



International Journal of Economic Research

ISSN : 0972-9380

available at <http://www.serialsjournal.com>

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Volume 14 • Number 7 • 2017

Competitive Growth of Irrigation Farming

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ABSTRACT

The article presents some issues on competitive growth in the agricultural sector in southern Kazakhstan taking into account the peculiarities of irrigation farming.

The goal of the research: to develop and to form the economic rationale for the ways of competitive growth of agricultural organizations, products and the sector in the context of irrigation farming.

The research includes a systematic analysis of ideal form of operation of the agricultural sector in the region. At that, the author applied well-known methods of new comparative advantages, Porter diamond, etc.

The research and analysis results involve the scientific justification of: efficiency of measures aimed at improving the competitiveness of production, products and the sector under internal and external economic challenges; efficiency of establishment of the cotton-textile cluster on the basis of the special economic zone (SEZ) Ontustik resulting in an increase in the internal cotton market potential, the share of the light industry in the GDP, the consumption of domestic cotton products per capita. The organization of a chain of primary and advanced cotton processing and generation of significant income from end product sales is discussed in the paper.

Conclusion. The work defines the opportunities for domestic cotton market growth by developing the domestic light industry in the region; justifies the efficiency of establishing the cotton-textile cluster on the basis of the regional “industrial zone” and obtaining the significant added value due to the advanced raw materials processing; develops the opportunities for implementing innovations: textile, weaving and sewing advanced technologies; underlines import substitution growth by manufacturing domestic products.

The novelty of the research is the scientific substantiation and elaboration of recommendations on the establishment of the cotton-textile cluster in combination with advanced cotton processing and implementation of innovations in the chain cotton fiber-end product, as well as the specialization and classification of production aiming at increased profitability and competitiveness of goods and the sector in the context of southern Kazakhstan.

Keywords: Competition, competitiveness, diversification, primary and advanced processing, cotton fiber, process chain, added value, ready-made clothing.

1. INTRODUCTION

Agribusiness development is associated with the diversification and implementation of innovations into production, processing of agricultural raw materials, manufacturing of domestic consumer goods.

In the historical message “Kazakhstani Way-2050: Common Objective, Common Interest, Common Future” the head of the state set up a clear task to transfer the agribusiness to innovation-based development, implementation of scientific achievements and technical progress, thus, raising labor productivity, efficiency and competitiveness of production.

An increase in demand for light and textile industry goods is observed in the global economy yearly. The task is to develop the agribusiness based on high technology and modernization of the agricultural production and processing structure (Nazarbayev 2014; Programma RK “Agrobiznes – 2020”). Thus, competitiveness and diversification play a critical role. Value of these problems grows due to globalization of the world economy and multifaceted integration of Kazakhstan by European, Asian and other countries.

The main categories of the market economy are as follows: supply and demand, price and competition. Large scale integration of the Kazakhstani economy – the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) – raises the competition and the urgency of production and sector competitiveness.

In this regard, famous world scientists have developed the theory of competitiveness and arrived at different scientific conclusions. One of the fathers of the modern economic theory Smith underlined the role of “an invisible hand” in a competitive environment, that is, the role of individual and collective enterprises, which develop their business for the purpose of profit and at the same time create public and use value, therefore, taking an active part in the national economic growth (Smith 1980).

Ricardo, a father of the theory of “comparative advantage”, at choosing optimum production resources offered to consider them in “static” position. The core principle of the theory is to enlarge volumes and to improve the quality of resources, as well as to find the ways for effective use and management of resources that is not always easy.

That’s why, the author of the theory of “persistent” and “nonpersistent” competitive advantages Baumol offers to direct a part of the total revenue allocated for the national economic development to sectors with high probability of “persistent” competitive advantages, which is more profitable as compared to undeveloped countries. These sectors are based on the achievements of scientific and technical progress, high intellectual and professional level of the staff, the technological progress, and the advanced information technology – a knowledge intensive industry, which achieved competitive advantages with a high “persistent” potential.

