TRANSFER INTO USE OF UNUSED AGRICULTURAL LANDS: SIGNIFICANCE, CHALLENGES, SOLUTIONS

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C.H. Volkov,

E.V. Cherkashina

The article considers the urgent challenge of modern land relations – transfer into use of unused agricultural lands, area of which makes over 50 million ha, including 31.8 billion ha of agricultural lands, 19.4 million ha of arable lands as estimated by now according to the data of the Ministry of Agriculture of Russia. The research of the problem as for non-use of lands revealed three groups of reasons: economical, natural (ecological), and social. The economic reasons include generally unsatisfactory financial and economical conditions of the agricultural producers, natural reasons imply low productivity of lands due to unfavorable water regime, negative influences, natural and anthropogenic degradation processes; social reasons cover migration of population from villages, improper land use, including allocated land shares, absence of accurately defined boundaries, location of lands of this category. In order to solve the problem of transfer of unused agricultural lands into active economic turnover the need appears not only for more then 660 million roubles, but first of all, for the comprehensive land use planning measures on planning, rational use and conservation of the transferred lands. For this purpose the land use planning schemes should be drawn up for the areas of the Russian Federation subjects and their municipal units, as well as the projects of the intraeconomic land management and working projects.

Keywords: unused agricultural lands, transfer into active economic turnover, reasons for non-use, land use planning measures.

Identification and involvement in agricultural turnover of unused agricultural land, which currently constitute a significant share in the total area of agricultural land in the Russian Federation is one of the most urgent problems of modern land relations.

In total, about 250 million hectares of previously unused land, including more than 72 million hectares of arable land, were developed in the Soviet years. At the same time, works were carried out on the drainage of waterlogged lands on the area of more than 16 million hectares and irrigation of lands in arid areas on the area of more than 15 million hectares, without reconstruction of outdated and destroyed in wartime drainage and irrigation systems.

Currently, according to Rosreestr, more than 16.7 million hectares of agricultural land is not used, or is not used for its intended purpose, and is not used properly. According to the Ministry of agriculture, 51.85 million hectares of agricultural land were not used in Russia in 2016. The area of unused arable land as of January 1, 2017 amounted to 19.4 million hectares-16.8% of its total area. According to the accounts chamber, the area of unused land, irrationally used, used for other purposes is currently 56.0 million hectares[1] (figure 1).

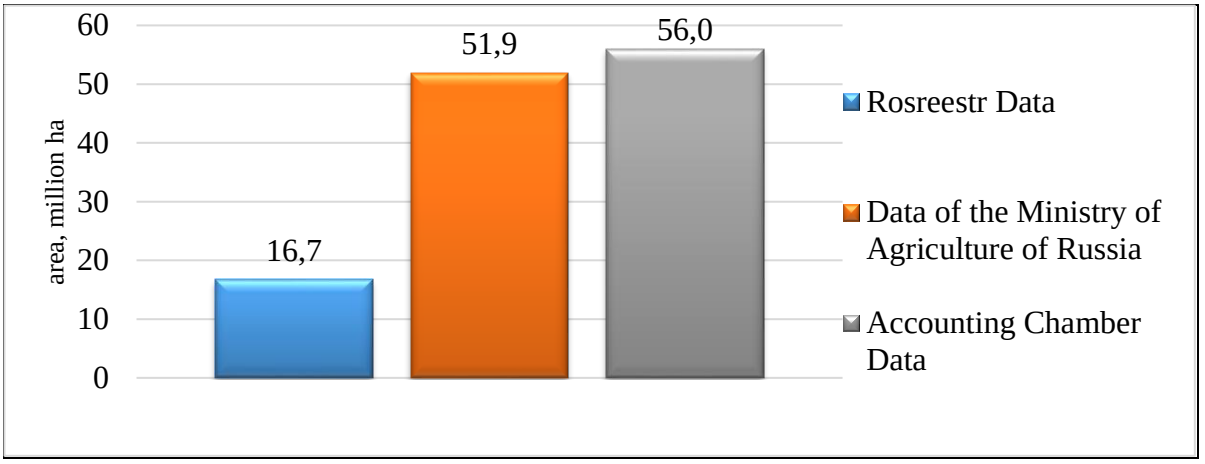

Fig. 1 - the area of unused, irrationally used, used for non-purpose agricultural land

The distribution of unused land among the country's Federal districts is uneven (table 1, figure 2). These data show that a large area of unused agricultural land and agricultural land is located In the Volga, Siberian Federal districts, unused arable land-in the Volga and Central Federal districts.

