 20840.0 thousand tons, having increased by 2.1 times compared to 1991. Much attention was paid to the production of vegetable oils, which allowed them to significantly (5.6 times) increase their production. In 2023, it amounted to 30432.74 thousand tons.

In response to the growing demand of the population for meat products, its production increased significantly during 1991-2023: poultry meat by 6.2 times (to 24409.17 thousand tons), beef and veal by 4.8 times (to 7530.00 thousand tons), sheep meat by 4.5 times (to 5310.00 thousand tons), and pork by 2.3 times (to 57840.00 thousand tons). Production of dairy products increased for all types of products. Thus, the production of raw milk increased 8-fold (to 41970.00 thousand tons), butter – 1.5-fold (to 99.97 thousand tons), and cheese – 1.3-fold (to 209.66 thousand tons) in 1991-2023. The production of eggs increased from 9240 thousand tons in 1991 to 35630.00 thousand tons in 2023 (3.9 times) and fish and fish products – from 14253.6 thousand tons in 1991 to 66412.5 thousand tons in 2023 (4.7 times).

The development of agricultural science, which is actively funded by the state, plays a key role in increasing the productivity of production of major agricultural products in China. During 2019-2021, China's public sector spending on agricultural research and development increased annually by 1.3 billion USD and amounted to 6.6 billion USD in 2021. This is more than similar expenditures in India, the United States and Brazil combined [22].

As China's growing middle class is projected to account for more than 50% of the population by 2025, demand for meat products from an increasingly affluent population will steadily increase, in line with the growing demand for soybeans and grains to feed livestock [11].

According to China's food security plans, under normal political and climatic conditions in 2025, China's total food production will be about 685 million tons, and grain production will be about 626 million tons [14]. It should be noted that the level of self-sufficiency in grain and food products of the Chinese population is considered a key indicator of the country's ability to guarantee food security. Since 2005, the overall level of grain self-sufficiency in China has exceeded 95%, which meets the requirements of basic self-sufficiency. In addition, the level of self-sufficiency in food (based on rice and wheat) in 2015-2019 exceeded 100%, which indicates absolute food security in these years [19]. According to the global food security index in 2020, China ranked 39th and Ukraine 54th [26]. China's agriculture is experiencing a significant negative impact of climate change (Fig.1).

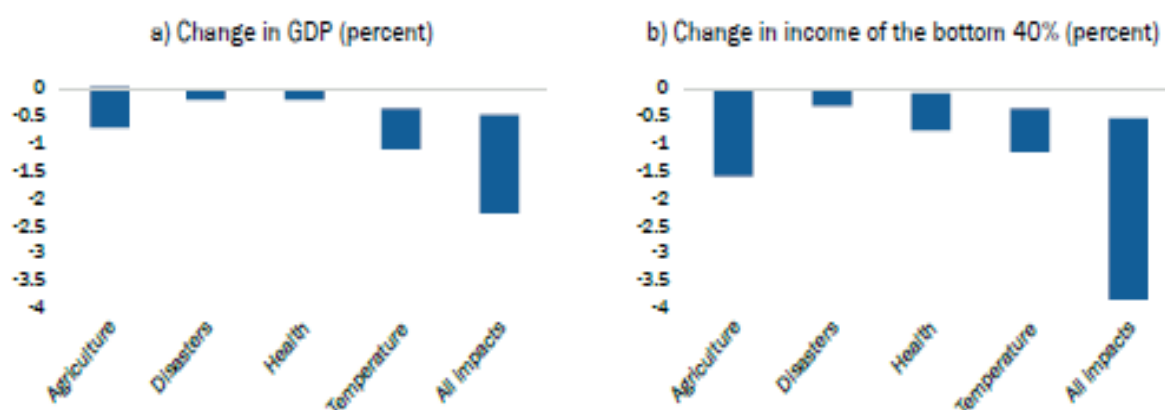


Figure 1. China's economic losses from climate change by 2030

Source: [12].

Along with the problem of water shortages and pollution, the industry also suffers from environmental degradation, rising temperatures, and extreme weather events. In particular, between 1981 and 2010, climate change and ozone pollution reduced grain yields in China by 10%, resulting in an annual loss of 55 million tons of grain [13]. According to forecasts by 2030, climate change poses a serious threat to China's economy. GDP losses will range from 0.5% to 2.3% annually [12].

To build its own food independence, China has increased state budget expenditures for 2025 to create stocks of grain, vegetable oils and other materials by 6.1% compared to 2024. 54.05 billion yuan was allocated for subsidies for agricultural insurance. Beijing has announced support for the cattle and dairy industries, which are facing problems of overproduction. It is planned to improve the storage infrastructure and logistics links for grain, cotton, sugar, meat, and fertilizers. To achieve these goals, the government is actively supporting farmers. Minimum purchase prices for rice and wheat are being introduced, and the public procurement system is being expanded in key provinces. The government has allocated more than 131 billion yuan (about 18 billion USD) to build up reserves of grain and vegetable oils, as well as 54 billion yuan in subsidies for agricultural insurance [6].

