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COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Specialized Section on Standardization of
Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

Fiftieth session, 10-14 May 2004, Geneva

Item 2 of the Provisional Agenda

MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING SINCE THE FORTY-NINTH SESSION

Note by the secretariat

This document sums up the relevant outcome of the seventh session of the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development and the fifty-ninth session of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards.

1. SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

The following excerpt is taken from the report of the Committee (ECE/TRADE/306, paragraphs 33 to 40):

Item 8 – Agricultural quality standards

Documentation:

TRADE/2003/6	Recent developments under the Working Party on Perishable Produce and Quality Development (WP.7)
TRADE/WP.7/2002/9	Report of the 58 th session of the Working Party Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7)

33. In the absence of the Chairman of the Working Party, Mr. David Priester (United States), who could not attend the session, the Secretary of the Working Party presented documents TRADE/WP.7/2002/9 and TRADE/2003/6, in which the Working Party asked the Committee to approve the decision to change its name from “Working Party on Perishable Produce and Quality Development” to “Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards”.

34. At the last Committee session, some delegations had raised the issue of cooperation with the OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables and the secretariat was pleased to report that this cooperation continued to function very well. He assured the Committee that within the existing resources of both the UNECE and the OECD, everything was being done to ensure a speedy completion of the standards and their explanatory brochures. Further ideas for closer cooperation would be discussed between the secretariats and in the relevant Specialized Sections in the near future.

35. He said that the secretariat was currently more involved in capacity-building work, such as training courses. Upcoming activities in this area included the organization of two events in Moscow, co-organized with the Russian Federation (one on implementation of the UNECE bovine standard and one on the draft UNECE standard for chicken meat), from 22-26 September 2003. A request had also been received from Lithuania for a training course on implementation of the UNECE bovine standard. Cooperation had also been initiated with the other United Nations regional commissions and EAN International, as well as with the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC).

36. The delegation of the European Community noted what had been said by the secretariat regarding cooperation with the OECD. Both the delegations of the European Community and the Russian Federation stressed the importance of this work and called for resources in this work area to be increased

37. The Chairman noted that the Bureau of the Committee was open to discussing well-documented requests for additional resources in order to determine what follow-up, if any, could be undertaken.

Further information about the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards can be found on the Internet at: <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm>

Decisions taken

38. The Committee endorsed the report (TRADE/WP.7/2002/9) of the fifty-eighth session of the Working Party on Perishable Produce and Quality Development.

39. The Committee noted document TRADE/2003/6 for information.

40. The Committee approved the change of name from the “Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development” to the “Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards”.

2. FIFTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE WORKING PARTY

The following excerpt is taken from the report of the Working Party (TRADE/WP.7/2003/6, paragraphs 46 – 69):

Item 3: Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

Document: *TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/26 (Report of the 49th session)*

46. The Chairman of the Specialized Section, Mr. David Holliday (United Kingdom), introduced the report of the 49th session held in Geneva from 17 to 20 June 2003 (see: TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/26), which had been attended by 34 delegations.

47. He indicated that at the session a representative of the World Health Organization had informed delegations on emerging disease patterns showing an alarming increase of diseases caused by unbalanced nutrition (e.g. cardiovascular diseases, diabetes) in all parts of the world, leading to a “double burden” in some countries where parts of the population suffer from malnutrition and others from unbalanced nutrition and lack of exercise. According to the findings of WHO, an appropriate consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables (400 grammes per day) is one of the key factors in avoiding nutrition-based diseases.

Items 3(a) Decisions concerning texts recommended for adoption as revised or new UNECE standards

48. **Apples:** The text contained in document TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/26/Add.1 was adopted as a revised UNECE Standard and will be published on the homepage of the UNECE at: http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/fresh/fresh_e.htm

49. The request for the addition of new apple varieties received from Turkey was referred to the Specialized Section.

50. **Artichokes, Onions, Peaches and Nectarines and Pears:** The amendments contained in TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/26/Add.3 concerning these products were adopted. The revised standards will be published in Addendum 1 (Artichokes) and Addendum 2 (Peaches and Nectarines) (see TRADE/WP.7/2003/6/Add. 1 and 2).

51. The revised UNECE Standard for Onions and Pears will be updated on the homepage of the UNECE.

52. **Courgettes:** The text contained in document TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/26/Add.4 was adopted as

a revised UNECE Standard and will be published on the UNECE homepage.

53. **Kiwifruit:** The secretariat informed the Working Party that some members of the Working Group on Kiwifruit (European Union, France, Greece; New Zealand, Spain, Switzerland, UNECE secretariat) had met in Paris after the OECD Plenary meeting and found a consensus on open questions concerning maturity requirements and sizing. The Working Group proposes to withdraw document TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/26/Add.5 and adopt a more complete revision of the standards next year.

54. The Working Party agreed to the proposal of the working group.

55. **Avocados:** The text contained in document TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/26/Add.6, based on the recommendation in force and including new amendments concerning Antillean varieties was adopted as a revised UNECE Standard and will be published on the UNECE homepage.

56. The delegation of the United States entered a reservation concerning Antillean varieties of avocados into the standard. They consider that these varieties are substantially different from other avocados and should thus not be included in the standard.

57. **Citrus Fruit:** The text contained in document TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/26/Add.8, based on the recommendation in force and including new amendments to align with the draft Codex standard, was adopted as a revised UNECE Standard and will be published on the UNECE homepage.

58. In C. Uniformity in the line for Satsumas, clementines, other mandarin varieties and their hybrids, the entry "1 – 4" was replaced with "1-xxx – 4".

59. **Table Grapes:** The delegation of Greece pointed out the differences in the maturity requirements in the UNECE standard with the draft Codex text. Other delegations said that the text was a compromise which was probably not perfect but a good start.

60. The delegation of Hungary mentioned some corrections to the list of varieties and will make further proposals for addition of varieties at the next session.

61. The existing recommendation as contained in document TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.9 was adopted as a revised UNECE Standard with some additions to the list of varieties. The standard will be published on the UNECE homepage.

62. **Pineapples:** The existing recommendation as contained in document TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.12 was adopted as a new UNECE Standard with some editorial amendments and will be published in Addendum 4 to this report (TRADE/WP.7/2003/6/Add.3).

Item 3(b) Decisions concerning texts recommended for adoption as UNECE Recommendations

63. **Apples:** The text contained in Part 2 of document TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/26/Add.1 including new provisions for minimum sizes and size tolerances was adopted as a UNECE Recommendation for a two-year trial period and will be published on the UNECE homepage.

64. **Citrus Fruit:** The text contained in Part 2 of document TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/26/Add.8 including new provisions for maturity requirements for green skinned oranges was adopted as a UNECE Recommendation for a one-year trial period and will be published on the UNECE homepage.

65. The Working Party asked the Specialized Section to take into account the changes made at the Codex Committee for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables when reviewing this text at its next session.

66. The delegation of the Netherlands said that in principle they were not in favour of making reference to

the growing area but that they could accept the text for a one-year trial period.

67. **Plums:** The trial period for the UNECE Recommendation for Plums was extended for one further year to allow correct classification/ naming of the interspecific hybrid varieties.

Item 3 (c) Proposal to create new UNECE Standards for Truffles and Ceps

68. The proposal to develop new UNECE Standards for Truffles and Ceps was adopted.

Item 3 (d): Revision to the standard layout

69. The revision to the standard layout contained in document TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/26/Add.3 was adopted. The text of the standard layout will be updated on the UNECE homepage at: <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/info/layout/layout.htm>