

Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes

Thirty-eighth session
Geneva, 17 – 19 March 2008
Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**Meeting of the Bureau of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes
Changins, Switzerland, 14 February 2008**

Note by the Chairman

At the invitation of the Swiss Authorities, the Bureau held its meeting on 14 February 2008 at the premises of the Agroscope research station at Changins-Wädenswil (Nyon). The following persons participated: Pier Giacomo Bianchi (Italy), Henri Gilliand (Switzerland), Werner Reust (Switzerland) and Serguei Malanitchev (UNECE).

The Bureau went through the provisional agenda of and the documents for the March 2008 meeting of the Specialized Section and made the following points.

Item 2 (Matters of interest since the last session)

If necessary, reflect the revised Terms of Reference and Working Procedures of WP.7 in the text of the Standard.

After this agenda item Mr. Bert Scholte from the European Seed Association (ESA) will be invited to give a presentation of about 15-20 minutes to present his organization's work in seed potatoes and explain how ESA and UNECE could work with each other.

Item 3 (Information on the results of the meetings of the Bureau)

Circulate at the March session the proceedings of the Potato Russia international conference that took place in August 2007 in Moscow to show to the Specialized Section what was done to promote the Standard.

Item 4 Review of the Standard

Ask the delegation of Romania if it could remove its reservation on powdery scab in Annex III.

Item 4 (a) (Assessment key for common and netted scab, and powdery scab)

Ask the delegation of the Netherlands to present the photographs of netted scab sent to the secretariat. The Specialized Section may wish to replace the existing photograph of netted scab in

the Standard (p. 25) with one of the new ones. Good-quality photographs of potato disease could form a gallery on the UNECE website to complement the Standard and the list of diseases and pests. If there is an interest in such a gallery among the delegations, the Specialized Section may wish to have a first exchange of views about its purposes and structure. Training might be one of the purposes.

Item 4 (b) (Sampling procedure for inclusion in the Standard)

If it proves to be difficult to find an all-embracing definition of “origin”, several definitions reflecting differing national practices could be included in the Standard.

Item 5 (Procedures for assessment of non-compliance at destination)

The Specialized Section will need a draft text of assessment of non-compliance to be able to discuss this item.

Item 6 (Images for the list of diseases and pests)

Put on the website the revised list of diseases and pests completed with the photographs sent to the secretariat by the delegation of France. These are not the photographs from the set that the Bureau looked through at its meeting in Moscow and that the secretariat sent out on CDs to the participants in the Moscow meeting for pre-selecting those that could be presented to the Specialized Section in March to complete the list. Those who received the CDs are invited to let the delegation of France know what their preferred pictures are.

If necessary, update the bibliography in the list.

Item 7 (Exchange of information on crop inspection practices)

Ask the delegation of the United Kingdom to present the draft questionnaire.

Item 8 (Control under official supervision and accreditation system)

In many countries “official” supervision is delegated to industry experts but under specific conditions and requirements. The delegations may wish to exchange information about these conditions in their countries. There is a lot of room for harmonizing them.

Item 9 (Exchange of information on post-harvest tests)

Ask the delegation of the United States to present the draft questionnaire.

Item 10 (Electronic certification)

It would be interesting to learn more about national practices and plans for the use of electronic certificates. Might be an interesting item for future work.

Item 11 (Vigour)

Would be useful to work out a common position of the Specialized Section on this issue, like it was done for PVY at the 2007 session.

Item 12 (Promotion of the Standard)

The delegation of Switzerland will make a presentation that could be used to promote the Standard at capacity-building workshops.

The secretariat received only two inputs for the promotional leaflet.

A four-page leaflet (format A4) could explain: on the first page - who develops the Standard, who for, why countries need it and what are the advantages of using it; on the second and third pages - its content; and on the fourth - the table of tolerances.

Item 13 (Future work)

PTNRD, *Erwinia* and PCN should preferably be discussed at Extended Bureau meetings with experts from hosting country.

Item 14 (Other business)

The Specialized Section could explain to Europatat why they should use the requirements of the Standard.

The UNECE website could be usefully extended to include “Useful links” to, for example, the EU regulation and to specialized sites, like www.spongospora.ethz.ch.