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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, 23-26 April 2002)

REPORT OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Note by the Secretariat

This document contains the paper presented by the representative of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) at the forty-eighth session of the Specialized Section.

**PAPER PRESENTED BY (OECD) AT THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE
SPECIALIZED SECTION ON COORDINATION OF STANDARDIZATION OF
FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES**

A. Publications

The explanatory brochures on the standards for plums and lettuces, curled-leaved endives and broad-leaved (Batavian) endives (escaroles) will be published by this summer. The explanatory brochure on the standard for tomatoes is due to be published by the end of 2002.

B. Ongoing work

In addition to the work already in progress on explanatory brochures on the standards for citrus fruit, strawberries, apples and pears, table grapes, cucumbers and beans, the Plenary Meeting of the Scheme decided at its last session to begin work on explanatory brochures on the standards for kiwifruit and cultivated mushrooms.

It also decided to revise the guide for quality control of exported fruit and vegetables to include, in particular, sampling methods for the quality control of nuts and the inner quality of fruit and criteria for defining inspection priorities.

The document on facilitating information exchange between the national monitoring services of exporting and importing countries concerning the non-conformity of fruit and vegetables is also being revised in order to specify in detail the information which it should include.

The Plenary Meeting is currently carrying out work on the inner quality of fruit. A discussion took place during the last session of the Plenary Meeting on the appropriateness of determining minimum and/or optimum levels of maturity of fruit and their inclusion in the standards and/or explanatory brochures. Many of the countries taking part in the Scheme indicated that it would be desirable to include such minimum levels in the text of the standards, and even to differentiate taste quality in the text with reference to already existing quality categories (categories Extra, I and II). Lastly, they suggested that the minimum levels to be achieved following the various objective criteria for determining maturity should be discussed product by product when standards are drafted or revised, and thus only within UN/ECE and not OECD. The Plenary Meeting of the Scheme therefore requested the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development to consider including these concerns in its programme of work. Discussions on methods for determining the maturity of fruit and on sampling methods for inner quality control, should, on the other hand, be held within OECD only. Decisions in these respects would testify to the good spirit of cooperation existing between OECD and UN/ECE and would be consistent with the objective of work on the drafting of standards within UN/ECE and the interpretation and application of standards within OECD.

C. International Training Courses

The International Training Course on the “Harmonization of fruit and vegetable quality assessment” sponsored by OECD will take place in the Slovak Republic from 26 to 28 June 2002.

Information concerning this course can be found on the web site of the OECD Scheme at the following address: <http://www.oecd.org/agr/fv>.

D. Meetings of Heads of National Monitoring Services

The 11th Meeting will be held in the Netherlands on 3 and 4 September 2002 at the kind invitation of the Netherlands authorities. The agenda for the meeting will include items on traceability, new methods of determining the maturity of fruit and the joint organization of the various types of control applicable to fresh fruit and vegetables. Fact-finding visits will also be made to enterprises in the fruit and vegetable sector, and participants will have the opportunity of visiting the “Floriade” horticultural exhibit.