Western economists advocating this theory proposed the concept of “dynamic comparative advantage”. Based on this concept, the state is to support this economic policy strongly in order to achieve “new comparative advantages”. The state can raise its social level for the long run by targeted control and support of highly-profitable industries having competitive advantage. The implementation of this policy in the USA, Germany and other developed countries resulted in a high industry growth rate and formation of industries with high external competitiveness. Similar technologies are introduced into Asian countries, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, etc., thus, reaching high macroeconomic performance (Ricardo 1821).

Bunich, the researcher of the problem of “Innovation Management in International Business”, concludes that Southeast Asian nations, having no high potential progress in science and technology with limited fuel and raw materials resources and service sector, concentrated their resources on the purchase of high technologies and scientific innovations even before moving towards market relations. Purchased “novelties” were improved and they achieved competitive advantages by introduction into production. While defining the modern factors of national competitiveness, it should be noted that in spite of advantageous geographical location, available natural resources and acceptable price of labor and resources, the most significant are the following factors: efficiency of labor and quality of life, application of advanced technologies, formation of the competitive environment and elaboration of the competitive growth strategy and its implementation (Bunich 2003).

It is well-known that the ratio of production costs per a cumulative unit of labor to capital is the main factor of macroeconomic competitiveness. Besides, the following factors are of great importance as well: investments in new technologies and innovations, levels of scientific research and professional education. The last factor is an important innovative component of competitiveness.

In this regard, a French scientist Crozier emphasized that the implementation of innovations and achievements are the needs of the time: “modern competition, first of all, is to focus efforts on resource and tangible assets ownership and improvement of ability to implement new technologies” (Crozier, n. d).

The theory of competitive advantage was thoroughly studied under the leadership of Michael Porter, the professor of Harvard University. According to this theory, any equally developed country will have special cumulative advantages relevant to this country. They are: performance level, high quality labor forces, quality of production and services, managerial skills, etc.

In the Porter’s theory, “national diamond” plays a critical role. It includes four determinants of the country. They create a competitive environment for local companies. The professional level of the country and the region is directly influenced by: labor, natural resources, capital and infrastructure (Porter 1990).

There are two types of production factors: inherited (natural resources, low level labor) and newly-established.

In many sectors, production factors are of great importance in competitive advantage. Particularly, in high-performance sectors of developed countries these are not “old inherited” factors, but “newly-established” ones including education and experience of population, perfect infrastructure and capital.

The competitiveness of the country depends directly on high quality institutional arrangements focused on new production factors. Also, competitive advantages are influenced by the relations with proper consumers.

Advanced, closely related and support industries impact the company competitive growth.

The other components of the diamond, such as company strategy, structure and competitiveness, are also of great concern. These components are important for local companies, because they influence the introduction of innovations and effective rendering of services. Keen competition in local markets is not restricted to an increase in competitive advantages, but it makes grounds for entering the international market and future development. Local companies gain experience while competing in the local market, they confirm their viability and enter into successful competition abroad (Porter 2002).

In the agricultural sector, agricultural organizations, companies and highly competitive industries are production units having advantages in the region. This is the target to hit. Under market relations, the agricultural sector of the country, irrigation farming inclusive, is to create economic environment and relations to enter into the world market. It requires some advantages and demand for ecologically clean production (cotton).

According to Raizberg et al., competition is a contest between manufacturers, and, if in general, between any economic market subject in the society (Reizberg, Lozovskiy & Ratnovskiy 1997).

In Kazakhstan, large institutions of higher education, research organizations and institutes conduct theoretical and applied research with regard to competition and competitiveness.

The Economic Research Institute under the direction of Sabden conducted comprehensive research of problems of competitiveness and arrived at scientific summaries and conclusions.

As per Sabden and Turgunbayev, under modern globalization and integration of economies the key problem of the Kazakhstani economy is the competitiveness and competitive growth of industries and the whole country (Sabden & Turgunbayev 2007).

Rigid requirements of international competition set forth new conditions of energy saving and efficiency. In competition, they are to become core instruments.

Competition as a market method of economic management and its success forms the basis for competitiveness and is a real factor of effective activity.

Competitive relations take part in market adjustment on macro-, micro- and meso-levels of economy. On the micro-level, it is an effective use of labor, material and financial resources and the lowest production and service costs. Competitive growth and efficiency improvement are assessed now by the availability of the following components: capacity for innovations, scientific research, opportunity to offer new goods to the market, product upgrading.

