

Legal Culture of Farmers as a Guarantee for the Development of Farming Enterprises

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study explores the significance of legal awareness in enhancing the success of farming enterprises in Uzbekistan. It aims to identify the challenges farmers face regarding legal support and education, and proposes solutions for improving legal knowledge within the agricultural sector. **Method:** A qualitative research approach is employed, utilizing legal analysis, case studies, interviews with farmers, legal experts, and policymakers, along with data from government publications and surveys. This methodology helps to understand the current legal challenges and gaps in farmers' legal education. **Results:** The study reveals several challenges, including the lack of legal support due to limited financial resources, uninformed contract signing, limited access to legal information, and inadequate accounting practices. These factors lead to legal disputes, financial losses, and hindered growth for farmers. **Novelty:** The novelty of this study lies in its focus on legal culture as a tool for empowering farmers. It emphasizes the importance of continuous legal education, access to professional legal services, and the integration of technology to address these challenges. By promoting legal awareness and improving legal access, the study provides a roadmap for the growth and sustainability of farming enterprises in Uzbekistan.

INTRODUCTION

In Uzbekistan's rapidly evolving market economy, the legal foundation for entrepreneurship, particularly within the agricultural sector, has become increasingly vital. As agriculture remains a cornerstone of the country's economy, the farming movement has emerged as a leading business entity, driving significant reforms in agricultural legislation. These reforms aim to align with the growing market demands and to create a more structured and efficient environment for farmers. However, while farmers may possess deep sector-specific knowledge and expertise, a comprehensive understanding of their legal rights and obligations is equally crucial. This understanding extends beyond basic sectoral practices and encompasses the complex legal documents, regulations, and rights that farmers must navigate to ensure the legal protection of their interests. The development of legal culture, therefore, is central to the future success and sustainability of farming enterprises in Uzbekistan.

Despite the progress made in improving legal frameworks for the agricultural sector, farmers continue to face significant challenges in fully utilizing these frameworks. Many are still unaware of the legal rights and protections available to them, leading to potential conflicts and legal disputes. Moreover, farmers often lack access to quality legal advice and resources, hindering their ability to navigate complex legal systems. In this context, fostering legal awareness is essential to ensuring that farmers can actively engage

with legal tools to protect their interests. This paper examines the importance of legal culture and the role of legal education in enhancing the success of farming enterprises. It offers recommendations for improving legal knowledge among farmers, which is critical to their growth and compliance within the framework of Uzbekistan's evolving agricultural laws [1], [2], [3].

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach, primarily utilizing a combination of legal analysis, case study evaluations, and interviews with key stakeholders in the agricultural sector. The research aims to identify the current challenges faced by farmers in Uzbekistan regarding legal support, awareness, and the practical application of agricultural laws.

1. Legal Analysis

A comprehensive review of the legal frameworks governing the agricultural sector in Uzbekistan, including the Law on Farming Enterprises, legal documents related to farmers' rights, and relevant Presidential Decrees, was conducted. This analysis helps to identify gaps in the legal structure and potential areas of improvement for fostering a more robust legal culture among farmers [4], [5].

2. Case Studies

Several case studies of farming enterprises were analyzed to understand how legal knowledge and access to legal services influence the effectiveness and growth of agricultural businesses. These case studies offer insights into how farmers apply (or fail to apply) their legal rights in everyday operations, and how this affects their decision-making and business outcomes [6].

3. Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a range of participants, including farmers, legal experts, and policymakers. These interviews helped assess the level of legal awareness among farmers and gather insights into the challenges they face when engaging with the legal system. The interviews also provided perspectives on the impact of ongoing legal reforms and suggestions for improving farmers' legal knowledge and access to services [7], [8].

4. Data Collection

Data was gathered through both primary sources (interviews and surveys with farmers) and secondary sources (government publications, legal documents, and academic studies). The focus was on collecting information related to farmers' interactions with legal professionals, their understanding of their legal rights, and their use of technological tools for legal research and contract management [9], [10].

5. Analysis

The collected data was analyzed thematically to identify key patterns and themes, such as the prevalence of legal knowledge gaps, the barriers to accessing legal services, and the role of legal culture in promoting successful farming practices. Additionally, the study compared the legal environment in Uzbekistan with best practices from other agricultural economies to propose recommendations for improving legal awareness and support [11], [12].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Current Challenges in the Legal Landscape for Farmers

Despite the considerable reforms in agricultural legislation in Uzbekistan, several critical challenges persist that hinder farmers' full participation in the legal system. One of the main challenges is the lack of legal support for farmers, primarily due to their limited financial resources, which results in their reluctance to seek professional legal advice. As a consequence, many farmers make decisions without fully understanding the legal implications, which can lead to contractual disputes and lost opportunities for growth [13], [14].