Thus, significant achievements in China's agriculture have been made possible by well-thought-out strategic planning of its development since the mid-twentieth century (intensification of production, land reclamation, including irrigation and drainage, and development of crop breeding). However, despite the impressive positive results in agricultural development, further increase in agricultural production is associated with a number of problems and challenges.

China's population is about 20% of the world's population or 1.4 billion people. In 2022, the country's labor force accounted for 774.6 million people. The share of workers employed in agriculture in 2022 decreased to 22.6% compared to 59.7% in 1991. The share of workers employed in industry (from 21.4% to 32.2%) and services (18.9% to 45.3%) has increased significantly [30]. By the end of 2024, China's population amounted to 1.419 billion people [4]. The traditional Chinese diet is based on staple grains, with a high content of vegetables and a low content of animal products [32]. During 1991-2023, consumption of pulses increased: soybeans (13.7 times),

corn (3.7 times), wheat (36.5%), and rice (20.0%). The consumption of vegetable oils also increased significantly (by 6.1 times). The rapid economic and social development of China has resulted in a change in the structure of the diet. It is now based on high-value products (meat, milk, fish, etc.). Between 1991 and 2023, consumption of beef and veal increased by 8.6 times, poultry by 6.4 times, fish and other fish products by 4.8 times, eggs by 3.9 times, and pork by 2.5 times. Consumption of fresh dairy products increased 12 times: from 2896.93 thousand tons in 1991 to 34727.20 thousand tons in 2023. According to OECD and FAO forecasts (2023-2032), the demand for food at the global level will increase primarily due to further population growth and rising income levels. Fresh dairy products, meat and sugar will be in high demand (Figure 2) [21].

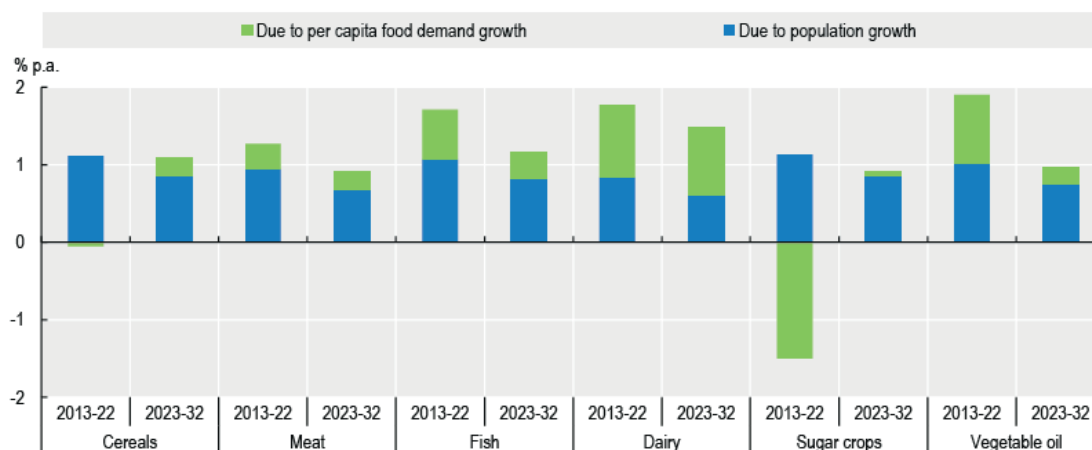


Figure 2. Average annual growth in consumption of basic consumer goods in 2013-2022 and 2023-2032, %

Source: [20].

Global consumption of higher-quality food products will increase primarily in response to rising incomes in emerging markets in Asia, where about half of the increase will come from increased demand for meat and fish in China (Fig. 3).