Prominent agricultural economic scientists of Kazakhstan Espolov, Belgibaev and Suleymenov underline in their research that competition is a market mechanism operating to maximize the profit. It makes the grounds to enlarge production volumes.

Competition mainly serves to define a degree of economic regulation, that is: price, profit and growth rate.

Based on the research, we think that in a competitive environment manufacturers will aim at production of goods according to solvent consumers' demands. With this view, resources are to be allocated and used properly resulting in high efficiency and profitability of production (Espolov, Belgibaev & Suleymenov 2005).

Economic literature defines competition and competitiveness in different ways, and all definitions have comparative meanings. The reason is that goods in all markets cannot be competitive, that's why it is necessary to study the domestic and foreign markets separately.

Most of authors offer to study competitiveness on three levels based on:

1. Types of goods, production and enterprise.
2. Sector, corporate association of enterprises and horizontally integrated companies.
3. Integrated intersectoral complexes of economy.

In order to study the nature of competitiveness it is necessary to analyze the activity of companies and their production-economic links. Thus, such notion as a value chain is introduced, which covers the process from the supplier and the production to the consumer.

A value chain: raw materials supplier – production plant (enterprise, company) – sales – consumer services.

A value chain of one company will have competitive advantage as compared to the other one. A value chain includes: value of production and services, and profit. Each activity involves: purchased resources, human resources, technology and information.

2. METHODS

Scientific methodology of the research: summary of abstract theorems of prominent foreign and local scientists in competitive growth, and design-and-calculation method. The methodology provides for:

1. Rational organization of innovative production: combination of sectors, advanced processing in order to increase added value;
2. Specialization and division of public labor in order to increase product competitiveness and profitability.

Theoretical significance – elaboration of supplements to the economic basis of competitiveness and diversification taking into account peculiarities of irrigation farming. Applied significance – modernization of advanced cotton processing by organizing the cluster in order to increase profitability of the sector, introduction of resource-saving technologies.

Competitiveness is evaluated by the method of comparative advantage, that is, by the comparison of productive-economic, financial and sectoral indicies, which are to have advantages over the same indicies of foreign structures or sectors.

According to Porter, competitive advantages are made by cumulative results of some activity components, such as: process design, production marketing, product sales and promotion and other services. Each above-mentioned activity independently creates grounds for differentiation with regard to costs and competitiveness.

Russian economic scientist Fatkhutdinov offers to apply two complementary methods to evaluate competitiveness in the countries with market economies:

1. First, the application of the index method for the evaluation of competitive growth. The authors of this method are Jeffrey D. Sachs, Andrew Warner and John McArthur (Fatkhutdinov 2005);
2. Second, the method for the evaluation of micro-economic competitiveness with the following indicators: market structure, improving population welfare, and economic policy, the key concept of which is to increase the economic efficiency of resource utilization. Porter is the author of this method.

The above-mentioned indices characterize the situation formed: one of them is an income per capita, the other one is a fluctuation of this income and its growth. As far as the theory of income growth is concerned, income and capital dimension per capita, which have direct influence on development of scientific and technical progress and increase in productivity per a capital unit, are of interest.

According to the method of Fatkhutdinov, competitiveness can be determined by “statistics”, that is, this index is calculated using the share of goods sold. This method can be used by introduction of a competitiveness adjustment factor on the internal and external market. At the same time, we think that it is necessary to introduce the other factors, which determine the level of demand as compared to new samples, market condition. After the evaluation of competitiveness some adjustments are made resulting in a specific rate of competitiveness.

3. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

We have studied and analyzed the problems of competitiveness of a cotton sub-complex in the chain: production, primary and advanced processing, ready-made clothing, sales. Based on the results, we have defined the mechanisms ensuring the links between economic efficiency and competitive relations, viability under severe market relations.

The authors think that competitive products can be manufactured only by competitive enterprises. That’s why the settlement of a problem of competitive growth of agricultural structures-manufacturers of agricultural raw materials is of prime importance.

For this purpose, it is recommended to update the organizational and legal status of agricultural structures in the sector:

1. Cooperation of agricultural organizations on a voluntary basis, that is, the optimization of production factors and their correlation;
2. Complex diversification, development of support industries and advanced processing by the establishment of the textile-cotton cluster in the region in order to get added value;
3. Implementation of advanced, low-cost innovative technologies in the production and processing chain.

