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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND  
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Working Party on Standardization of  
Perishable Produce and Quality Development

Specialized Section on Coordination of  
Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables  
Forty-eighth session, Geneva, 23 to 26 April 2002

REPORT ON ITS FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

**Executive Summary**

The meeting was attended by 30 national delegations and several organizations.

The new UNECE Standard for Apples and the new UNECE Standard for Pears and their respective lists of varieties were agreed and forwarded to the Working Party for adoption. Further work will be done on maturity requirements and minimum sizes for apples sized by weight.

The new UNECE Recommendation for pineapples was agreed and forwarded to the Working Party for adoption for a one-year trial period.

Revisions to the following standards were agreed: Annonas, Citrus Fruit, Leeks, Melons, Plums (addition of the Lithuanian varieties only), Strawberries, Table Grapes.

It was agreed to revise the recommendations for Avocados, Plums, Table Grapes (late harvest grapes) and propose the extension of the trial period for one further year.

A research report on the relationship of sensory acceptance of citrus fruit and objective maturity indicators was presented by Spain and is reproduced in TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.4.

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**Executive Summary (cont'd)**

Work on maturity indicators for Kiwifruit will continue. The revision of the standard was postponed to the next session.

The working group on Peaches and Nectarines will continue to work on maturity requirements for these products and other issues.

The new working group on shallots will try to find a consensus for a definition of produce.

The Specialized Section requested the Secretariat to prepare amendments to the standard layout to include the text on trade marks. Proposals to amend all standards which contain lists of varieties according to this new text will be presented to the Working Party.

The Specialized Section proposes to the Working Party to discuss the revision of the Working Procedures at its next session on the basis of a draft from the secretariat.

The revision of the working procedures and numbering system for UNECE standards will be further discussed in the Working Party on the basis of proposals from the Secretariat.

Many delegations attended the second meeting of the working group on harmonized produce coding where the terms of reference for the group were defined.

Delegations were informed on the outcome of the Seminar on Safe and High Quality Food for International Trade which was co-organized by EAN, UNECE and UN/ESCAP in New Delhi.

### **Opening of the session**

1. The meeting was held in Geneva from 23 to 26 April 2002. It was chaired by Mr. David Priester (United States). The session was opened by the chief of the Trade Policy and Governmental Cooperation Branch of the UNECE Trade Division, Ms. Virginia Cram-Martos who welcomed the delegations to Geneva.
2. She explained that in an internal restructuring of the Trade Division it had been decided to unite all intergovernmental bodies in one branch to create synergies and new possibilities for cooperation.
3. She said she was happy to see such a large number of delegations including some participating for the first time. It was UNECE's goal to encourage a broad participation from both importing and exporting countries because only that led to widely accepted and used standards for international trade.
4. She said that many standards were on the agenda of the meeting and expressed the hope that progress could be made on the revision to the UNECE Standards for Kiwifruit, Apples and Pears and the new UNECE Standard for pineapples. She appreciated that the group had decided to discuss maturity requirements and inner quality more extensively.
5. In her opinion it was important to come to a decision on how to reference trade marks in UNECE standards which was an important topic for the trade. She said finally that it was good to see that the group had started work on codifying the standards for use in electronic systems which could also lead to closer cooperation with UN/CEFACT in this area.

### **Participation**

6. The session was attended by delegations of the following countries: Austria; Belgium; Bulgaria, Canada; Chile<sup>1</sup>; Côte d'Ivoire<sup>1</sup>; Cyprus; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Ireland; Italy; Lithuania; Morocco; Netherlands; New Zealand<sup>1</sup>; Poland; Slovakia; South Africa<sup>1</sup>; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and United States of America.
7. The European Community was also represented.
8. At the invitation of the secretariat, a representative of the OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables participated in the session.
9. Representatives of the following non-governmental organization participated in the session: CLAM (Comité de Liaison de l'Agrumiculture Méditerranéenne); COLEACP (Comité de Liaison - Europe - Afrique - Caraïbes - Pacifique - pour la promotion des fruits tropicaux, légumes de contre-saison, fleurs, plantes ornementales et épices); and EAN International.

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<sup>1</sup> Participating under Article 11 of the Commission's terms of reference. This Article regulates participation of non-UNECE member States and is mentioned here for administrative reasons only. According to the working procedures of WP.7 and its specialized sections any Member State of the United Nations can participate in their work with the same rights as UNECE member States.