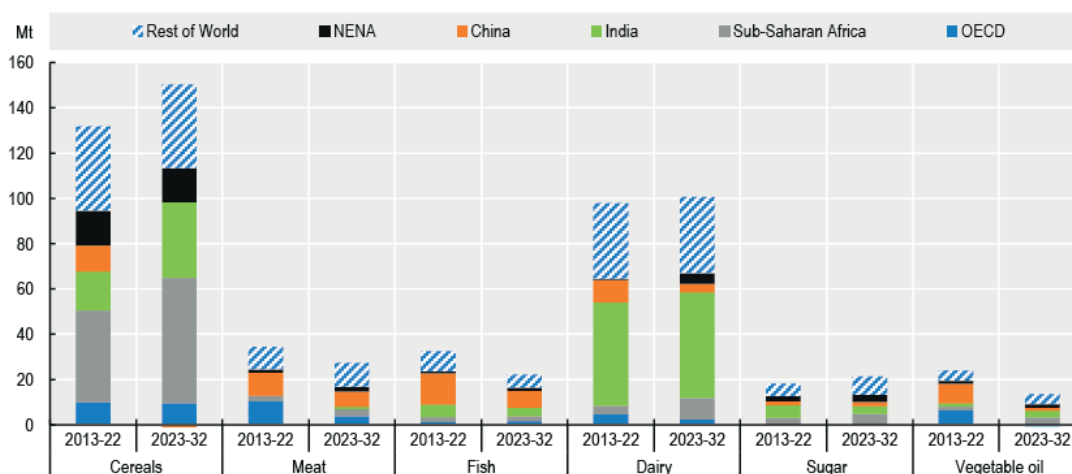


Figure 3. Regional contribution to consumer demand growth by region, 2013-2022 and 2023-2032, tons

Source: [20].

Thus, according to China's food security plans, the growing demand for agricultural products in China must be met both by increasing its own agricultural production and by importing a significant amount of food. That is why China remains the world's largest importer of agricultural products and food.

China's accession to the WTO in 2002 led to an unprecedented increase in agricultural exports and imports. During 2001-2020, China's agricultural trade increased by 218.93 billion USD (from 27.90 billion USD to 246.83 billion USD, respectively). This changed the importance of China's presence in world agricultural trade from 3.6% in 2001 to 10.1% in 2019 [28]. In 2022, China imported almost 98.3 billion USD worth of agricultural products, which is a record high [33].



From 2001 to 2020, the value of agricultural exports from China increased 3.7 times (from 16.05 billion USD to 76.03 billion USD), with an average growth rate of 8.5%. The value of imports of agricultural products to China over the same period increased 13.4 times (from 11.85 billion USD to 170.80 billion USD). The average annual growth rate was 15.1%. Significant excess of import growth over export growth, China quickly turned into a country with a negative balance in agricultural trade. The growth of China's foreign trade has led to a significant increase in the depth of the impact of the global economy and trade environment on China's food security.

China is highly import-dependent for a number of agricultural products (Table 1). China is highly import-dependent on oilseeds (over 60%) and their processed products – vegetable oil (over 36%). The import dependence on fish and fish products is quite high (about 18%). There is also an increase in import dependence on meat supplies, which increased by 2.9 times in 2015-2019 alone [31].

Table 1

Imports of major agricultural products to China in 1991-2023, thousand tons

Type of product	1991	2000	2010	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 to 1991, times
Wheat	15255,0	398,2	812,0	5789,0	10509,0	9606,0	9960,0	10000,0	0,7
Corn	0,0	42,9	979,0	7606,0	29546,0	21886,0	20620,0	27130,0	27130
Rice	103,4	292,3	862,6	2932,0	4347,0	5744,5	4967,4	4416,0	42,7
Soybeans	136,0	13244,0	54800,0	88512,8	100330,0	96520,0	91080,0	99410,0	731,0
Vegetable oils	1154,8	2517,7	9169,0	11318,0	11531,0	8306,0	9507,0	9185,0	8,0
Beef and veal	0,7	11,1	44,6	2121,3	2706,6	2959,3	3418,5	3501,9	5004,9
Pork	0,1	148,2	254,0	2450,8	5279,9	4331,1	2128,0	2102,8	16930,9
Poultry meat	89,3	852,2	545,7	799,1	1556,8	1484,3	1321,2	1398,1	15,7
Sheep meat	0,1	17,8	57,0	392,3	364,9	410,6	357,9	400,2	5027,6
Eggs in the shell, canned or boiled	1,0	0,0	1,0	0,0	1,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
Butter and other fats and oils derived from milk	3,4	3,1	23,4	85,5	115,6	131,0	142,9	131,1	38,3
Cheese, fresh or processed	0,2	2,0	22,9	114,9	129,2	176,2	145,4	170,5	768,1
Fish and other fishery products	174,2	1529,7	3287,8	6229,3	5509,0	5072,5	6146,3	7052,3	40,5

Source: [21]

During 1991-2023, China significantly increased its imports of meat products: pork by 16931 times (up to 2102.8 thousand tons), beef and veal by 5005 times (up to 3501.9 thousand tons), sheep meat by 5028 times (up to 5310.00 thousand tons), and poultry meat by 15.7 times (up to 1398.1 thousand tons). Moreover, while in 1991 there were practically no imports of such items as pork, beef, veal, and sheep meat, in 2023 they reached significant volumes. Imports of butter (38.3 times), cheese (768 times), and fish (41 times) also increased significantly. In 2023, corn imports reached 27130.0 thousand tons. Rice imports increased from 100.3 thousand tons in 1991 to 4416.0 thousand tons in 2023 (43 times). Instead, wheat imports decreased by 30% (from 15255.0 thousand tons in 1991 to 10000.0 thousand tons in 2023).