An increase in labor productivity, product upgrading, implementation of new resource-saving technologies, improvement of standardization and grading, introduction of advanced information technology are to be top targets of processing plants in the agricultural sector. To our opinion, the term “competitiveness” is to be supplemented with the following factors: the efficiency of the company strategy, and the level of meeting demands for new products.

So, by our definition competitiveness is a mechanism that adjusts the viability of manufacturers and their products, market expansion, meeting consumers’ demands and relations in production development.

The cotton-textile cluster in the region conditions and develops the internal cotton market and is the main line and object of sectoral competitive growth.

Competitiveness and economic efficiency are interrelated categories, that’s why it is important to study the theory and the methodology of improving efficiency.

As far as we know, the main target of the economic science is to study ways of achieving maximum value of public consumption within a definite period of time.

The American economist Gregory Mankiw concluded that normally in order to assess that the economy works in the right direction it is necessary to make maximum use of available limited resources and to achieve final results as high as possible.

According to the conclusion above, the production possibility frontier is determined and it is to be equal to the high production level; in order to increase production above this level, it is necessary to attract equivalent costs due to reduction in the other production.

In order to diversify the national economy it is reasonable to establish clusters in the agricultural and other sectors.

Cluster is an agglomeration of manufacturers, suppliers of raw materials and services, research institutions and state bodies. It also shows a level of specialization of the region and administrative territories (Serikov 2012).

Economic advantages of cluster development:

1. Improved productivity of a company or a sector:
 - Competition provides opportunities for intracluster specialization.
 - Opportunities of volume economy are fully used (joint purchase of raw materials, joint marketing research and rendering of services).
 - High technologies, permanent supplying partners, highly-qualified specialists and staff, information, business services are involved.
 - Infrastructure of professional, financial and logistical services is upgraded.
2. Opportunity for innovative development and diversification of production:
 - Innovative potential forms channels for effective utilization of new resources.
 - Program and areas of implementation of new technologies are forecasted and determined.
 - Favourable environment for diversification of production and new professions are created under conditions of advanced processing of raw materials.
 - Favourable conditions to share risks between companies in the technological chains of the cluster are created.
3. Increased attraction to organize new small and medium businesses, preferences, implementation of innovations and possibility to develop available clusters:
 - It creates a possibility for best practices, extension of intracluster links, implementation of new technologies, as well as influences the effective use of state support.
 - It creates the environment for private low-competitive companies to participate in large business by means of generalization and implementation of accumulated experience.
 - Proper information channels are created in the cluster internal structure.
 - The cluster brain trust is organized enabling to improve business potential, to strengthen social and other links.

In the south of the country, the cotton-textile cluster is a group of companies operating on the basis of one raw material (cotton fiber), having productive-economic interrelations at product transformation (technological chain: cotton fiber – ready-made clothes and sales).

In the region, they have primary raw cotton processing facilities; advanced processing plants; yarn, textile and clothing plants. The advantages are as follows: proximity to raw materials and energy sources, low transportation costs, labor surplus. The special economic zone (SEZ) Ontustik covering the area of 200 ha is organized in the South Kazakhstan Region. There was adopted a government program on the establishment of the cluster system on this territory: 15 cotton advanced processing plants, 3500-4000 new working places. Investments amounted to KZT 820 mln (Fatkhutdinov 2005).

Such plants as Kazakh-Russian Alliance, Melange and Ak zhip were commissioned in 2008-2009. And in 2010, new plants appeared: Oxy Textile, LLP Khlopkoprom-tsellyuloza and JSC Utex-KZ. In 2009-2013, the budget investments amounting to KZT 7886 mln. were allocated for development of the infrastructure on this territory.

Table 10.1 shows added value estimates in the technological chain advanced cotton processing – ready-made clothes.

