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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

COMMITTEE ON TRADE

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat

Seventeenth session

Geneva, 28-30 April 2008

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

**REVIEW OF THE UNECE STANDARDS FOR EGGS AND EGG PRODUCTS**

**Explanation of the amendments to the UNECE  
Standards for Eggs and Egg Products**

**Note by the secretariat**

1. In accordance with the decision of the Working Group on Agricultural Quality Standards (document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/2007/27, para. 35), the Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat has begun work on reviewing the five UNECE standards for eggs and egg products in effect since 1986:

- Eggs-in-shell (No. 42)
- Eggs-in-shell for processing (No. 43)
- Chilled eggs-in-shell (No. 44)
- Preserved eggs-in-shell (No. 45)
- Hen egg products for use in the food industry (No. 63)

2. The aim of the review is to take on board the substance of the latest European Commission marketing standards for eggs,<sup>1</sup> which raise the quality requirements for eggs, as well as changes made since 1986 to the relevant national practices of other ECE member States.
3. Existing standards Nos. 42-45 largely duplicate one another, the main differences being the methods for storing eggs. The new version of standard No. 42 submitted to the Specialized Section for consideration combines four of the old standards into a single document and the structure of this new document is as close as possible to the unified structure of the current UNECE standards for meat, in particular, for chicken and turkey meat.
4. Similarly, standard No. 63 for hen egg products for use in the food industry was reviewed.
5. The following amendments were made to the above-mentioned standards:
  - The list of terms used in the standards was extended with a view to improving the definitions;
  - Minimum quality requirement for eggs and egg products were drawn up;
  - Product quality requirements imposed by the purchaser were systematized;
  - The list of quality indicators tested for egg products was extended to include more detailed information on product status and production history;
  - Egg products were divided into two groups: conventional (with natural characteristics) and modified products, the latter being produced by a technical process which incorporates special techniques to modify the natural characteristics of the egg products to meet consumer needs;
  - A traceability system was proposed to include, for example, hen farming and feeding systems and methods for the processing of eggs and egg products;
  - A provision on conformity-assessment requirements was introduced;
  - New versions of the UNECE Codes for Purchaser Requirements were drawn up for eggs and egg products.
6. The documents submitted reflect modern international statutory requirements for the commercial quality of eggs and egg products and may serve as a basis for work by the Specialized Section to harmonize the texts of the new UNECE standards for eggs and egg products.

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<sup>1</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No. 1028/2006 of 19 June 2006 on marketing standards for eggs, and Commission Regulation (EC) No. 557/2007 of 23 May 2007 laying down detailed rules for implementing Council Regulation (EC) No. 1028/2006 on marketing standards for eggs.