The top 10 countries that supplied agricultural products to the Chinese market in 2021 were Brazil, the United States, New Zealand, Thailand, Indonesia, Canada, Australia, Argentina, France, and Ukraine (Table 2).

Table 2

China's imports of agricultural products from major importing countries from 2011 to 2021, thousand USD

Country	2011			2021			Deviation, +/-	
	thousand USD	%	Location	thousand USD	%	Location	thousand USD	%
Brazil	14 929 676,95	19,8	2	43 799 337,91	21,4	1	28 869 660,96	1,6
USA	18 703 393,26	24,8	1	35 406 978,44	17,3	2	16 703 585,18	-7,5
New Zealand	2 447 196,28	3,2	8	10 605 971,43	5,2	3	8 158 775,15	1,9
Thailand	2 457 236,42	3,3	7	10 368 824,31	5,1	4	7 911 587,89	1,8
Indonesia	4 147 179,02	5,5	5	10 238 535,20	5,0	5	6 091 356,18	-0,5
Canada	2 893 257,54	3,8	6	8 584 893,76	4,2	6	5 691 636,22	0,4
Australia	2 106 750,42	2,8	10	7 020 653,74	3,4	7	4 913 903,32	0,6



Continuation of Table 2

Country	2011			2021			Deviation, +/-	
	thousand USD	%	Location	thousand USD	%	Location	thousand USD	%
Argentina	5 285 033,96	7,0	3	6 351 749,38	3,1	8	1 066 715,42	-3,9
France	2 116 806,87	2,8	9	6 273 770,41	3,1	9	4 156 963,54	0,3
Malaysia	5 171 186,33	6,9	4	3 725 672,12	1,8	15	-1 445 514,21	-5,0
Ukraine	86 451,27	0,1	43	5 215 837,79	2,5	10	5 129 386,52	2,4
Other partners *160 B 2011 **171 B 2021	15 105 171,49*	20,0*	x	94 345 302**	46,0**	x	79 240 130,74	26,0
World	75 419 899,95	100		204 957 724	100		129 537 824,00	

Source: [3].

In general, China's imports of agricultural products increased by 129.54 billion USD during 2011-2021 and amounted to 205.0 billion USD in 2021. From 2011 to 2021, there was an absolute increase in imports for all key trading partners, except Malaysia. In 2021, Brazil was the main trading partner (43.8 billion USD or 21.4%). The United States moved to second place (35.4 billion USD). Brazil's share of food imports increased to 21.4%, but the United States lost 7.5% of China's total food imports and controlled only 17.3%. New Zealand increased its exports to China by 8.2 billion USD and reached a share of 5.2%. Argentina took the 8th place (6.3 billion USD or 3.1%). In 2011 Ukraine ranked 43rd in China's food imports (86.5 million USD or 0.1%). From 2011 to 2021, Ukraine's exports to China increased by 5.1 billion USD (+2.4%) and in 2021 amounted to 5.2 billion USD (2.5% of food imports). Ukraine ranked 10th in this indicator.

In 2023, the main food suppliers to the Chinese market were Brazil, the United States, New Zealand, Thailand, and Indonesia. Brazil became the largest supplier of meat products (41.4% of beef, 17.2% of pork and 46.2% of poultry). Argentina (15%), Australia (11.5%) and the United States (10.6%) also supplied a large share of beef to the Chinese market. Pork came mainly from Spain (23.9%), milk – New Zealand (44.5%), and vegetables and fruits – Thailand (64.5% and 38.8%, respectively). In 2023, the United States imported 29% of nuts; 20.7% of soups; 19.9% of poultry; 15.9% of pork; 10.6% of beef.

During Donald Trump's first presidential term, Chinese imports to the United States experienced significant fluctuations: 505.2 billion USD in 2017; 538.5 billion USD in 2018; 449.1 billion USD in 2019; 432.5 billion USD in 2020. These fluctuations were partly caused by the trade war that erupted between the countries in 2018-2019, during which both sides imposed reciprocal tariffs on a wide range of goods. By the time Biden took office, trade between the USA and China had somewhat leveled off. In 2024, the United States exported goods to China worth 143.5 billion USD (2.9% less than in 2023). At the same time, exports of goods from China to the United States increased by 2.8% and amounted to 438.9 billion USD. This indicates significant volatility in China-USA trade relations.

Currently, China and the United States are in a full-blown trade war after US President Donald Trump imposed duties on Chinese exports above and beyond the existing ones (20% at the beginning of his presidency; 34% on February 06, 2025; 50% on April 08, 2025; 41% on April 09, 2025). In this regard, China initiated a consultation procedure with the United States in the WTO. The Chinese side believes that these measures violate the US obligations under the provisions of the 1994 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, as well as the Agreements on Customs Valuation and on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures [23]. Regardless of what Trump's next steps will be, it is clear that the economic relationship between the United States and China will never be the same.