Table 10.1
Added value estimates in the cotton-textile cluster (average 2011-2013)

<i>Production in the technological chain</i>	<i>Volume, t</i>	<i>Price, t/thous.tenge</i>	<i>Added value, times</i>
Raw cotton, <i>t</i>	330.0	70.0	–
Fiber, <i>t</i>	100.0	177.5	1.15
Seeds, <i>t</i>	181.0	50.0	–
Yarn, <i>t</i>	90.0	346.9	1.95
Cotton cloth, thous. <i>m²</i>	600.0	1042.5	5.87
Ready-made products, thous. <i>pcs</i>	170.0	1409.0	7.93

Figure 10.1 shows added value growth in times. If at primary raw cotton processing this figure equals to 1.15, at the end of the technological chain the end-product price growth is 7.93 times.

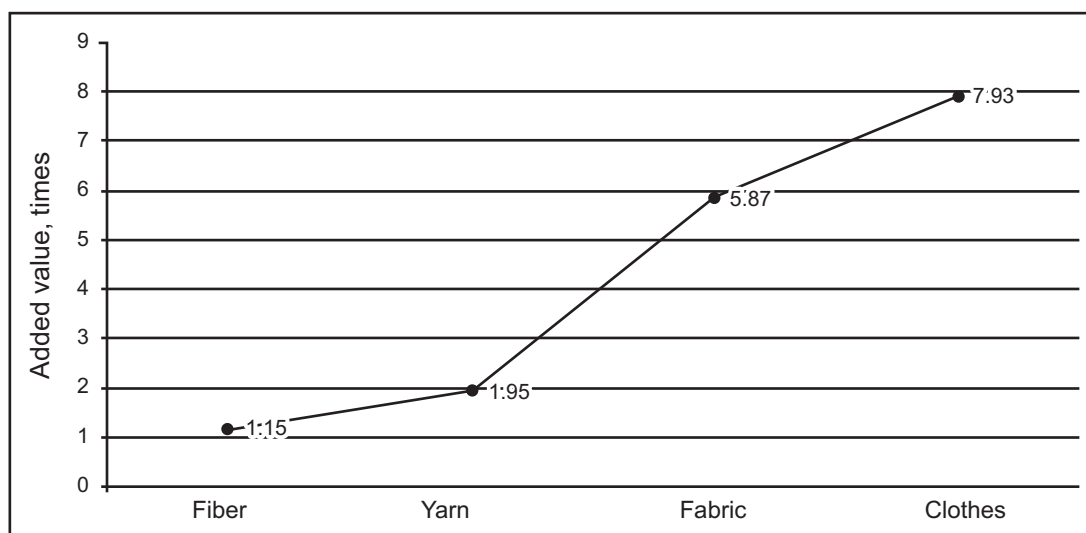


Figure 10.1: Upward dynamics of added value

At that, three tons of raw cotton result in one ton of fiber, that is, their ratio is 3:1. For simplicity, we took the initial value of 330 t raw cotton resulting in 100 t fiber (33% output), 181 t seeds (55% output). Then, we determined market costs and current sale prices, as well as added value rates for the goods produced in the advanced processing chain: fiber, yarn, fabric and ready-made clothes. 3.5 m² of fabric is used to produce one piece of ready-made clothes, the weight of which is 500 g; the price of one product amounts to USD 5.60 or KZT 1080.

The main target of the cotton-textile cluster is to saturate the internal market with ready-made products and cotton goods, and, thereby, to meet the requirements of consumers. Thus, it is necessary to solve the problem of competitive growth of manufactured goods and products, to extend integration ties and to improve state control in the sector.

The experience of developed countries, where they grow and process cotton, shows that it is possible to extend the advanced processing chain and to increase the sectoral GDP rate in the national economy by implementing innovations. According to the Association of Light Industry Enterprises of Kazakhstan, the share of the textile industry in GDP in Germany, France, the USA amounts to 8-9%, in Turkey and China – 12%. In India, this figure amounts to 14% and makes one fifth of the national state budget, 75-80% of the market are commoditized with domestic products (Serikov 2003).

In the country, clusters promote economic growth and increase in the GDP share, full utilization of technological capabilities. Clusters impact national competitiveness in the process of economic integration with different unions and organizations. The right way is to execute the Industrial-Innovative Program 2015-2019. The state developed direct and indirect methods supporting goods manufacturers and processors.

Raw materials quality, new technologies, professional labor and companies initiating integration play a key role in sectoral competitive growth and in production of goods complying with international quality standards. Also, these are the main parameters: export potential, quantity demanded in the global, territorial and local markets (Strategy of Industrial and Innovative Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan 2010-2014, 2015-2019).