1 http://www.ach.gov.ru/press_center/news/25338

Table 1 - distribution of unused land areas by Federal districts of the Russian Federation in 2016

Federal district	Agricultural land		Agricultural grounds		Arable land	
	Area (thousand ha)	Specific weight (%)	Area (thousand ha)	Specific weight (%)	Area (thousand ha)	Specific weight (%)
Central FD	7460,26	14,39	6243,48	19,64	4930,65	25,46
Northwest FD	4069,10	7,85	2593,59	8,16	1294,99	6,69
Southern FD	3805,54	7,34	3041,46	9,57	1870,32	9,66
North Caucasus FD	211,45	0,41	205,78	0,65	76,50	0,39
Volga FD	13450,59	25,94	7299,81	22,96	5424,39	28,00
Ural FD	3863,41	7,45	3376,46	10,62	1338,65	6,91
Siberian FD	9881,23	19,06	7590,44	23,87	4011,02	20,71
Far Eastern FD	9110,43	17,57	1441,41	4,53	423,43	2,19
Total for the Russian Federation	51852,01	100,00	31792,43	100,00	19369,95	100,00

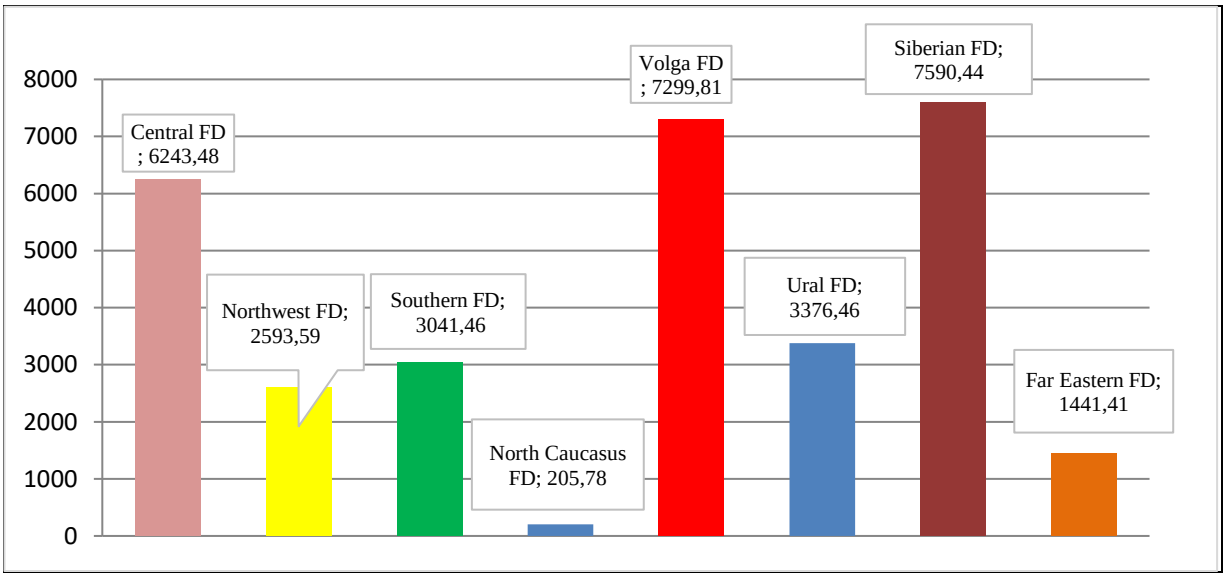

Fig. 2 - distribution of unused agricultural land areas by Federal districts of the Russian Federation in 2016

The process of involvement in the agricultural turnover of unused land is associated with the solution of serious problems, for the implementation of which it is necessary to identify the causes of non-use.

