PROBLEMS AND CONDITIONS OF IRRIGATION IN THE SOUTH OF UKRAINE DURING THE WAR
(ПРОБЛЕМИ ТА УМОВИ ЗРОШЕННЯ НА ПІВДНІ УКРАЇНИ ПІД ЧАС ВІЙНИ)

В статті наведена проблема контролю над водними ресурсами на півдні України, яка зумовлена повномасштабним вторгненням Російської Федерації, що призвело до економічних та соціальних проблем у регіоні

Ключові слова: зрошування, зниження врожайнісі культур, крапельне зрошування

The article presents the problem of control over water resources in the south of Ukraine, which is due to the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation, which has led to economic and social problems in the region

Key words: irrigation, reduction in crop yields, drip irrigation

The war in Ukraine, which began in 2014, has had a significant impact on many aspects of life in the country, including agriculture. The southern regions of Ukraine, which are traditionally known for their fertile soil and abundant crops, have been particularly affected by the conflict. After the Russian invasion in 2022, farmers in the occupied territories continued to struggle to grow crops and earn a living.

Russian-backed separatist forces have seized much of the farmland, making it difficult for local farmers to access their pastures, grow crops and livestock. In addition, many farmers who are able to continue working on the land have limited access to markets and sales of their produce. One area of concern has been irrigation, as the war has disrupted the supply of water to these regions. In this article, we will explore the challenges of irrigation in the south of Ukraine during the war and the efforts being made to address these challenges.

The southern regions of Ukraine, including the regions of Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, and Donetsk, are among the most productive agricultural areas in the country. These regions are characterized by a favorable climate, fertile soil, and a long tradition of agriculture. However, the...
ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine has disrupted the supply of water to these regions, making it difficult for farmers to irrigate their crops.

The main source of water for irrigation in the south of Ukraine is the Dnieper River, which flows through the region. However, the war has led to the destruction of infrastructure, including dams and pumping stations, that are needed to divert water from the river to the fields. In addition, the conflict has made it difficult to maintain and repair this infrastructure, as the areas where the infrastructure is located are often the sites of fighting. The lack of water for irrigation has had a significant impact on agriculture in the southern regions of Ukraine.

According to a report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the drought caused by the war has resulted in a 30 percent reduction in crop yields in some areas. This has led to food shortages and higher prices for food, as well as a loss of income for farmers. Efforts are being made to address the challenges of irrigation in the south of Ukraine during the war. One approach is to promote the use of more efficient irrigation techniques, such as drip irrigation, which use less water than traditional methods. The FAO is working with local farmers to introduce these techniques and provide training on how to use them effectively.

Another approach is to repair and rebuild the infrastructure that is needed for irrigation. The irrigation system that currently exists in Ukraine was built in Soviet times. Most of the networks are in need of repair or are generally in a state of disrepair. Since 1991, funds for the expansion and modernization of this infrastructure have not been allocated, their technical condition has deteriorated at the inter-farm level, and intra-farm networks, which once belonged to state farms and collective farms, were partially transferred to newly formed agricultural enterprises.

The Ukrainian steppe is gradually turning into a desert. Crops in this zone are decreasing. Over the past thirty years, the average yield of grain and grain-legume crops in the Ukrainian steppe — despite the emergence of new, more productive varieties and hybrids — has remained at the level of 1990. The Ukrainian government has allocated funds for the repair of irrigation infrastructure in the southern regions, and international organizations such as the European Union are providing support for these efforts. However, the conflict continues to pose challenges to these efforts, as the areas where the infrastructure is located are often the sites of fighting. In conclusion, irrigation in the south of Ukraine has been severely affected by the war, leading to a reduction in crop yields and food shortages. However, efforts are being made to address these challenges, including the promotion of more efficient irrigation techniques and the repair of infrastructure. These efforts will be crucial in ensuring that the southern regions of Ukraine can continue to be productive agricultural areas and provide food for the country.

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