Companies involved in the cluster group have high economic efficiency, labor productivity and competitiveness as compared to independent ones. In this regard, the experience of foreign countries is of great value. While evaluating activity and economic efficiency, a group unit integrated into the cluster, and not an independent company or organization, is to be assumed as a basis.

4. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The research report was presented and discussed at the University department and research council meetings with participation of scientists from the Research Institute and specialists of agricultural bodies of the region. There were some remarks on the summary of the results. The main provisions of the article were approved and recommended for publication, and introduction into production.

The key notes of the article were reported at two international research and practice conferences held at the Kazakh National Agrarian University and the South Kazakhstan State University, at round tables and seminars with participation of scientists, specialists and businessmen of the agricultural sector in Shymkent.

Based on the discussion results, we have elaborated recommendations for practical application and implementation into production.

5. CONCLUSION

The research and the analysis of competitive growth and diversification of irrigation farming sectors under the global economic integration showed that the goal was set correctly, the problem was scientifically validated and optimal solution to the problem was found timely. It enables to draw a scientific conclusion and to develop relevant recommendations:

1. Guided by the core provisions of practical and theoretical developments of prominent foreign and domestic scientists in terms of the theory of competitiveness, the research tried to supplement these provisions with regard to peculiarities of the regional economy and natural environment of southern Kazakhstan. The results obtained are recommended to be applied and to ensure viability of manufacturers and their products.

The authors have also determined economic mechanisms increasing competitiveness and diversification, which adjust the following market relations at developing small and medium business in the region:

- Increase in demand, sale price diversifying the textile industry structure by means of advanced raw material processing.
 - Production of a wide range of new goods with added value.
 - Regulation of prices among competitive goods and services in a competitive environment of manufacturers and consumers.
2. It is recommended to intensify state control and support of organizations in the special economic zone for the cotton-textile cluster, to extend the chain from advanced processing to ready-made clothes and to establish joint ventures integrated with foreign innovative complexes. It enables to:
 - Increase added value 7.9 times.
 - Create 3.5-4 thousand new working places.
 - Develop and improve infrastructure, socio-economic level of population and the whole region.
 - Increase the export potential of the sectors and to get currency earnings, to implement innovative technologies in textile, clothing production, etc.
 3. In order to achieve the goal and to get it to practical use in the region the authors have developed the criteria of complex competitive growth of production and goods:
 - Increase in demand and upgrading of products sold, reduction in prices and costs, national and international product certification.
 - Diversification of the processing structure in order to increase unit profitability, rational use of technological equipment and other resources.

Thus, research of some issues on competitiveness and diversification of regional manufacturers is scientifically validated, results are generalized and recommendations and offers on primary and advanced processing of agricultural raw materials on the cluster basis are elaborated.

4. The Department of Economics and Law has intentions to continue the scientific research of this problem according to the following priorities:
- We think that it is necessary to implement the system of indicators and production evaluation standards particularly in the clusters organized in the regional economic sectors. These indicators are to show introduced production facilities, gross value added, GDP share, etc.
 - Adjustment of relations between the participants in the cotton-textile cluster, promotion of their mutual interests, that is, coordination of private and corporate targets, determination of production, resource, price and other relations, their parameters and conclusion of contracts, and ways of introduction of the following mechanisms:
 - a) Standards on exchange and allocation of resources and earnings.
 - b) Prices for goods used in intracuster production and for the end-product.
 - c) Profitability rates of each cycle in the technological chain.
 - d) Order of establishing the leasing foundation center.
 - e) Material incentives, upgrading of the products (intermediate and end products).
 - f) Order and terms of mutual settlements between companies.
 - g) Relations with regard to distribution of earnings from sales on external markets and observance of alignment of interests of participants, and their adaptation to your work of all business partners.
 - h) Protection of interests of each participant increasing volumes of gross product and its competitiveness on the market
 - Scientific validation of economic mechanisms developing the fruit and vegetable cluster: primary and advanced processing, storage and sales of the green stuff, transport and logistic infrastructure. Supply of goods to EAEU markets requires a comprehensive study of experience of foreign countries and clusters existing within the country.

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