### **Adoption of the agenda**

Documents: TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/1

10. The provisional agenda as contained in TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/1 was adopted with the following changes:

11. The following documents were deleted from the agenda:

- TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/3
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/7
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/12
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/14
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/15

12. The following documents were added to the agenda:

- INF.1 Italy Redesigning the supply chain
- INF.2 Secretariat Working procedures
- INF.3 South Africa Table Grapes, list of late harvest varieties
- INF.4 Germany Table grapes, sizing, English and French
- INF.5 Germany Apples and Pears, list of varieties
- INF.6 Canada Comments on coding
- INF.7 Canada, CPMA Comments on coding
- INF.8 Secretariat Information on the Asian Seminar concerning Safe and High Quality Food for International Markets
- INF.9 COLEACP Pineapples - Draft standard
- INF.10 Secretariat Table grapes - trade marks
- INF.11 France Shallots
- INF.12 European Community Apples, Citrus, English and French
- INF.13 Spain Annonas
- INF.14 France Trademarks
- INF.15 Netherlands Comments on shallots (see INF.11)
- INF.16 South Africa Table grapes - Maturity requirements
- INF.17 New Zealand Kiwifruit - result of the working group
- INF.18 South Africa Pineapples with the stem
- INF.19 Germany Table Grapes
- INF.20 New Zealand Draft UNECE Standard for Apples
- INF.21 COLEACP Pineapples
- INF.22 European Community Table grapes
- INF.23 France Shallots
- INF.24 Lithuania Plums
- INF.25 New Zealand Pears
- INF.26 Italy Coding of produce

13. Following a request from France it was agreed to add an item, 3(k), concerning shallots.

### **Item 2 Matters of interest arising since the forty-seventh session**

14. Delegations took note of document TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/2 summing up the relevant outcome of the fifth session of the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development and the fifty-seventh session of

the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development. The secretariat mentioned that several topics contained in the report of the Working Party would be discussed under various items of the agenda.

### **Item 3 Proposals to revise UNECE standards**

#### **Item 3 (a) Annonas**

*Background Document:* TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2001/3 (Spain)

Document for this session: INF.13

15. A proposal for the revision of this standard was prepared by Spain for the last session. The proposal was welcomed in principle by the Specialized Section because it consisted of a simplification of the standard.

16. It was decided to agree document TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2001/3 as modified by INF.13 (Spain) in which the delegation of Spain addressed the comments made at the last session of the Specialized Section with the following additional changes/variations:

- Footnote 1 under Definition of produce was deleted as the text clearly states what is included.
- There were some consequential amendments owing to the introduction of a new Class II.
- The text for Extra Class and Class I was aligned with the standard layout.
- The heading to the sizing tables were named: “weight per fruit in grammes” and “max variation in the package” for Cherimoyas etc.
- In VI D. number of fruit was put in a separate indent.

17. The complete text of the revision will be reproduced in addendum 1 to this report (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.1) and will be proposed to the Working Party for adoption as a revised UNECE Standard.

#### **Item 3 (b) Apples and Pears**

##### **List of varieties for Apples**

*Standard in force:* TRADE/WP.7/2000/11/Add.1

Documents for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/4 (Lithuania) - proposal for list of varieties  
INF.5 (Germany) - consolidated list of varieties

18. The delegation of Germany introduced the updated list of varieties into which the proposal from Lithuania had already been integrated. Mutants that conform to higher colour criteria than the original variety had been included following the variety. The amendments decided by the Working Party concerning trade marks had not yet been included in the document.

19. A number of amendments were mentioned to the list.

20. It was clarified that the mutants had not been included in alphabetical order following requests from several countries in previous years.

21. The delegation of Belgium said that as there was no indication given in the list which of the mutants had the status of varieties, it was not clear, especially to the inspector, what could be marked to fulfil the requirements of the standard.

22. Several other delegations were of the opinion that the solution proposed by Germany was practical and the list was very helpful in practice. They did not see any problems for quality inspection as the inspector would look in the list, find the appropriate name and check if the requirements were fulfilled.

23. It was decided to agree the list and to recommend to the Working Party to adopt it and annex it to the new UNECE Standard for Apples. The list and the standard are reproduced in addendum 2 to this report (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.2).

### **Proposed separate UNECE Standards for Apples and Pears**

*Background documents:* TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2001/19/Add.1 (New Zealand)

TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2001/19/Add.2 (New Zealand)

Document for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/5 (Chile)

TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/6 (New Zealand)

TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/18 (European Community)

INF.12 (European Community)

INF.20 (New Zealand)

#### *Apples*

24. The delegation of New Zealand introduced INF.20 which represents the results reached at several working group sessions. The main novelty is the introduction of weight sizing into the standard.

25. The working group did not find a consensus on how to lay down the minimum size for apples expressed in weight. In the proposal the minimum size for all apples is still given as minimum diameter. Several delegations are of the opinion that the minimum weight proposed in 19/Add.1 is not sufficient to exclude immature apples from the market and that objective maturity requirements (e.g. brix value) were needed.

26. The delegations of New Zealand, South Africa and Chile entered a reservation to the fact that the minimum size in diameter has been maintained without any alternative minimum size in weight. They ask for further work to allow for inclusion of separate minimum requirements for weight sizing.

27. The delegation of Slovakia informed the meeting that its country had adopted the same minimum size as the European Community and should therefore be added to footnote 3 concerning these higher values.

28. The Specialized Section commended the working group on the excellent work done and decided to recommend to the Working Party to adopt the text as a new UNECE Standard for Apples. The text is reproduced in addendum 2 to this report together with the list of varieties previously agreed (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.2).