China's budget for 2025 provides for funding for expanded measures to ensure the country's food security in response to the results of the US election on November 06, 2024. These measures are part of preparations for a possible protracted trade war with the United States and growing geopolitical challenges [5]. According to the announcement of the Tariff Commission of the State Council of China, the increase in duties on US agricultural products is aimed at protecting the interests of domestic producers and responding to the increased tariff burden that the US has imposed on Chinese goods, harming the multilateral trading system.

The current US policy towards Russia (in particular, building strong trade relations, which are hindered only by the Russian-Ukrainian war) China may perceive as a potential threat to its geopolitical interests, especially in the context of the Indo-Pacific region. These moves could further intensify the long-term rivalry between the United States and China, potentially worsening trade relations. In response to these challenges, China is preparing for possible further deepening of geopolitical isolation and economic competition [24]. In the context of the US and Russia's plans for possible joint aluminum mining in the Arctic, China is preparing for new political tensions



between Russia and the US, as their cooperation could change the geopolitical balance in the region. China, which is actively promoting its “Polar Silk Road” and seeks to secure access to resources and new trade routes in the Arctic, may perceive these actions as a threat to its interests. In turn, this may prompt Beijing to reconsider its own strategy in the Arctic, including military buildup and economic expansion, to counter US and Russian influence and secure its national interests [2].

Geopolitical redistribution will also affect China’s cooperation with Ukraine. Today, it can be argued that China is increasingly paying attention to the risks of the Chinese-Ukrainian trade partnership. While in the pre-war period, imports of agricultural products from Ukraine amounted to 4.29 billion USD, in 2024 the volume decreased by more than 3 times. In particular, in 2020-2021, the volume of imports of Ukrainian corn was in 2nd place after the US and amounted to a record 8.5 million tons. As a result of logistics disruptions in Ukraine in 2022, China opened the market for Brazilian corn. In 2022-2023, Brazil exported 3.8 million tons to China, and in 2023-2024 – 15 million tons, it became the main supplier of this crop to China [17].

Changes in China’s trade policy have also occurred in other agricultural products. Thus, due to the political conflict, in 2020 China imposed an 80.5% duty on Australian barley. Ukraine took advantage of this opportunity, so during 2020-2021, exports to China increased to 3.4 million tons. However, the war destroyed Ukrainian logistics, and in August 2023, China and Australia resumed trade, duties were canceled, and Australia became the market leader again. In 2023-2024, it supplied 5.2 mln tons of barley, while Ukraine supplied only 0.8 mln tons.

Ukraine has also lost its leadership in China’s imports of sunflower oil. Previously, Ukraine supplied more than 1 million tons of sunflower oil to China, controlling more than 60% of the market. In 2022-2023, Ukraine’s exports decreased to 643 thousand tons, and in 2023-2024 – to 290 thousand tons. In the first four months of the 2024-2025 marketing year, only 52 thousand tons were shipped. The main player in this area is now Russia, which controls more than 60% of the Chinese market through active expansion and dumping. Kazakhstan is also strengthening its position. Its share has grown from 1% to 11% in five years. However, the main threat is not competitors, but alternative oils. Palm oil remains the cheapest and most popular. Soybean is another competitor: China is actively developing its own soybean oil production, reducing its dependence on imports.

The agricultural product whose exports to China grew after the outbreak of war in Ukraine was sunflower meal. In 2022-2023, Ukraine exported 2.1 million tons, and in 2023-2024 – 2.3 million tons. In the first four months of the 2024-2025 marketing year, only 232 thousand tons were shipped, which is three times less than in the same period in 2023 [17].

China’s global agricultural strategy envisages diversification of agricultural imports along with investments in agriculture in other countries, international cooperation in the agricultural sector, and expansion of strategic trade partnerships [34]. The trade war launched by the United States may create favorable conditions for Ukraine and other countries to expand their presence in the Chinese agricultural market. According to the International Trade Center, Ukraine’s untapped export potential in the Chinese food market is estimated at 2.2 billion USD [15].

We believe that a complete cessation of imports of agricultural products from Ukraine is unlikely, but the intensification of competition for the Chinese market is obvious. As noted above, Ukraine offers agricultural products on the world market at prices significantly lower than the global average. Ukraine has significant agricultural production potential and plays an important role in ensuring global food security. Ukraine can help China meet its rapidly growing consumer demand for organic food and meat products. Even in the crisis year of 2022, Ukraine supplied 44.6 million tons of beef to the Chinese market. One of Ukraine’s competitive advantages is the production of genetically unmodified corn.