More than 40% of unused arable land (8.9 million hectares) cannot be considered as a resource for increasing its area without carrying out cultural works. Many of the unused land plots were withdrawn from agricultural circulation more than ten years ago, which led to their overgrowing with shrub

and woody vegetation, and their involvement in agricultural turnover in modern economic conditions is impractical.

The qualitative state of unused arable land and the activity of its introduction into agricultural turnover are shown in table 2. The table shows that, on average, 47.6 per cent (9.8 million ha) of arable land has not been used for more than 10 years in the country, mainly due to overgrowth and forest cover. The rate of introduction of arable land into circulation, which is suitable for use for the period 2014-2016, is extremely low and ranges from 5.3% to 8.2%.

Part of the unused agricultural land is unclaimed land shares, the area of which is reduced, but remains quite impressive. The Ministry of agriculture cites as of 01.01.2017 year, which 1776749 land shares included in the lists of the local authorities in the area of 18.5 million hectares. According to the Rosreestr in shared ownership is the 61.8 million hectares, of which unclaimed in 2017 was 13.1 million ha (21.2 per cent), 510,3 thousand hectares less than in 2016. The dynamics of unclaimed land shares is shown in figure 3.

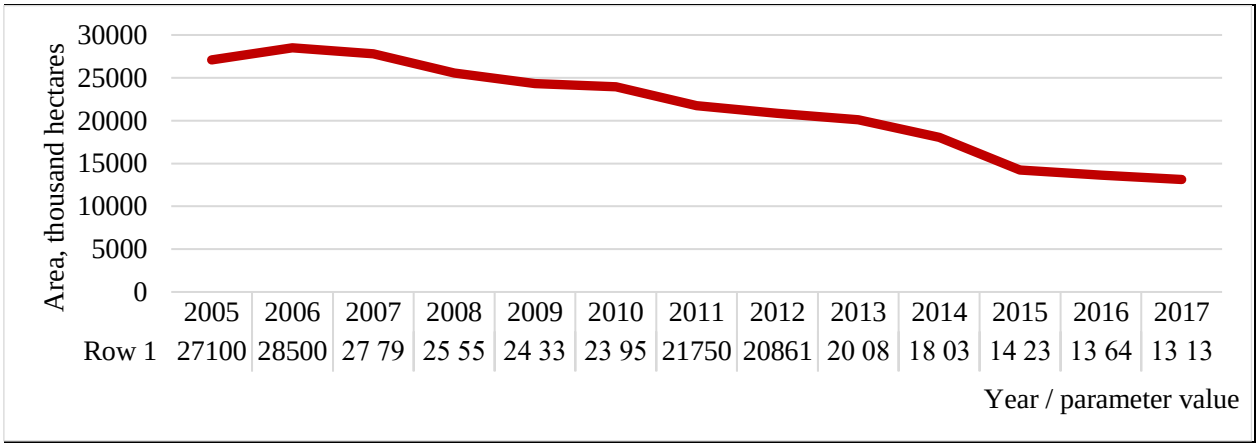

Fig. 3-Dynamics of unclaimed land shares

Table 2-availability of unused arable land and its quality condition

The name of the Federal district	year 2014								year 2015		year 2016		
	Unused arable land				State of arable land		Arable land suitable for introduction into circulation	Put into circulation	Unused arable land	Put into circulation	Unused arable land	Arable land suitable for introduction into circulation	Put into circulation
	Total	including			subsistence and forestation	waterlogging and flooding							
		up to two years	from two to ten years	more than ten years									
Central, thousand ha	5131,8	489,7	2710,6	1931,5	2389,2	86,7	2630,2	292,8	4860,9	319,0	4361,2	2407,73	334,3
%	100,0	9,5	52,8	37,7	46,6	1,7	51,3	5,7	100,0	6,6	100,0	55,21	7,7
North-West, thousand ha	1072,8	102,7	391,9	578,2	425,8	34,9	680,0	43,3	1435,6	116,2	1295,0	797,52	46,2
%	100,0	9,6	36,5	53,9	39,7	3,3	63,4	4,0	100,0	8,1	100,0	61,58	3,6
South, thousand ha	1623,8	290,9	1012,0	320,8	784,5	30,0	1413,4	85,2	1878,0	90,4	1870,3	698,57	275,2
%	100,0	17,9	62,3	19,8	48,3	1,8	87,0	5,2	100,0	4,8	100,0	37,35	14,7
North Caucasus, thousand ha	186,4	20,5	77,2	88,7	69,6	11,8	93,4	34,9	104,7	13,0	76,2	90,30	20,7
%	100,0	11,0	41,4	47,6	37,3	6,3	50,1	18,7	100,0	12,4	100,0	118,50	27,2