#### *Pears*

Document for this session: INF.25 (New Zealand)

INF.5 (Germany)

29. INF.25 contains the results of the working group meetings which met during the week.

30. The delegation of Germany introduced a number of changes that had been made to the list of varieties for pears (e.g. deletion of the colour group). It said that the proposal from Lithuania concerning addition of varieties was already contained in INF.5.

31. The Specialized Section agreed the documents and commended New Zealand and Germany for the excellent work done. The text of the standard and the annex are reproduced in addendum 3 to this report (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.3) and will be forwarded to the Working Party for adoption as a new UNECE Standard.

#### *Publication issues*

32. The secretariat will include in the publication history of both new standards that originally there was a combined UNECE Standard for Apples and Pears. The new UNECE Standard for Apples will be numbered FFV-50 and the new UNECE Standard for Pears FFV-51. Consequently the existing combined standard FFV-01 will be deleted from the list of standards.

#### **Item 3 (c) Avocados**

*Recommendation in trial period: TRADE/WP.7/2001/9/Add.6*

33. The recommendation will finish its trial period in November 2002. At the last session maturity requirements had been included for the remaining time of the trial period.

34. The delegation of the United Kingdom said that the experiences with the recommendation had been positive. Traders had enquired if it was possible to reduce the minimum weight for the Hass variety even further.

35. It was decided to amend the recommendation as follows:

- To exclude antillian varieties from the scope of the standard because they are inherently different (this had already been commented by COLEACP at the last session).
- To include requirements for the maturity of the fruit which are at present in the minimum requirements in the section "Maturity" and consequently to delete the text currently in that section.
- Reduce the minimum weight for the Hass variety to 80 grammes and increase the maximum difference between the smallest and the largest fruit within a package to 25 grammes for size "S".
- To align the layout of the provisions concerning sizing with the standard layout.

36. It was decided to propose to the Working Party to extend the trial period for the amended recommendation for one further year.

37. The revised recommendation is contained in addendum 4 to this report (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.4).

#### **Item 3 (d) Citrus Fruit**

*Standard in force:* TRADE/WP.7/2000/11/Add.3 + Corr.1

Documents for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/8 (South Africa)  
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/19 (European Community)  
INF.12 (European Community)

#### *Sizing*

38. The proposal to use "1" alternatively to "1-x" for soft citrus (2002/8 and 2002/19) was adopted.

39. The proposal by the European Community to allow sizing by count and consequential amendments (2002/19 and INF.12) were adopted.

*Consumer packages*

40. The proposal to allow mixed packing of different species (2002/19) was adopted with the clarification that additionally to the marking of the species contained, all other marking requirements that exist for the individual species, have to be observed.

41. Several delegations stressed that different varieties of the same species should NOT be allowed in mixed packages as this might confuse the consumer.

42. The delegations of Belgium and South Africa said that it might be useful to have a list of varieties in the standard.

43. Other delegations said that the standard should be kept as simple as possible. They felt that because there were not many distinctions made in the standard according to the variety there was no need for such a list which would be difficult to establish and to update.

44. The group decided not to work on a list of varieties.

*Marking of preserving agents*

45. The delegation of the European Community had proposed (in 2002/19) an addition to the text in VI D. to clarify that the present requirement to mention preserving agents refers only to post-harvest treatments.

46. Following a question from New Zealand it was clarified that the term "Where appropriate..." was synonymous with "If used..." in this context.

47. The group discussed whether a provision such as this was appropriate in the standard. Some delegations felt that this was a food safety issue which should not be dealt with by the group. Others thought that this was an important information for consumers in case they intended to use the peel of the citrus.

48. There was no consensus on this matter. The delegation of the European Community withdrew its proposal and the text remains unchanged.

*Proposal to the Working Party*

49. The revised text of the standard is contained in addendum 5 to this report (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.5) and will be forwarded to the Working Party for adoption as a revised UNECE standard.

*Research on maturity requirements*

50. The delegation of Spain reported on a research project on sensory acceptance for citrus fruit which aims at establishing a relationship between taste and objective parameters for determining quality. The report of the results can be found in addendum 6 (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.6).

51. The Specialized Section thanked the delegation for this useful information and encouraged Spain to continue the work and, if possible, to prepare a proposal for amendments to the standard for the next session.

**Item 3 (e) Kiwifruit**

Document for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/9 (New Zealand)  
INF.17 (New Zealand)



52. The delegation of New Zealand presented the documents. The main changes to the existing text have been made in the maturity requirements and the inclusion of ratios of min/max diameters in the classification sections.

53. They said that extensive testing on maturity requirements had been done in the last three years. The result was that for the variety Hayward and mutants a brix value of 6.2% did not predict an acceptable eating quality whereas a dry matter content at harvest of 15.5% did. For the variety Hort 16A, the flesh colour as hue angle estimated from a reading by a chronometer was considered a reliable maturity indicator.