An important positive signal is the intensification of Ukraine-China cooperation. In July 2023, the Seventh Meeting of the Ukrainian-Chinese Subcommittee on Trade and Economic Cooperation took place, where the conditions for opening new commodity items for the export of Ukrainian products were discussed: honey, flour, fish products, poultry, peas, fresh blueberries, feed for productive animals (premixes), etc. Recently (on March 06, 2025), an agreement was signed to expand the list of Ukrainian agricultural exports to China. In particular, China will open its market to Ukrainian producers of peas and wild-caught aquatic products (fish and seafood caught in natural waters). The agreement regulates veterinary, sanitary and phytosanitary requirements for the supply of these products to the Chinese market.

Given the above, we can identify the following promising areas for the development of Ukrainian-Chinese trade relations [7]:

1) search for and use of alternative export routes: the EU-Ukraine solidarity routes, the Danube via Romania, the Baltic (via Poland to the Baltic Sea ports) and the Balkan routes (to Croatia);

2) export diversification: expanding Ukrainian exports with high value-added, creative products and services, including telecommunications, computer and information services, royalties, business, and material processing services;



3) meeting the demand of the Chinese middle class for high-quality agricultural products: vegetable oil, meat, vegetables, fruits, chocolate products, and finished wheat products;

4) e-commerce: the development of e-commerce platforms can help Ukrainian enterprises enter the Chinese market;

5) access to global supply chains through the creation of joint Ukrainian-Chinese enterprises with an export orientation.

Consequently, China's foreign trade shows dynamic growth in both exports and imports. This ensures China's growing presence in global agricultural trade. At the same time, the impact of global processes on China's food supply is increasing. Despite a significant increase in domestic agricultural production, China's import dependence on a number of agricultural products is high.

China's global agricultural strategy envisages diversification of agricultural imports. However, its successful implementation is hampered by geopolitical instability and the US-led trade war, which threaten the stability of supply chains.

There is a significant untapped export potential for Ukraine in the Chinese market, which is hampered, in particular, by the Russian-Ukrainian war. In such a difficult and unpredictable environment, the seventh meeting of the Ukrainian-Chinese Subcommittee on Trade and Economic Cooperation and the recent signing of an agreement to expand the list of Ukrainian agricultural exports to China were important positive signals for intensifying Ukraine-China cooperation.

Thus, China's significant success in ensuring food security is the result of a progressive and thoughtful reform of agriculture, which began in the mid-twentieth century. Despite the achievement of significant results in increasing the production of major crops through intensification of production, reclamation works (irrigation and drainage of land), as well as active development of crop breeding, further increase in agricultural production is accompanied by a number of problems and risks.

The growing demand for agricultural products in China must be satisfied both by increasing its own agricultural production and by importing a significant amount of food. China is highly import-dependent on a number of agricultural products. The country's global agricultural strategy provides for the diversification of agricultural imports. This is especially important in the context of the unprecedented escalation of the trade war with the United States. At the same time, this situation may open up new opportunities for Ukraine and other countries in the Chinese food market.

Geopolitical realignment has a significant impact on China-Ukraine cooperation. There is a significant Ukrainian agricultural potential, on the other hand, there are a number of threats and challenges to increasing the presence of Ukrainian exporters in the Chinese domestic market, the main one being the Russian-Ukrainian war. We believe that a complete cessation of imports of agricultural products from Ukraine is unlikely, but the intensification of competition for the Chinese market is obvious. In such an uncertain situation, an important positive signal is the intensification of Ukraine-China cooperation, in particular the recent signing of an agreement to open the Chinese market to Ukrainian producers of peas and wild-caught aquatic products.

Conclusions and prospects for further research. The food problem, which manifests itself in food shortages as a result of insufficient development of productive forces, adverse effects of natural and climatic conditions and geopolitical shocks, has always been one of the most acute problems at both the national and global levels. In China, the issue of food security is seen as a top priority for the government, taking into account the impact of both internal and external factors. The main internal factor is the state and dynamics of the country's agriculture. However, with a significant increase in the degree of the country's involvement in international relations and processes, foreign economic factors are becoming increasingly important.

China's significant success in ensuring food security is the result of a progressive and thoughtful reform of agriculture, which began in the mid-twentieth century. The main objectives of Chinese agricultural policy are to ensure and achieve food independence and physical and socio-economic access to food for the population. Despite significant results in increasing the production of major crops through intensification of production, land reclamation (irrigation and drainage) and active development of crop breeding, further increase in agricultural production is accompanied by a number of problems and new challenges. Achieving full self-sufficiency in food at this stage of human technological development is an incredible, if not impossible, goal. Therefore, the growing consumer demand for agricultural products in China must be satisfied both by increasing the volume of its own agricultural production and by importing a significant amount of food.

China is highly import-dependent on a number of agricultural products. The country's global agricultural strategy provides for the diversification of agricultural imports. This is especially important in the context of the unprecedented escalation of the trade war with the United States. At the same time, this situation may open up new opportunities for Ukraine and other countries in the Chinese food market.