Volga, thousand ha	5338,2	513,9	2194,9	2629,4	2324,9	33,7	2684,1	282,0	4852,6	337,6	5424,4	2774,05	401,6
%	100,0	9,6	41,1	49,3	43,6	0,6	50,3	5,3	100,0	7,0	100,0	51,14	7,4
Ural, thousand ha	1808,2	104,2	742,7	961,3	910,8	110,2	792,1	39,4	1656,6	50,6	1338,7	785,10	95,7
%	100,0	5,8	41,1	53,2	50,4	6,1	43,8	2,2	100,0	3,1	100,0	58,65	7,1
Siberian, thousand ha	4577,4	289,3	1451,1	2837,1	1518,8	85,3	2440,8	183,4	3463,8	130,1	4011,0	2659,65	175,7
%	100,0	6,3	31,7	62,0	33,2	1,9	53,3	4,0	100,0	3,8	100,0	66,31	4,4
Far Eastern, thousand ha	765,5	65,7	255,0	463,7	267,1	72,1	589,4	124,6	345,6	19,3	423,4	294,08	189,9
%	100,0	8,6	33,3	60,6	34,9	9,4	77,0	16,3	100,0	5,6	100,0	69,46	44,9
Crimean, thousand ha	150,8	41,2	76,8	32,9	0,4	0,0	93,5	0,3	-[2]	-	-	-	-

[2] Included in the southern Federal district

%	100,0	27,3	50,9	21,8	0,3	0,0	62,0	0,2	-	-	-	-	-
Russian Federation, thousand ha	20654,9	1918,1	8912,3	9843,5	8690,8	464,8	11416,9	1085,9	18597,8	1076,0	18800,2	10507,00	1539,3
%	100,0	9,3	43,1	47,6	42,1	2,3	55,3	5,3	100,0	5,8	100,0	55,89	8,2

Note. Calculated according to the Report on the state and use of agricultural land in the Russian Federation in 2014-2016

In practice, the task of involving unused land in the active economic turnover is complicated by the lack of relevant and reliable information about unused land in the structure of agricultural land, their location and boundaries, quality status, land owners.

Difficulties in the identification and accounting of unused land are largely related to the specifics of the unified state register of real estate, which provides for cadastral registration on the declarative principle that, like the presence of previously recorded land plots without defining boundaries, does not provide a complete picture of the location of land plots on agricultural land and their owners for subsequent analysis of their use (non-use).

Analysis of the causes of non-use of agricultural land, conducted in some regions of the country, shows the following:

- in the Saratov region 167 thousand hectares of arable land are not used due to lack of investors, 346.1 thousand hectares are not used for more than 3 years due to the possession of unscrupulous owners, 101.6 thousand hectares-have low fertility;

- in the Penza region-this is an unreasonable refusal of the owners of unused land to take measures to introduce them into agricultural turnover; lack of financial resources of agricultural producers associated with changes in their financial condition, the deterioration of macroeconomic conditions (increase in interest rates on loans, inflation, lower prices for the implementation of basic crops, the lack of a market, etc.);

- in the Crimea from 1,87 million hectares of agricultural land is not used 178 thousand hectares mainly due to lack of moisture.