54. Several delegations welcomed the introduction of reliable maturity requirements but were concerned with the fact that contrary to the brix which can be tested easily and cheaply, testing for dry matter content or colour required expensive equipment. They said that it was no use to include requirements that were too complicated and would thus not be used.

55. The delegation of France was not in favour of including dry matter content. It said that there was no consensus on this in IKO and there were variations in the dry matter content from one year to the next, in different growing regions as well as within the same orchard.

56. The delegation of New Zealand addressed these issues:

- New equipment for the non-destructive testing of dry matter content was available for relatively low prices now (1500USD) and they were expected to become even cheaper in future.
- The colour might be measured using a colour chart which would be available together with the OECD explanatory brochure.
- There are variations in the dry matter content but the value of 15.5 %, proposed for the standard was not difficult to reach and was still a reliable parameter.

57. It was decided to wait until the next session with the amendment to the standard. Meanwhile France and New Zealand should make their data on research on dry matter content available to all delegations. The delegation of New Zealand will prepare a new proposal for the next session taking into account all comments made.

### **Item 3 (f) Leeks and Melons**

Document for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/10 (European Community)

58. The delegation of the European Community proposes for leeks to allow in class I and II a slight damage/damage caused by thrips. Thrips is a pest that does not affect the taste of the product but only the exterior aspect and is difficult to control. In a second amendment it proposes to allow a tolerance of tender flowering stem for early leeks which is a product traded only in a small volume.

59. The proposal was accepted and will be forwarded to the Working Party for adoption as a revised UNECE Standard for Leeks.

60. For melons it was proposed to simplify the provisions of Class I concerning the peduncle.

61. The proposal was accepted as modified by South Africa and will be forwarded to the Working Party for adoption as a revised UNECE Standard for Melons.

62. The amendments to the UNECE Standards for Leeks and Melons are reproduced in addendum 7 to this report (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.7). They will be forwarded to the Working Party for adoption as revised UNECE Standards.

**Item 3 (g) Peaches and Nectarines**

63. The delegation of France reported that no progress had been made in the working group and proposed to discontinue it.

64. The delegation of the European Community stressed that it was very interested in the topics and would cooperate with the working group.

65. The Specialized Section felt that the topics to be discussed by the group were important and the group should make an effort to make progress in the year to come.

66. It was decided that the working group (Chile, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden and European Community) would work on the following items:

- size "D"
- maturity indicators
- information from the United Kingdom on the use of the brix level
- concept of "well matured fruit" (Chile)
- proposal from the Ukraine (TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2000/14).

**Item 3 (h) Plums**

*Recommendation in trial period:*       TRADE/WP.7/2000/11/Add.16  
  INF.24 (Lithuania)

67. The recommendation will finish its trial period in November 2002. New interspecific hybrid varieties had been included in the standard under their trade mark names.

68. The delegation of the United Kingdom informed that it had received a letter from the American company Sun World indicating that "Black Diamond" is a trade mark name of the variety "Suplumeleven".

69. It was decided to add the text decided by the Working Party to the list of varieties and to make reference to "Black Diamond" only in a footnote with a text as proposed by the secretariat in INF.10.

70. The second problem concerns the hybrid varieties mentioned on the last page of the standard. For the individual varieties as well as for the name of the hybrids only protected names are included in the recommendation at present. Thus the solution arrived at by the Working Party is not applicable at the present time.

71. It was confirmed by several delegations that even though the trade volume for these hybrids was not high, they should remain in the standard as they had plum characteristics and were not easily distinguished from plums by the consumer.

72. It was decided that Chile would inform the Specialized Section at its next session of the correct varietal names for the hybrids.

73. The secretariat reported that the International Trademark Association had informed the secretariat that the protected names of the hybrids should only be used in singular to prevent them from becoming generic. The secretariat suggests to include that change in the standard. It was decided to amend the names appearing in the annex to read "Plumcot®", "Pluot®" and "Aprium®"

74. It was also decided that in the marking requirements under nature of produce the first indent should read:

- “Plums”, “Plumcot®”, “Pluot®” or “Aprium®” where the contents are not visible from the outside.’

75. It was agreed to recommend to the Working Party to extend the trial period for the amended recommendation for one further year.

76. It was agreed to include the varieties proposed by Lithuania (see INF.24) in the list of varieties of the standard without a trial period.

77. The amendments to the UNECE Standard/Recommendation for Plums are reproduced in addendum 7 to this report (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.7) They will be forwarded to the Working Party for adoption.

### **Item 3 (i) Strawberries**

*Background document:* TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2001/19/Add.3

Document for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/11 (European Community)

78. The delegation of the European Community reported that in discussions among the Member States it had been agreed that varieties that easily lose their calyx were not traded internationally and did not need to be addressed by the standard.

79. The amendments proposed by the European Community in 2002/11 were agreed with the clarification that the requirements for the small white patch were in relation to the “total surface area of the fruit”.

80. It was agreed to recommend to the Working Party to adopt the text contained in addendum 8 to this report (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.8) as a revised UNECE Standard. Comments concerning errors in the French translation of 2002/11 were handed to the secretariat.