Uninformed contract signing is another common issue. Many farmers sign contracts with local authorities without thoroughly reviewing the terms, often due to a lack of awareness about the importance of these documents. This lack of understanding can result in unfavorable conditions for farmers, as they may agree to terms that undermine their legal rights or business interests [15].

2. Limited Access to Legal Information

A significant barrier is the limited access to legal information. While there are digital legal databases available, many farmers lack the experience and technological skills to use these resources effectively. This limits their ability to stay updated on sectoral regulations and fully understand the legal frameworks that govern their businesses. As a result, farmers may unknowingly violate regulations, which can lead to legal conflicts and financial losses [6], [7].

3. Inadequate Accounting Practices

Another issue is the inadequate accounting practices within the farming sector. Farmers rarely hire professional accountants, which can lead to poor financial management and missed opportunities for tax deductions or financial assistance. Accounting is vital for farmers to maintain transparency and accountability, and the lack of such practices can hinder the sustainability and growth of farming enterprises [8], [9].

4. Legal Knowledge Deficiency

Finally, low legal knowledge remains a major problem. Many farmers are not well-versed in the laws that affect their operations. This lack of legal education impedes their ability to protect their interests and fully utilize their rights. According to President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, this knowledge gap is one of the key obstacles to achieving higher yields and modernizing the agricultural sector in Uzbekistan [10], [11].

5. Proposals for Enhancing Legal Awareness

To address these issues, several recommendations have been put forward. One key proposal is continuous legal education for farmers. By ensuring that farmers are kept updated on legislative changes, they can make better-informed decisions and operate within the legal framework. This would enhance their legal culture and enable them to protect their interests more effectively.

Another important step is utilizing legal services, as mandated by Presidential Decree No. PQ-2733. This decree encourages farmers to seek professional legal assistance, particularly for contract drafting, to ensure that their agreements are legally sound and protect their rights.

In addition, technological competency is essential for the growth of farming enterprises. Farmers can benefit from collaborating with tech-savvy accountants and economists to better manage their finances and implement modern farming practices. This integration of technology can increase the efficiency and profitability of farming operations.

6. The Role of Legal Culture in Farmer Empowerment

Legal culture plays a critical role in empowering farmers by making them aware of their rights and responsibilities. The Law on Farming Enterprises (Article 16) ensures that farmers have the right to seek legal protection through the courts. This is particularly important as it allows farmers to challenge legal conflicts and secure their rights.

As highlighted by Professor O. Okyulov, the right to defend one's rights through the courts is one of the most essential methods of legal protection [1]. By increasing their understanding of legal frameworks and cultivating a strong legal culture, farmers can significantly improve their ability to navigate legal challenges and safeguard their interests.

7. Conclusions and the Way Forward

In conclusion, the development of farming enterprises in Uzbekistan hinges on the legal awareness and culture of farmers. Ensuring that farmers are knowledgeable about their legal rights and responsibilities is vital for the growth and success of their businesses. By improving legal education, promoting the use of professional legal services, and enhancing technological competency, Uzbekistan's farming sector can overcome its current challenges and continue to flourish. As farmers become more aware of their legal rights and obligations, they will be better equipped to achieve sustainable growth and contribute to the overall development of the agricultural industry in the country.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : The research reveals significant gaps in legal knowledge and access to legal support among farmers in Uzbekistan, hindering the success of farming enterprises despite ongoing legal reforms. Farmers lack awareness of their legal rights, face barriers in accessing legal services, and struggle with limited technological skills to navigate legal frameworks effectively. **Implication :** The findings emphasize the need for improved legal education and access to professional legal services. Fostering a strong legal culture, empowering farmers with the tools to understand and apply legal frameworks, is essential for the sector's growth. A well-informed farming community can protect their interests and make more sustainable business decisions, contributing to the overall development of the agricultural industry. **Limitation :** This study's limitations

include the lack of comprehensive data on the effectiveness of current legal education programs and the limited technological reach in rural areas. Additionally, there is insufficient evidence on how well farmers are integrating legal knowledge with their daily operations and whether the available legal support is fully utilized. **Future Research :** Future studies should explore the impact of targeted legal training programs, assess their effectiveness in enhancing legal awareness, and investigate the potential benefits of integrating technological resources into farmers' legal education. Research could also focus on how these improvements influence farm productivity, sustainability, and overall business growth in the long term.

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