Thus, our research has shown that the availability of unused land is due to a number of different economic, natural and social causes:

- lack of economic opportunities for involvement in active agricultural turnover of these lands, maintenance and restoration of their fertility;

- termination (bankruptcy) of a number of agricultural enterprises and transfer of land to the redistribution Fund;

- economic inexpediency of use of agricultural land due to existing territorial deficiencies of land tenure (interleave, remoteness, interspersing, wedging in).

- natural and anthropogenic processes of land degradation, the development of negative processes leading to a decrease in land fertility and the impossibility of using them for their intended purpose;

- the expediency of using the lands left out of circulation as elements of the ecological-landscape system, which allow protecting adjacent lands from negative processes and improving the quality of the soil;

- the presence of a significant number of unclaimed land shares;

- allocation of land shares with subsequent misuse, the practice of transfer of land shares in the short-term lease, not stimulating the tenant to take measures to maintain soil fertility;

- inappropriate use of agricultural land associated with their litter, pollution, violation of security and environmental regulations, leading to land degradation and other negative processes;

- migration of the rural population, leading to an increase in abandoned rural settlements and overgrowing of land with trees and shrubs;

- concentration of production due to intensification of technologies and natural disposal of unproductive land;

- the lack of legal registration of ownership, the uncertainty of the location of the boundaries of agricultural land.

To engage in the turnover of unused land requires a serious infusion of capital investors. The cost of measures to introduce land plots in the country is different and depends on the natural and economic conditions of the regions. Since January 1, 2018, when calculating the cost of works on cultural reclamation necessary to bring the agricultural land plot into a state suitable for agriculture, the average values of the cost of works adjusted to the forecast of deflator indices and producer price indices provided for construction contained in the forecast of socio-economic development of the Russian Federation for the, developed according to the Federal law of June 28, 2014 N 172-FZ "on strategic planning in the Russian Federation" (Assembly of the legislation of the Russian Federation, 2014, N 26, Art. 3378; 2016, N 26, Art. 3879, N 27, Art. 4210) (table 3).

Table 3 - Average cost of works on cultural melioration in Federal districts of the Russian Federation (thousand rubles for 1 hectare)

Name of the Federal District	Clearing of woody and grassy vegetation	Clearing of bumps, stumps and moss	Clearing of stones and other objects	Primary tillage
Northwestern FD	22,86	4,34	1,74	36,52
Central FD	22,86	4,34	1,74	36,52
Volga FD	20,86	3,96	1,59	33,31
North Caucasus FD	19,54	3,71	1,49	31,21
Southern FD	20,51	3,9	1,56	32,76
Ural FD	22,05	4,19	1,68	35,21
Siberian FD	19,91	3,78	1,52	31,81
Far Eastern FD	22,45	4,26	1,71	35,87

As can be seen from the table, the cost of 1 hectare varies depending on the type of work. Studies show that in the subjects of the cost of these works on average from 14 thousand. RUB. per 1 ha (Saratov region) to 31 thousand. RUB. per 1 ha (Yaroslavl region). If we assume that basically there is a need to

clear agricultural land from woody and grassy vegetation, then the cost of involving unused agricultural land in the country will be 677136.6 thousand rubles, including arable land-412964.7 thousand rubles.

The initial stage of establishing the possibility of involvement in the turnover of unused land is the need for their classification: by land, forms of ownership, quality status, reasons for non-use (figure 4).