81. The delegation of the European Community informed that Member States had begun research on acceptable brix levels to indicate maturity objectively. He said that it would be interesting to learn from other countries which brix levels were acceptable to them or if they preferred different objective maturity indicators for strawberries.

### **Item 3 (j) Table Grapes**

*Recommendation in trial period:* TRADE/WP.7/2001/9/Add.7

Documents for this session: INF.3 (South Africa)  
INF.4 (Germany)  
INF.16 (South Africa)  
INF.22 (European Community)

#### *Simplification of the annex*

82. The delegation of the European Community introduced its proposal (INF.22), aiming at simplifying the standard. In its view, only those varieties should be listed for which special provisions apply. The present list of varieties in the standard distinguishes small and large-berry varieties as well as open grown varieties and varieties grown under glass. Different minimum sizes apply to the different groups of varieties.

83. The sizing provisions of the standard contain the following sentence:

“Where the name of the variety on the marking does not appear on the list in the Annex hereto, the minimum weight for large-berry varieties is required.”

84. This means that for all varieties that are not mentioned in the list of small-berry varieties, the minimum weight for large-berry varieties applies. It was thus proposed to delete list II. (a) and to amend the heading of the table currently reading “large-berry varieties” to read “all varieties excluding small-berry varieties listed in the table”. Consequently, the phrase mentioned in para. 83 above has to be deleted.

85. This was agreed by the Specialized Section with the clarification that any varieties might be included again in the standard should this be necessary to indicate their specific maturity requirements.

86. Additionally it was stated that all varieties could be grown under glass and it was thus not necessary for quality control to list any varieties in list I of the annex. The marking “underglass” was sufficient. It was proposed to delete table I from the annex and to amend the heading of the first column in the table to read “table grapes grown under glass if indicated”.

87. This was also agreed by the Specialized Section. The title of the annex was amended to read “Exhaustive list of small-berry varieties”. Delegations were invited to communicate to the secretariat by 31 July 2002 any small-berry varieties missing from that list.

88. The delegation of France reserved its position on the deletion of the lists as they did not yet have the time to discuss the issue with their national experts.

*Question from Germany concerning minimum weight*

89. The delegation of Germany explained (see INF.4) that the present provisions for sizing contain a paragraph which allows to adjust the weight of certain consumer packages with one bunch not satisfying the required minimum weight. In the provisions concerning tolerances bunches not satisfying the size requirements may not weigh less than 75 g. The question is, does this requirement also apply to the bunches used for adjusting the weight?

90. The Specialized Section decided that there should be no minimum weight imposed for bunches used for adjusting the weight. The standard was amended as follows:

- The paragraph concerning consumer packages was deleted from the provisions concerning sizing.
- A new IV B. (iii) was added, reading:  
“For all classes: in each package for direct sale to the consumer not exceeding 1 kg net weight, one bunch weighing less than 75 g is allowed to adjust the weight, provided the bunch meets all other requirements of the specified class.”

*Maturity requirements*

91. The delegation of South Africa introduced INF.16 which it had prepared to collect data on acceptable brix levels for all varieties mentioned in the annex of the standard. Little information had been received from other delegations.

92. The Specialized Section welcomed the list. A number of modifications should be made to it, taking into account the changes made to the standard. It was decided that this work should continue and delegations were invited to provide their data to South Africa by 31 December 2002.

*Late harvest grapes*

93. The delegation of South Africa proposed to include three further varieties into the footnote concerning late harvest grapes.

94. Several delegations expressed concern that this was rather a marketing than a technical issue and might lead to unacceptable bunches being sold late to extend the season, especially for the variety "Red Globe".

95. It was decided to include the two other varieties (Bonheur and Sunred Seedless) proposed into the footnote on late harvest requirements.

#### *Sampling method*

96. The delegation of South Africa presented a sampling and testing method for determining maturity indicators for table grapes (INF.19).

97. Following a comment from Chile that the test method Chile used for the determination of the sugar/acid ratio was much more complicated than what was proposed in INF.19, the delegation of South Africa clarified that it had only wanted to give an indication of the principle of the determination.

98. The Specialized Section agreed the first part of INF.19 concerning sampling and brix value testing. According to the separation of work between UNECE and OECD, this document is forwarded to the OECD Scheme.

#### *Text to be proposed to the Working Party*

99. The Specialized Section agreed that:

- The existing standard should be amended as described in paras. 82 to 90 above (proposals INF.22 and INF.4 as amended). The text will be recommended to the Working Party for adoption as a revised UNECE standard (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.9)
- The existing recommendation should be amended as the standard above and additionally include the amendments to the footnote concerning late harvest varieties. It will be proposed to the Working Party to extend the trial period for this recommendation for one more year.(see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.9)

#### **Item 3 (k) Shallots**

Document for this session:      INF.11 (France)  
   INF.15 (Netherlands)

100. The delegation of France gave a presentation justifying the need for a standard for shallots. The main reason is that there is no internationally harmonized definition of shallots. The French law includes a standard for shallots which was developed to prevent products on the market which look like shallots but do not have their main characteristics.