Cooperation between China and Ukraine is heavily influenced by geopolitical realignment. On the one hand, there is a significant Ukrainian agricultural potential, on the other hand, there are a number of challenges to increasing the presence of Ukrainian exporters in the Chinese domestic market, the main one being the Russian-Ukrainian war. We believe that a complete cessation of imports of agricultural products from Ukraine is unlikely, but the intensification of competition for the Chinese market is obvious. In such an uncertain situation, an important positive signal is the intensification of Ukraine-China cooperation, in particular the recent signing of an agreement to open the Chinese market to Ukrainian producers of peas and wild-caught aquatic products. Despite all the difficulties, Ukraine remains the world's largest producer of sunflower oil, a major global producer of grain, sugar, honey, eggs, poultry and a future global player in the meat and dairy markets. There is an urgent need to create a new model for the development of the Ukrainian agricultural sector with a balance of its economic and environmental components that will meet the goals of sustainable green development.

Prospects for further research may include many areas. In particular, a detailed analysis of the economic results of increasing exports of Ukrainian agricultural products to China with forecasting of supply/demand volumes; studying the possibilities and economic justification for introducing technological innovations in Ukrainian agricultural production (crop production, livestock production); studying the environmental impact of agricultural production and the possibilities of ensuring sustainable "green development" in Ukraine; developing strategies for managing risks associated with climate change; increasing employment in the agricultural sector) but also opportunities to enhance overall national security, etc.

References:

1. Ahropolit. (2017). What Ukrainian goods does China need? URL: <<https://agropolit.com/news/6777-yaki-ukrayinski-tovari-potribni-kitayu>>. (2026, August, 15). [in Ukrainian].
2. Belzetskaya, N. (2025). For Russia, this will result in big problems: what serious step can China take? <https://24tv.ua/spivpratsya-rosiyi-ssha-yak-tse-reaguye-kitay_n2763401>. (2026, August, 15). [in Ukrainian].
3. China Food Imports by Country in US\$ Thousand 2021. World Integrated Trade Solution. <<https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/CHN/Year/LTST/TradeFlow/Import/Partner/by-country/Product/Food>>. (2026, August, 16).
4. China Population 2024. <<https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/china-population/>>. (2026, August, 16).
5. Chu, M.M. (2025). China raises 2025 budget for grain stockpiling, targets higher domestic output. Reuters. <<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-raises-2025-budget-grain-stockpiling-targets-higher-domestic-output-2025-03-06/>>. (2026, August, 15).
6. Donnelon-May, G. (2025). China's grand plan for food self-sufficiency. Asia Times. <<https://asiatimes.com/2025/02/chinas-grand-plan-for-food-self-sufficiency/#>>. (2026, August, 16).
7. Drobotyuk, O. (2023). Ukrainian-Chinese trade relations in the conditions of a full-scale war between Russia and Ukraine. Ukraine-China, 1(24). <<https://sinologist.com.ua/category/publication/journal/ukrayina-kitaj-n24-2023/>>. (2026, August, 17).
8. FAO. (2022). Ukraine: Impact of the war on agriculture and rural livelihoods in Ukraine. Findings of a nationwide rural household survey. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc3311en> [in Ukrainian].
9. Foreign Agricultural Service (2024). China: Retail Foods Annual. <<https://www.fas.usda.gov/data/china-retail-foods-annual#:~:text=China%20continued%20to%20be%20the,oriented%20agricultural%20products%20in%202023>>. (2026, August, 17).
10. GIEWS. (2025). Global Information and Early Warning System. <<https://www.fao.org/giews/countrybrief/country.jsp?lang=en&code=UKR>>. (2026, August, 18).
11. Grimmelt A., Hong, S., Uchoa, R., Zhang, C., Zhou, J. (2023). For Love of Meat: Five Trends in China that Meat Executives Must Grasp. McKinsey & Company. <<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/consum>>. (2026, August, 17).
12. Hallegatte, S., M. Bangalore, L., Bonzanigo, M. Fay, T. Kane, U. Narloch, J. Rozenberg, D. Treguer, and A. VogtSchilb. (2016). Shock Waves: Managing the Impacts of Climate Change on Poverty. Climate Change and Development. <<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/>>. (2026, August, 16).
13. Hanqin, T. et al. (2016). Climate extremes and ozone pollution: a growing threat to China's food security. Ecosystem Health and Sustainability 2, 1.
14. Huokai, W., Kai, C. (2020). Report says China's food security guaranteed. Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. <http://casseng.cssn.cn/press/202209/t20220909_5492028.html#:~:text=The%20report%20predicts%20that%20under,output%20will%20remain%20above%2090%25>. (2026, August, 15).
15. International Trade Center. (2021). Export Potential Map. Retrieved from International Trade Center. <<https://exportpotential.intracen.org/en/markets/gap-chart>>. (2026, August, 13).
16. Kyrchenko, A. (2025). How much will the production of livestock products increase in Ukraine? Economic Truth. <<https://pravda.com.ua/biznes/na-skilki-v-ukrajini-zbilshitsya-virobnytvo-produkciji-tvarinnictva-804173/>>. (2026, August, 15). [in Ukrainian].
17. Latifundist. (2025). Nothing Personal: How China Replaced Almost All Agri-Imports From Ukraine. <<https://latifundist.com/en/blog/read/3133-nichogo-osobistogo-yak-kitaj-zamistiv-majzhe-ves-agroimport-z-ukrayini>>. (2026, August, 12).