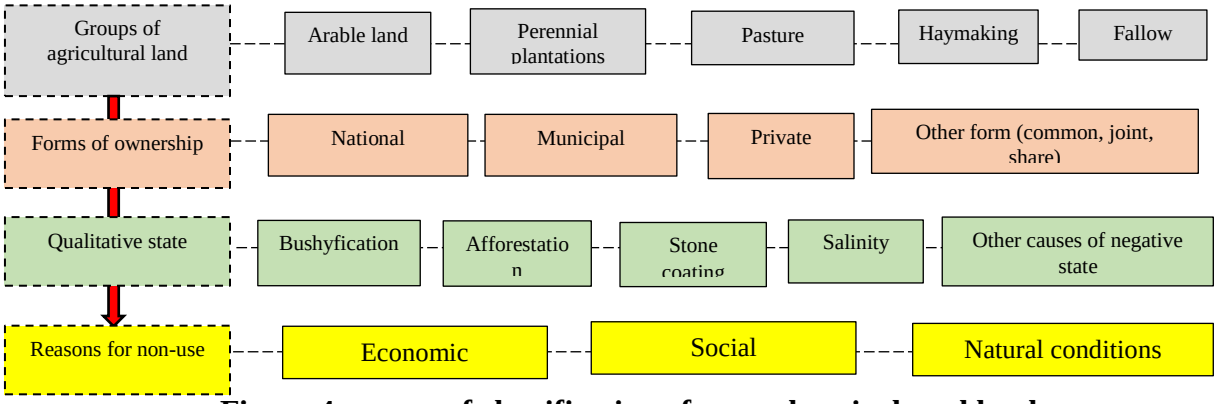

Figure 4-system of classification of unused agricultural land

Many regions of the Russian Federation have prepared road maps for the introduction of unused agricultural land (arable land) for the period 2016-2020, which include the following activities:

- conducting an inventory of agricultural land with the determination of the location and area of arable land suitable for involvement in the turnover;

- formation of a spatial database on the availability of unused agricultural land;

- establishment of qualitative characteristics of land plots not used in agricultural production, analysis of their suitability for different types of agricultural land;

- completion of measures for registration of unclaimed land shares, transfer them to municipal ownership for introduction into agricultural turnover;

- implementation of cadastral works on the formation of land plots at the expense of unclaimed land shares and ensuring state registration of municipal property rights to the formed land plots;

- seizure of unused or improperly used land plots on agricultural land and their sale to effective owners;

- development of proposals for the creation and investment of projects in the field of agro-industrial complex on free lands, the establishment of measures to stimulate the involvement in agricultural turnover of unused agricultural land for agricultural production, including the provision of subsidies for land surveying and cadastral work in the registration of ownership of land, as well as subsidies for unrelated support in the field of crop production;

- analysis of the efficiency of agricultural land use, which are put into circulation.

Rational and effective implementation of measures to involve unused land in the turnover is possible only on the basis of land management measures. The algorithm of land management support of involvement in agricultural turnover of unused land can be divided into three stages. The first stage is the need to identify unused, irrationally used, used for non-purpose agricultural land, carried out in the process of land inventory.

At the second stage, taking into account the data of the land inventory, an assessment of their quality should be carried out, in the process of which a comprehensive characteristic of the land is determined by the level of their fertility and productive capacity on the basis of standard characteristics of the land on separate grounds: granulometric composition, development of erosion, salinization, excessive moisture, stony, etc.

The third stage includes a set of land management works, consisting of the development of schemes of land management of the territory of the subjects of the Russian Federation, municipalities, projects of on-farm land management of agricultural organizations, working projects, where in detail from general to specific are considered the program issues of involvement in the turnover of unused land, estimate and financial calculations of these activities, the organization of their further rational use and protection.

The presented system of land management measures will most effectively ensure the involvement in the turnover of unused agricultural land.

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About the authors:

Sergey Nikolayevich Volkov, Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Economics, the Rector of the State University of Land Use Planning (15, Kazakova Street, Moscow, 105064, Russia)

Elena Vyacheslavovna Cherkashina, Doctor of Economics, the Vice Rector for Economic and Financial Affairs of the State University of Land Use Planning (15, Kazakova Street, Moscow, 105064, Russia)