101. According to the definition of the French experts, shallots have to be grown through vegetative multiplication or - if grown from seed - must retain the aptitude for vegetative multiplication as demonstrated by numerous auxiliary shoots, a scar at the root plate and an asymmetry in relation to the axis of the root plate and to the transverse cut of the bulb.

102. They said that if no standard was set, products resembling shallots, e.g. onions which have been sown densely, could not be prevented from being marketed as shallots.

103. The delegation of the Netherlands was concerned that the proposal by France would exclude seed shallots grown in their country which were marketed worldwide with success.

104. Several delegations mentioned that it was not clear to them if the difference between the seed shallots marketed by growers in the Netherlands and those marketed by growers in France due to growing conditions or genetic and what the noticeable differences to the consumers would be.

105. Concern was expressed over the reason for excluding a genetically identical product from the standard. The question what this product should be called was put forward.

106. It was decided to form a working group (France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom) which would work on a definition for shallots and report back to the next session. To assist this group all delegations were invited to provide their own definition for shallots to the delegation of France and the secretariat.

**Item 4 Proposal for a draft UNECE Standard for Pineapples**

*Background document:* TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/15/Add.2 (COLEACP)

Documents for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/13 (COLEACP)  
INF.9 (COLEACP)  
INF.18 (South Africa)  
INF.21 (COLEACP)

107. The delegation of COLEACP presented INF.22 containing the outcome of a meeting of the working group in which the original proposal 2002/13 had been modified. The document shows the existing Codex standard and the proposed UNECE Standard next to each other, indicating the differences.

108. According to the proposed UNECE standard pineapples are by default traded with the crown intact (which can be reduced through an ablation process before harvest or trimmed by cutting outer leaves of the crown). The complete removal of the crown is allowed as an option to be specified by the purchaser and to be marked explicitly. In the Codex standard both options are on an equal footing.

109. The draft UNECE standard contains optional provisions concerning classification by exterior colouring which are not contained in the Codex standard.

110. The draft UNECE standard contains additionally to the sizing method of the Codex standard an alternative method used in trade and based on count per box.

111. The delegation of Germany proposed instead of including any specific regional sizing method in the standard, to include only a minimum size and allowed variation in a package to guarantee uniformity.

112. A solution concerning the sizing issue was found in a working group and is included in the final text of the standard.

113. The delegation of South Africa presented a new method of marketing pineapples with the stem intact in order to increase the keeping quality so that transport by sea (3 weeks) is possible. It said that this method raised a number of phyto-sanitary concerns which are being discussed in the relevant groups.

114. The group had no objection to this method from the point of view of commercial quality and decided to include a footnote allowing this method in response to special market demand. Marking provisions will be included at a later stage.

115. The Specialized Section decided that the proposal had sufficiently advanced to be forwarded to the Working Party for adoption as a new UNECE Recommendation for a one-year trial period. The secretariat will align the text proposed by COLEACP (INF.21) to the UNECE standard layout and publish it as addendum 10 to this report (see TRADE/WP.7GE.1/2002/20/Add.10).

#### **Item 5 Issues concerning trade marks and names of varieties**

*Background document:* TRADE/WP.7/2001/9 (Secretariat)

TRADE/WP.7/2001/9/Add.13 (Secretariat)

Document for this session: INF.10 (Secretariat)

INF.14 (France)

116. The issue was discussed at length at the most recent sessions of the Specialized Section and the Working Party. Based on advice received from the office for Legal Affairs, the Working Party agreed on a solution for the mention of trade marks in UNECE Standards (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/2).

117. Since then a proposal for minor amendment of the text adopted at the Working Party was received from Sun World. The changes proposed were acceptable to the UN Office of Legal Affairs. The secretariat proposes therefore to include these amendments in INF.10.

118. Further changes from Sun World were received during this session. They will be discussed with the Office of Legal Affairs.

119. It was decided that:

- The secretariat will prepare for the Working Party a proposal to amend the standard layout to include provisions regarding lists of varieties and the mentioning of trade marks.
- The secretariat will prepare for the Working Party a proposal to amend all standards with lists of varieties which might contain trade marks to include the solution adopted by the Working Party in the appropriate form.

120. Marking requirements and trade marks, names of mutants and synonyms will be proposed for discussion at the next OECD Heads of Control services meeting.

121. The document from France (INF.14) will be reproduced in addendum 11 to this report.

#### **Item 6 Revision of the working procedures and the Geneva Protocol**

*Background document:* TRADE/WP.7/2001/6

TRADE/WP.7/2001/9 (Secretariat)

Document for this session: INF.2 (Revised Working Procedures)

122. The members of the working group will comment on INF.2 by 31 July 2002. The secretariat will prepare an official document for the Working Party on the basis of INF.2 and the comments received.

