

LIVESTOCK FEED SUPPLY IN THE KASHKADARYO REGION

Ruziboev Dilshod Azam ugli

Karshi State University, doctoral studies

+99897 310 01 29

Annotation:

This paper explores the agricultural and livestock development in the Kashkadaryo region during the 1920s to 1950s, focusing on the impact of environmental challenges, agricultural reforms, and government policies. It highlights key events such as the 1927 drought, which severely affected livestock, causing widespread livestock deaths due to feed shortages. The study also examines the measures taken to regulate pasture use, including the redistribution of lands from wealthy nomads and the introduction of livestock feeding points. Despite setbacks, such as the failure to meet feed production goals in 1937, the establishment of new pastures between 1945 and 1958 supported livestock growth. However, the area planted with alfalfa decreased over time, especially after 1940, as cotton cultivation expanded. The paper emphasizes the role of Soviet policies in transforming agricultural practices, including crop rotation and the development of irrigated pastures. By the 1960s, despite favorable yields in some years, the livestock sector continued to face challenges due to adverse weather conditions. Ultimately, the research sheds light on the evolving relationship between livestock farming, agricultural practices, and environmental factors in the region.

Keywords: livestock farming, agricultural reforms, drought, feed shortages, pasture regulation, alfalfa cultivation, crop rotation, collective farms, livestock mortality.

In the Kashkadaryo region, 2,689.4 thousand poods of wheat were harvested in 1925-1926 [1]. In 1926-1927, the use of pastures in Uzbekistan was regulated, and the pastures were taken away from the nomadic wealthy landowners [2]. In 1927, the herders of the Kashkadaryo region were provided with 164,000 poods of cotton, barley, chaff, husks, as well as 263.5 thousand poods of wheat and flour. In 1928, 300,000 poods of concentrated feed and 150.7 thousand poods of wheat and flour were distributed. In 1929, 146.2 thousand poods of feed and 201.2 thousand poods of wheat and flour were provided. In 1930, 211,000 poods of concentrated feed and 117,000 poods of wheat and flour were distributed [3]. Observations have shown that the digestibility and satiety properties of straw treated under high pressure have almost doubled [4]. In 1927, due to unfavorable weather conditions for livestock, the farms found themselves in a difficult situation. During the drought, there was a lack of forage in the pastures, and starting from May and June of that year, shepherds from the Beshkent and Koson districts took their sheep to other areas with abundant pastures. The sheep were taken to the pastures in the Kitob, Shahrisabz, Chiroqchi, Samarkand, and Surkhandarya regions. Additionally, due to the shortage of feed and the occurrence of skin and lung diseases among

the sheep, many sheep perished. In total, 74,200 sheep died in the Kashkadaryo region, with 50,000 sheep from the Koson district, 12,000 from Chiroqchi, 8,000 from G‘uzor, and 3,600 from Tangriharam (Dehqonobod) district [5]. In 1928, 13 livestock feeding points were established in the Kashkadaryo region under the leadership of veterinarians [6]. In 1929, in the Kashkadaryo region, the areas planted with alfalfa were distributed as follows: in the Koson district, 188 hectares were sown with one-year-old alfalfa, and 2,050 hectares with perennial alfalfa. In the Beshkent district, 165 hectares were sown with one-year-old alfalfa, and 2,107 hectares with perennial alfalfa. In the Chiroqchi district, 86 hectares were sown with one-year-old alfalfa, and 564 hectares with perennial alfalfa. In the Kitob district, 303 hectares were sown with one-year-old alfalfa, and 1,383 hectares with perennial alfalfa. In the Shahrisabz district, 332 hectares were sown with one-year-old alfalfa, and 996 hectares with perennial alfalfa. In the Yakkabog‘ district, 107 hectares were sown with one-year-old alfalfa, and 671 hectares with perennial alfalfa. In the G‘uzor district, 95 hectares were sown with one-year-old alfalfa, and 1,000 hectares with perennial alfalfa. In the Tangriharam district, 33 hectares were sown with one-year-old alfalfa, and 333 hectares with perennial alfalfa. Overall, in the Kashkadaryo region, 1,309 hectares were planted with one-year-old alfalfa, and 9,104 hectares with perennial alfalfa [7]. One of the most important factors in the development of livestock farming is the preparation of feed. In 1937, the plan for preparing feed for livestock was not fulfilled in the Beshkent, Koson, and Behbudiy districts of the Kashkadaryo region. In these districts, feed for horses was also not prepared, resulting in the culling of 577 cattle in Beshkent, 268 in Koson, and 82 in the Behbudiy district during 1937-1938 [8]. In April 1930, the collective farms of the Kashkadaryo region had 36,590 hectares of irrigated land and 46,670 hectares of rain-fed land, along with 6,143 horses, 6,299 oxen, 718 camels, 4,599 donkeys, 197 cattle, 5,778 woolly sheep, and 14,067 Karakul sheep, as well as 5,733 goats. Thus, each of the 150 collective farms had approximately 244 hectares of irrigated land and 31 hectares of rain-fed land, with around 41 horses, 42 oxen, 5 camels, 30 donkeys, and 140 sheep and goats [9]. The decision of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on August 21, 1936, titled 'Measures for the Development of Alfalfa Cultivation and Increasing the Alfalfa Yield,' focused on the issues of alfalfa seed production and the expansion of alfalfa crops [10]. In the USSR, the development of socialist agriculture aimed at continuously increasing land fertility and making labor spent on land cultivation more productive was based on the widespread application of the achievements of Soviet agrobiolgy. In collective farms where crop farming and livestock raising were closely integrated, the method of crop rotation with pasture lands was used. For irrigated lands, the rotation of cotton and alfalfa crops was intended to progressively increase both cotton and alfalfa yields. The correct implementation of crop rotation methods allowed for the creation of a plentiful feed base to support livestock farming. According to the decision of the 10th Congress of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party of Uzbekistan, the method of crop rotation with pasture lands was to be introduced in all