18. NISS, (2024). Agricultural Sector of Ukraine in 2023: components of sustainability, problems and future challenges. <<https://niss.gov.ua/doslidzhennya/ekonomika/ahraryny-sektor-ukrayiny-u-2023-rotsi-skladovi-stiykosti-problemy-ta>>. (2026, August, 15). [in Ukrainian].
19. OECD Data Explorer. <<https://data-explorer.oecd.org/>>. (2026, August, 17).
20. OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2023-2032. <<https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/a4e5c326-37f7-43c7-9455-b35efb613827>>. (2026, August, 15).
21. OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2024-2033. OECD Data Explorer. <[https://data-explorer.oecd.org/vis?pg=0&bp=true&snb=3&df\[ds\]=dsDisseminateFinalDMZ&df\[id\]=DSD_AGR%40DF_OUTLOOK_2024_2033&df\[ag\]=OECD.TAD.ATM&df\[vs\]=&lc=en&pd=2010%2C2032&dq=OECD.A.CPC_0111..&to\[TIME_PERIOD\]=false](https://data-explorer.oecd.org/vis?pg=0&bp=true&snb=3&df[ds]=dsDisseminateFinalDMZ&df[id]=DSD_AGR%40DF_OUTLOOK_2024_2033&df[ag]=OECD.TAD.ATM&df[vs]=&lc=en&pd=2010%2C2032&dq=OECD.A.CPC_0111..&to[TIME_PERIOD]=false)>. (2026, August, 14).
22. Plastina, A., Townsend, T. (2023). World spending on agricultural research and development. The ICAC Recorder. <https://icac.org/Content/Publications/Pdf%20Files/a6457001_bb5f_4bbb_92c3_1acadf3bbb1f/Mar%202023%20World%20Spending%20on%20Agricultural%20Research%20and%20Development%20-%20Alejandro%20Plastina,%20Terry%20Townsend.pdf.pdf>. (2026, August, 12).
23. Radio Svoboda (2025). Trump raises tariffs on China by another 50%, Beijing appeals to the WTO. <<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-trump-myta-kytaj-sot/33377574.html>>. (2026, August, 12). [in Ukrainian].
24. Standish, R. (2025). What does the US-Russia reset mean for China? Radio Svoboda. <<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/rfe-rl-ssha-rosiya-perezavantazhennya-kytay/33323138.html>>. (2026, August, 12). [in Ukrainian].
25. State Statistics Service of Ukraine. Agriculture. Livestock production by species. <<https://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>>. (2026, August, 13). [in Ukrainian].
26. The Economist Intelligent Unit & Corteva. (2020). The Global Food Security Index. <<https://foodsecurityindex.eiu.com/Index>>. (2026, August, 14).
27. UCAB. (2025). Outlook for Ukrainian agricultural market. Ministry of Agrarian and Food of Ukraine. <https://ucab.ua/files/2024/2025%20Outlook.pdf?fbclid=IwY2xjawJTUvleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHY4AIgMt6R2WuGRs-ixsSKsbYHZ1UIJtSCrht4yCNrpyJelKKHcqOCQLjw_aem_YVKKBptmmY5EAfM7XPOo1A>. (2026, August, 15).
28. United Nations Trade Development Programme database. <<https://comtrade.un.org/data/>>. (2026, August, 13).
29. USDA. (2024). Retail Foods Annual. <https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Retail%20Foods%20Annual_Guangzhou%20ATO_China%20-%20People%27s%20Republic%20of_CH2024-0126.pdf>. (2026, August, 12).
30. World in Data. <<https://data.worldbank.org/>>. (2026, August, 10).
31. Yakimovich, A. (2023). China's food problem: Issues of system transformation and security in a crisis. *RUDN Journal of Economics*, 31(3). <<https://journals.rudn.ru/economics>>. (2026, August, 12).
32. Ye, Y., Leeming, J. (2023). By the Numbers: China's Changing Diet. *Nature*. <<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-023-02060-3>>. (2026, August, 11).
33. Yihan, M. (2023). Agricultural Products Import and Export Growth in China 2005-2022. Statista. <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1300634/china-agricultural-products-trade-growth-rates/>>. (2026, August, 10).
34. Zhang, H., Cheng, G. (2013). China's Food Security Strategy Reform: An emerging global agricultural policy. *China's Global Quest for Resources Energy, Food and Water*. Routledge