

## LIVESTOCK FEED ISSUES IN THE UZBEK SSR IN THE 1950S–1960S

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**Annotation:** *This article examines the evolution of livestock feed provision in the Uzbek SSR during the 1950s–1960s, a period marked by intensive agricultural reforms and the expansion of animal husbandry. Based on archival records, statistical reports, and contemporary scientific literature, the study analyzes the structural limitations of feed production, the impact of cotton monoculture on forage resources, and the challenges of balancing pasture utilization with increasing livestock numbers. Special attention is given to the development of feed-crop cultivation, efforts to mechanize fodder harvesting, and the introduction of new agro-technical methods aimed at improving feed productivity. The article also explores government decisions, institutional reforms, and scientific debates that shaped feed policy in the republic. The findings reveal that despite certain advancements, chronic shortages of high-quality fodder persisted, limiting the efficiency of livestock farming and influencing broader socio-economic outcomes in the Uzbek SSR.*

**Keywords:** *Uzbek SSR; livestock feed; forage production; agricultural policy; feed resources; cotton monoculture; pasture management; livestock sector; 1950s–1960s; Soviet agriculture.*

As a result of the campaign to expand cotton cultivation in the Uzbek SSR, the livestock sector began to lag behind. This is confirmed by Resolution No. 492 of the Council of Ministers of the USSR dated 4 February 1949, “On Measures for the Development of Cotton Growing in Collective and State Farms.” According to this resolution, beginning in 1949 the obligation to deliver wool from cotton-planted lands was abolished [1].

The resolution of the USSR Council of Ministers of 4 February 1949 aimed to prioritize cotton cultivation in Uzbekistan—a process that had begun in the 1920s–1930s and intensified during the 1940s. As part of the broader strategy to restore the Soviet economy after the Second World War, Central Asia, particularly Uzbekistan, was viewed as a crucial raw-material base for cotton production. As a result of this policy, cotton growing expanded rapidly, while livestock breeding was relegated to a secondary position.

With the continuous increase in cotton-planted areas, the forage base necessary for livestock declined. Until 1949, collective farms cultivating cotton were required to produce livestock products, including wool. The abolition of this obligation began to have a negative impact on the livestock sector.

Economically, the essence of the resolution lies in the fact that the USSR regarded cotton production as a strategic resource. Uzbekistan, being one of the main cotton-producing regions, was turned into a key supplier of raw materials for the Union-wide industrial sector. Compared to cotton, the economic value of livestock breeding was rated lower, resulting in reduced state support for the sector.

The shortage of land and resources for livestock development intensified economic imbalance. The reduction of pastures led to a decline in the productivity of livestock, which

in turn caused a decrease in the production of meat, milk, and wool. Thus, while the resolution yielded short-term profits through cotton exports, it created long-term disruptions in the agricultural sector.

From a logical standpoint, the resolution aimed to increase cotton production to meet industrial needs, since Soviet agricultural policy prioritized high-revenue sectors. However, prioritizing one sector at the expense of another inevitably undermines long-term economic stability. The decline in livestock products caused food supply problems for the population. Within the Soviet planned-economy system, these issues were not resolved promptly, and beginning in the 1950s–1960s, measures were undertaken to restore livestock farming[2].

In summary, this resolution strengthened Uzbekistan's role in the USSR economy as a cotton-producing region, but it also disrupted the intersectoral balance of the agricultural economy. Although cotton brought short-term profit, the supply of food and light-industry products weakened, creating difficulties for the regional economy. This situation demonstrated that the extreme prioritization of one agricultural branch can damage other sectors and lead to long-term economic imbalance.

On 14 February 1949, Resolution No. 202 of the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek SSR established the required quantities of raw hides that collective farms, state farms, and private households were obliged to deliver to the state. These raw hides included large and medium cattle hides, as well as sheep and goat skins. This resolution was also an important element of the Soviet system of obligatory agricultural procurement. It regulated the volumes of raw hides—one of the main livestock products—that farms were required to deliver. The obligation to supply large and medium-sized cattle hides, as well as sheep and goat skins, was imposed on collective farms, state farms, and individual households[3].

In the post-Second World War years, the USSR was rebuilding its industrial capacity, and securing raw materials for the light industry, military needs, and mass consumer goods was of critical importance. The tanning industry in particular was vital both for military equipment (boots, uniforms, technical materials) and for civilian production.

The Uzbek SSR, being one of the major agricultural suppliers, had to provide not only cotton but also livestock products, including raw hides. Resolution No. 202 served this purpose by imposing clear obligations on all categories of farms and households.

The adoption of this resolution was also related to the difficult situation in the livestock sector in the late 1940s. By 1949, although the number of livestock had begun to recover after wartime losses, the sector was still far from fully restored. Despite this, under the centrally planned economy, the compulsory delivery of livestock products to the state continued.

The Soviet economy was based on centralized planning, and procurement targets were set for all sectors. Raw hides were collected in state-determined quantities and delivered to light-industry factories. These hides were not sold freely on the market but were purchased by the state at fixed prices. This restricted the economic freedom of livestock owners and reduced their incentives to expand production.

On 28 January 1949, the USSR Council of Ministers approved the 1949 meat procurement plan through Resolution No. 317. Subsequently, on 14 February 1949, the

Council of Ministers of the Uzbek SSR issued Resolution No. 203, establishing the republic's meat procurement plan for 1949[3]. According to the resolution, state farms, auxiliary farms of state and cooperative institutions, and private household farms that previously had no such obligations were required to supply fixed quantities of meat beginning in 1949: 12 kilograms from each head of cattle, 5 kilograms from each sheep, and 25 kilograms from each pig.

In the late 1940s, the Soviet Union was undergoing economic recovery after the war. During the war, the livestock population had sharply declined, leading to severe food shortages. By 1949, the government began implementing strict planned economic measures to rebuild agriculture and industry. Although the Uzbek SSR was not a highly developed livestock region, the central Soviet government demanded maximum output of food and raw materials from every region. As a result, even farms that had never previously been subject to such obligations were required to deliver meat to the state [4].

This resolution demonstrates that in the Soviet Union, economic planning took precedence over the needs of the population, with strategic state interests given priority. Economically, the resolution was part of efforts to further centralize and strictly control the livestock sector. The requirement for auxiliary and private farms to deliver meat to the state did not encourage the increase of livestock numbers; rather, it pushed farms to reduce the number of animals, since compulsory procurement undermined private profit and provided no economic incentive.

As the costs of raising cattle and sheep increased, the state continued to procure meat at low fixed prices, causing shortages in livestock products intended for household consumption. This resolution once again highlighted the weaknesses of the rigid Soviet planning model, where the suppression of market principles created long-term structural problems. Consequently, in subsequent years, the USSR had to implement new reforms to restore the livestock sector.

To regulate the procurement of pigs delivered in place of other livestock, the equivalents established by the Order No. 7 of the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek SSR dated 3 January 1949 were extended to all state farms, and to auxiliary and suburban farms of state and cooperative enterprises.

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