collective farms by 1950, and by 1953, this method was to be fully mastered. It was planned that the area of alfalfa cultivation on crop-rotated lands in the republic would reach 700,000 to 750,000 hectares by 1957-1958 [11]. In 1937, the plan for preparing feed for livestock was not implemented in the Beshkent, Koson, and Behbudiy districts of the region. In these districts, feed for horses was not prepared, resulting in the culling of 577 cattle in Beshkent, 268 in Koson, and 82 in the Behbudiy district during 1937-1938 [12]. Due to the drought in 1937, livestock farming suffered significant damage. That year, it became very difficult to feed sheep because there was no grass in the pastures. For example, in the Muborak sovkhoz, nearly 1,500 sheep perished in 1937. The pastures in the villages of Sho‘rquduq, Kichikbuloq, and Torjilg‘a in the Chiroqchi district were allocated for the use of sovkhoz sheep. On the Torjilg‘a pastures, 56,000 sheep were grazed, and in Sho‘rquduq, 41,000 sheep were raised [13]. In 1937, in the Uzbek SSR, a total of 159,951 households had no cows, and 80,000 households had no garden plots [14]. In 1937, 180,000 sheep and lambs perished from hunger in the sovkhozes of the Uzbek SSR. During this period, 17% of the horses in the collective farms were culled. In 1937, in the Kashkadaryo region, 1,343 horses, 172 camels, and 658 oxen died [15]. In 1937, 45% of the collective farmers in the Kashkadaryo region had no cows, and 21,380 members of collective farms did not have any cows. Additionally, 800 households in the region did not own any work oxen [16]. In 1940, the area of cotton fields in Uzbekistan was 947.7 thousand hectares, while the area of perennial grasses (alfalfa) was 433.5 thousand hectares. By 1970, the area of cotton fields had increased to 1.74 million hectares, while the area of alfalfa fields had decreased to 262.2 thousand hectares [17]. In 1945, the 'Pasture Reclamation Construction Trust' was established in Uzbekistan. The total number of sheep and goats in Uzbekistan increased by 18.6% between 1945 and 1950. Specifically, the number of Karakul sheep grew by 7.4%, and the number of woolly sheep increased by 37.4% [18]. Between 1945 and 1958, 4.4 million hectares of new pastures were developed in Uzbekistan, and the number of sheep and goats increased from 5.6 million to 9 million. This growth was largely due to the addition of 1 million hectares of irrigated pastures, which led to an increase of 770,000 sheep. Although an additional 6.2 million hectares of new pastures were developed between 1959 and 1966, the number of sheep did not increase significantly during this period. However, in 1961-1962, due to favorable pasture yields, the number of sheep grew again, reaching 9.2 million. In contrast, in 1963-1964, the number of sheep decreased by 1.6 million due to poor pasture growth and the cold, prolonged winter [19]. Between the 1920s and 1950s, significant changes took place in the livestock and agriculture sectors of the Kashkadaryo region. During the 1920s and 1930s, the use of pastures was regulated, and lands were redistributed from wealthy nomads to establish necessary infrastructure for pasture management and feed production. However, the 1927 drought and feed shortages caused major losses, particularly in sheep farming, leading to a decrease in livestock numbers. While resources for cotton production increased during this period, the area planted with perennial grasses (alfalfa) shrank, and by the 1940s-1970s, the area dedicated to alfalfa cultivation

decreased. Despite this, between 1945 and 1958, new pastures were developed, which provided a foundation for the growth of livestock farming. However, in the 1960s, poor pasture yields and harsh winters continued to challenge the sector. Moreover, in 1937, the failure to meet the planned feed production goals led to the culling of livestock in many collective farms. At the same time, Soviet policies, including the introduction of crop rotation and the improvement of pasture lands, were gradually implemented, laying the groundwork for more sustainable agricultural practices in the future. Overall, while natural challenges such as drought, feed shortages, and harsh winters heavily impacted livestock farming during this period, the reforms and infrastructure investments made later on helped to mitigate these issues and provided a foundation for the future development of the livestock and agricultural sectors in the region.

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