#### **Item 7 Revision of the Standard Layout**

*Background document:* TRADE/WP.7/2001/3

Document for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/16 (Secretariat)

123. At the last session of the Working Party the secretariat proposed changing the numbering system used in UNECE standards to a legal numbering system (e.g. 1, 1.2, 1.2.1) (see TRADE/WP.7/2001/3). The proposal

was welcomed and the Working Party asked the secretariat to prepare a comprehensive example based on a complicated standard.

124. The secretariat introduced document 2002/16 in which the system had been applied to the Citrus Fruit standard. He said that he had split the "Provisions concerning quality" into its three sub-sections to stress their importance and to keep the numbering depth low (four numbers).

125. Delegations agreed to having a separate section for Maturity requirements but preferred to keep the three sections under the existing heading so that the concept of quality was not lost.

126. The secretariat said that alternatively the concept of quality could be introduced into the three sections headings as follows: "Minimum quality requirements", "Minimum maturity requirements" and "Quality classification".

127. Some delegations felt that if the numbering was too complicated an alternative system with numbers and letters could be used.

128. The secretariat official said that he had been asked in another meeting to remove letters from the numbering because a different alphabet is used in Russian. He also mentioned that there was an ISO standard on numbering of international standards which recommends use of the legal numbering system.

129. The secretariat will develop another example on the basis of a simple standard and will check with ISO if it is recommended to start numbering at "0" instead of "1".

**Item 8 Proposal to create an internationally recognized list of trade descriptions and classification codes for fruits and vegetables.**

Documents for this session: TRADE/GE.1/WP.7/2002/17 (Secretariat)  
INF.1 (Italy)  
INF.6 and INF.7 (Canada)

130. A first session of the Working Group was held in November 2001. Document 2002/17 contains a short summary of that meeting which collected the information contained in UNECE Standards to be coded. The working group will meet again during this session to continue the coding and prepare an example.

131. The delegation of EAN International introduced the subject matter and congratulated the working group on their results. It said that the results showed the need for this work. It said that his organization would offer guidance on achieving the goals especially through their extended contacts with retailers and the industry.

132. The delegation of Italy introduced its document (INF.1) which contains a comprehensive description of coding issues for fresh produce and its application in the supply chain. It said that when starting a coding exercise the costs of implementation should be kept in mind. It also said that it was practical to classify the information to be coded into three groups, as follows:

- compulsory information (e.g. international regulations)
- optional information - first order of importance (e.g. protected designation of origin)
- optional information - second order of importance (any additional information suggested)

133. The Specialized Section commended Italy on the work done in preparing this excellent and comprehensive document.



134. The delegation of Canada said that its main concern was to make sure that there would not be several competing systems for codifying quality issues. This would create difficulties for importing and exporting countries.

135. The delegation of Sweden said that it understood the need for harmonization but stressed that the work of UNECE must be commercially neutral and therefore the coding system should be usable by different systems or companies.

136. The delegation of EAN International clarified that the code developed would be usable by any system. It said further that it was a fact that the EAN-UCC system was the one widely used in trade.

137. A large number of delegations indicated interest in participating in the working group. The report of that group is contained in addendum 12 to this report (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.12).

#### **Item 9            Items Pending from the last session**

*Exchange of information on non-conformity cases*

*Background document:*            TRADE/WP.7/2000/11/Add.21

138. The secretariat continues to work on a list containing information concerning contact points. Delegations are invited to provide the relevant address to the secretariat.

139. The delegation of the European Community informed that it will make proposals for amending the text to the OECD Scheme.

*Establishment of a list of countries using code marks*

*Background document:*            TRADE/WP.7/2000/11/Add.22

140. Only a few answers to the questionnaire were received. Delegations are invited to provide the relevant information to the secretariat.

*Review of the Guide on Implementation of Quality Control*

*Background document:*            AGRI/WP.1/R.190

141. Following a decision at the last session the secretariat made the actual version of the document available on the Internet.

142. The delegation of the European Community informed that it would be making proposals for amending the text to the OECD Scheme.

#### **Item 10            Participation to the Specialized Section**

143. The Chairman said that the participation at this session had been very satisfactory. Nevertheless efforts should be undertaken that more countries in transition participate (Russia, CIS countries, countries from South-East Europe).

#### **Item 11            Acceptances**

144. The secretariat had prepared a consolidated document listing by standard the acceptances of countries for the last session. This information can also be found on the web site at: [www.unece.org/trade/agr](http://www.unece.org/trade/agr) under the menu item GENERAL. Some corrections have been received which will be included in the list. Delegations are invited to check the information on the Internet and to provide any further corrections to the secretariat.



154. Speakers came from the organizers and OECD, the European Commission, WTO and USDA

155. The meeting was well attended by experts from several countries of the region. Presentations were well received and the discussions showed that there is a need for this kind of event in the region. A follow-up event is planned for next year in Bangkok, again in cooperation with ESCAP. It is the intention of UNECE to widen the scope of cooperation with other regional commissions to further promote the application of UNECE Standards.

