

STATEMENT

from

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vanya Atanasova Boycheva (Birdanova), MD, PhD
Department of Hygiene, Medical Ecology, Occupational Diseases and Disaster Medicine, Faculty
of Public Health, Medical University-Pleven

REGARDING: dissertation thesis for awarding of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" to Dr. Rozalina Stefanova Braykova, MD full-time doctoral student in the Department of Hygiene and Epidemiology, Faculty of Public Health, Medical University - Varna

1. Overview of the procedure

By Order № P-109-110/07.02.2023 of the Rector of the Medical University-Varna I was elected as an external member of the Scientific Jury in connection with a dissertation on the topic: "Control of trade in organically produced agricultural products and food in North-Eastern Bulgaria" for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education 7. "Health and Sports", Professional field 7.1 "Medicine", doctoral program "Hygiene" (incl. Labor, communal, school, radiation, etc.) with author Dr. Rozalina Stefanova Braikova, MD. The Research Supervisor of the dissertation thesis is Prof. Darina Naydenova, MD, PhD.

The doctoral student has submitted all the necessary documents in accordance with the requirements of the Law for the development of the academic staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of MU-Varna.

2. Professional development of the candidate

D-r Rozalina Stefanova Braykova, MD was born on December 15, 1961 in the town of Dobrich. She graduated in 1986 at the Medical University of Varna; Saint Petersburg State Medical Academy. From 1986 to 2019, she worked in the system of state health control and official food control. Since April 2019 and currently she is an assistant at the Department of Hygiene and Epidemiology, MU-Varna. She has a diploma in medical specialty "Nutrition and Dietetics" (2003) and certificate of completed medical training in "Health Management" (2010). D-r Braykova speaks Russian and English.

3. Structure of the dissertation thesis

The present work is current, both from a scientific and a practical point of view. The topic of the dissertation is dedicated to a modern problem of public health, related to the current official control in the trade of Bulgarian organically produced agricultural products and food and the specific factors that determine the profile of the biological user. Trade in safe and high-quality biologically produced agricultural products and foods guarantees the protection of the health and interests of consumers, but also contributes to the protection of the natural environment and the preservation of natural resources.

The dissertation is presented on 251 standard pages and has the qualities of a completely executed scientific product. The dissertation is illustrated with 113 figures, 33 tables and 9 appendices, which greatly help the visibility of the obtained results, and most of the tables and figures also have significant informational value. The bibliographic reference includes 368 titles, of which 334 are in Latin and 34 in Cyrillic. The presentation is clear, the structure of the dissertation is properly constructed, the individual sections are well balanced.

The literature review occupies 38 pages, covers all aspects of the given topic and logically brings out the argumentation for conducting the scientific study. The presented data regarding the organic production and consumption of organic food in the review are problematically structured and supported by a large number of literary sources, which shows the doctoral student's good awareness of the scientific discussion on the topic in modern literature.

The purpose of the dissertation is clearly defined: to investigate and analyze the activity of official control in the trade of biologically produced agricultural products and foods in the Dobrich region and the Varna region, as well as to study the awareness of consumers, traders and producers about organic food. The 6 tasks set are well-formulated and completely sufficient to achieve the goal of the research.

The study is complex in terms of the studied object and subject:

A) A found of the results of the official control of the trade in biologically produced agricultural products and food in the Dobrich region and the Varna region for the period 2014-2019 – regulatory documents, procedures and conducted inspections of organic food in commercial establishments.

B) Survey among 220 persons (20 producers, 50 traders and 150 consumers) on issues related to biologically produced agricultural products and food in the Dobrich region for the period 2020-2021.

Documentary, sociological and statistical methods were used to achieve the set tasks. The survey among producers, traders and consumers regarding biologically produced foods was carried out by means of an adapted, developed and applied structured questionnaire (Vitosha Research, 2009; MUTLU, 2007; Melovic et al., 2020). The results are objective and reliable; their discussion is competent and thorough. The results of the study are presented in 5 separate chapters and logically lead to 14 main conclusions, which I accept. They fully meet the objectives and emphasize the main achievements of the dissertation.

4. Contributions of the dissertation thesis

The contributions of the dissertation are well formulated and are the result of the research. Dr. Braykova presented and argued 6 contributions with theoretical-cognitive character, 6 contributions with original character and 4 contributions of applied nature. An in-depth analysis of the results of the official control on the territory of the Dobrich and Varna regions in relation to the use of terms and designations of organic food, as well as the normative documents regulating this activity, was carried out. It was established regularities when outlining the biological profile of users of organic foods in the context of attitudes, frequency, motives, stimulating factors and barriers related to their consumption. One of the contributions of a scientific-applied nature is particularly valuable due to the possibility that the results of this study give to enrich the profile of the organic consumer, to increase trust in organic production and improve communication with institutions related to organic production.

5. Publications related to the dissertation thesis

Dr. Braikova has presented 3 scientific publications and 3 participations in prestigious national forums. All materials are related to the dissertation thesis.

6. The author's abstract

The presented author's abstract fully meets the requirements and accurately summarizes the scientific research carried out by Dr. Braykova.

In conclusion, the dissertation of Dr. Rozalina Stefanova Braykova, presented to me for opinion, contains scientific and scientific-applied results that make a contribution to science and fully meet the requirements for the award of educational and scientific degree "DOCTOR".

On this basis, I vote "yes" and invite the members of the esteemed Scientific Jury to vote positively for the awarding the educational and scientific degree "DOCTOR" in doctoral program "Hygiene" of Dr. Rozalina Stefanova Braykova.

With respect:



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vanya Boycheva (Birdanova), PhD

20.02.2023