156. The conclusions and a short report on the meeting are reproduced in addendum 14 to this report (see TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.14).

157. The Director of the Trade Division said further that the Secretary-General has started a wide ranging reform of the United Nations which will lead to a stronger concentration on issues related to technical cooperation and implementation. She said that it was clear that the Agricultural Standards Unit could not do this additional work with the present resources.

158. The delegation of Slovakia invited all delegations to attend its international training course which is sponsored by OECD. The course will be held from 26 to 28 June 2002. It is structured as follows:

- day 1: standards interpretation, (lettuce, cauliflowers, cherries, strawberries, avocados, peaches and nectarines)
- day 2: research matters
- day 3: technical visits concerning crops discussed on day 1.

159. All relevant information on the course is available on the OECD web site.

160. The delegation of the United Kingdom informed that its international training course will be held from 17 to 19 September. Initial information has been sent to former participants. The following products will be discussed: Aubergines, Mushrooms, Grapes, Onions, Brussels sprouts, Courgettes, Leeks, Avocados and Nuts.

161. The delegation of the Netherlands said that the OECD Heads of Control Services Meeting from 3 to 4 September (see also addendum 13) would offer a good opportunity to visit the "Floriade", the Dutch horticultural exhibition organized every 10 years.

#### **Item 14                      Other business**

162. The delegation of COLEACP asked if the group had done any work on harmonizing different codes of practice to ensure quantity and safety of food which were being developed by different organizations.

163. The secretariat replied that this was not yet done but that UNECE very much worked on demand and if delegations saw the need for harmonization in an area, this could be discussed.

164. The delegation of Chile informed that a non-governmental organization (CIES - The Food Business Forum) based in Paris works on the harmonization of food safety standards from the private sector.

**Item 15                      Preparation of the next session**

**(a)      Future work**

165.      Future work of the Specialized Section will contain:

- Maturity requirements and other issues concerning: Apples, Citrus Fruit, Kiwifruit, Peaches and Nectarines, Pears, Pineapples, Plums and Strawberries.
- Definition of produce for shallots

**(b)      Date and place of the next session**

166.      The next session has been tentatively planned to take place from 12 to 16 May 2003.

**Item 16                      Election of officers**

167.      The Chairman, Mr. David Priester (United States), announced that he would not stand for reelection for another year owing to his increasing workload within the United States Department of Agriculture. The Specialized Section regretted his decision, thanked him for many years of excellent work as Chairman and expressed the hope that he would continue to come to the meetings as a delegate.

168.      Following a proposal from South Africa, the Specialized Section elected Mr. D. Holliday (United Kingdom) as its Chairperson and Ms. U. Bickelmann (Germany) as its Vice-Chairperson.

**Item 17                      Adoption of the report**

169.      The Specialized Section adopted the report of its forty-eighth session on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat.

**List of addenda to the report**

TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.1	Revised UNECE Standard for Annonas
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.2	New UNECE Standard for Apples
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.3	New UNECE Standard for Pears
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.4	Revised UNECE Recommendation for Avocados
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.5	Revised UNECE Standard for Citrus Fruit
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.6	Research report Citrus Fruit
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.7	Amendments to the UNECE Standards for Leeks and Melons; amendments to the UNECE Recommendation on Plums
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.8	Revised UNECE Standard for Strawberries
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.9	Revised UNECE Standard/Recommendation for Table Grapes
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.10	New UNECE Recommendation for Pineapples
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.11	Comments from France on marking of trade marks
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.12	Report of the working group on harmonized produce coding
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.13	Activities of the OECD Scheme
TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.14	Information on the Asian Seminar on Safe and High Quality Food for International Trade

## Task list

<b>Task (all information should be directly provided to the relevant working groups as well as to the secretariat)</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Proposal on maturity requirements for citrus	Spain	10 February 2003
Transmit data on research of dry matter content as maturity indicator for Kiwifruit	France, New Zealand	10 February 2003
Maturity indicators for apples and pears. Minimum weight size for apples.	Working Group	10 February 2003
Maturity requirements and other issues for Peaches and Nectarines	Working Group	10 February 2003
Provide the generic names of varieties for the interspecific hybrids in the standard for plums	Chile	10 February 2003
Report on maturity requirements for strawberries	European Community	10 February 2003
Provide national definition for shallots	all delegations	31 December 2002
Work on the draft standard for shallots	Working Group	10 February 2003
Consult with the legal office on text changes requested by Sun World concerning the mentioning of trade marks	Secretariat	asap
Prepare a proposal to the Working Party to amend the standard layout to include the text concerning trade marks and lists of varieties	Secretariat	2 August 2002
Prepare a proposal to the Working Party to amend all standards which include lists of varieties to include the text concerning trade marks	Secretariat	2 August 2002
Comments on INF.2 concerning the Working Procedures	All interested members of the Specialized Section	asap
Prepare an official document for the Working Party on the revision of the Working Procedures	Secretariat	2 August 2002
Prepare a new proposal for a new numbering system of UNECE standards	Secretariat	2 August 2002