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COMMITTEE ON TRADE

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat

Seventeenth session
Geneva, 28-30 April 2008

**REPORT OF THE SPECIALIZED SECTION ON STANDARDIZATION
OF MEAT ON ITS SEVENTEENTH SESSION**

Summary

The Specialized Section agreed on the following decisions:

Proposal for a new UNECE Standard for Edible Meat Co-products: Following detailed discussions, the Specialized Section made some amendments and finalized the text of the Standard, which will be proposed to the Working Party for adoption.

Proposal for a new UNECE Standard for Duck Meat–Carcasses and Parts: Following detailed discussions, the Specialized Section made some amendments. The delegation of China (rapporteur) will prepare a consolidated text and liaise with delegations to collect final comments. The text of the standard was finalized and will be proposed to the Working Party for adoption.

Review of the UNECE standards for eggs and egg products: Following detailed discussions, the Specialized Section made some amendments. Owing to a lack of time the Section could not review the draft standard for egg products. To advance work on the revision of both standards, the delegation of Russia offered to host an international seminar, provisionally in the middle of September 2008. The draft standards that will be prepared at the seminar will be approved at the meeting of the Section in April 2009.

Publications: The secretariat reported on the status of the publications of the standards published in 2007 and those planned for 2008. The publications for chicken and ovine were published in 2007, while porcine, llama/alpaca and turkey meat will be printed in 2008.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Mr. Hans Hansell, Chief of the Trade Policy and Governmental Cooperation Section of the UNECE Trade and Timber Division, opened the meeting.
2. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Ian King (Australia).

II. ATTENDANCE

3. Representatives of the following member states attended the meeting: Australia, China, France, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovakia and United States of America.
4. The European Commission also participated in the session.

III. APOLOGIES

5. The representatives of Bolivia, Brazil, Italy and Lithuania could not attend and sent their apologies.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda item 1)

Documentation: ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.11/2008/1

6. The delegations adopted the revised provisional agenda. The following documents were added to the agenda:

Code	Title	Contribution from
INF.1	Proposal for a new UNECE Standard for Retail Meat Cuts	United States (E)
INF.2	Status of publications on existing standards	Secretariat (E)

Note: E = English

V. MATTERS OF INTEREST SINCE THE LAST SESSION (Agenda item 2)

Documentation: Report of the Working Party (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/2007/27)
 Terms of reference (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/2007/12)
 Working procedures (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/2007/13)

7. The secretariat presented the main decisions taken at the sixty-third session of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7) concerning the work of the Specialized Section (document ECE/TRADE/WP.7/2007/27, paragraphs 34 to 35 and 38).

VI. STATUS OF PUBLICATIONS ON EXISTING STANDARDS (Agenda item 3)

Documentation: Status of publications (Informal document INF.2)

8. The secretariat reported on the status of the publications on the standards for bovine, caprine, chicken, llama/alpaca, ovine, porcine and turkey meat.

VII. INFORMATION ON THE RESULTS OF THE RAPPORTEURS' MEETINGS (Agenda item 4)

Documentation: Meeting of the rapporteurs (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.11/2008/2)

9. The Chair informed the Section on the results of the meeting of Rapporteurs on Eggs and Egg Products, which was held in Moscow from 29 October to 2 November 2007 and also on the meeting of the Rapporteurs on Veal, which was held in Rennes, France, on 24 and 25 April 2008.

(a) Meeting of the rapporteurs on eggs and egg products and duck standards

10. He thanked Mr. Victor Guschin and the All-Russian Research Institute for Poultry Processing Industry of the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences for organizing and hosting the meeting of rapporteurs and for the technical visit to the poultry-processing plant "Elinar Broiler".

(b) Meeting of the rapporteurs on the standard for veal

11. The Chair also thanked Mr. Alain Boismartel and the "Direction Générale de la Concurrence, de la Consommation et de la Répression de Fraudes" of France, for organizing and hosting the meeting of rapporteurs and for the technical visit to the abattoir Jean Rozé, Société Vitréenne d'Abattage (SVA) and the technical discussions that were held at the premises of CEFIMEV (centre de formation aux métiers de la viande).

VIII. REVIEW OF THE UNECE STANDARDS FOR EGGS AND EGG PRODUCTS (Agenda item 5)

Documentation: Explanatory note on revising egg standards (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.11/2008/3)
Draft revised UNECE Standard for Eggs-in-shell (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.11/2008/4)
Draft revised UNECE Standard for Egg Products (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.11/2008/5)

12. The delegation of Russia introduced the two draft revised UNECE standards for eggs-in-shell and egg products. The draft standard for eggs-in-shell draws on the 1986 UNECE standards for eggs (Nos. 42, 43, 44 and 45), on the latest European Commission marketing standards for eggs, and on changes in national practices of other UNECE member States that have taken place

since 1986. The structure of the draft standard follows, to the extent possible, the unified structure of the current UNECE standards for meat; in particular, for chicken and turkey meat.

13. The draft standard for egg products is a revision of the 1986 UNECE Standard for Egg Products for Use in the Food Industry (No. 63). The text of the draft also takes into account the latest European Commission standards, changes in national practices, and follows the structure of the UNECE meat standards.

14. The Specialized Section reviewed the text of the draft standard for eggs-in-shell (document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.11/2008/4) and made the following major changes:

(a) The definition of fresh eggs (para. 11) should read: “Fresh eggs are Class A eggs. Class A, Extra should be collected on a daily basis”.

(b) The definition of the week number (para. 20) should read: “The laying date or period (week number) is the day and month or the index number of the week on which the eggs were laid”.

(c) In the minimum requirements section (para. 21) item (i) should read: “Be damaged (cracked or broken) at candling; cracked eggs are allowed in Class B”; and item (iii) should read: “Contain visible foreign matter at candling”.

(d) The Class B definition (para. 24) should read: “Class B for use in the food or non-food industries. Cracked eggs shall only be used for the food industry purposes within one day of delivery at the processing plant and shall be kept chilled (≥ 0 and $\leq +5^{\circ}$ C).

15. The Specialized Section also decided to:

(a) Supplement “Use-by” date with “Sell-by” or “Best-before” dates, as appropriate

(b) Merge “Cage (type-1)” and “Cage (type-2)” production systems into one category “Cage-housed”

(c) Introduce under “Marking of eggs” (before para. 41) the sentence: “Importing country regulations shall be used to define the marking and traceability requirements by the exporting country”

(d) Revisit and simplify provisions on marking of eggs and labelling of packages at a seminar or rapporteurs meeting that are expected to be held before the 2009 session of the Specialized Section.

16. Other changes introduced in the text of the draft standard for eggs-in-shell are marked in document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.11/2008/4-Revised, downloadable from the UNECE website:

http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/meetings/ge.11/document/2008_04_Rev.doc.

17. The Specialized Section did not have time to review the draft text of the revised standard for egg products. The draft texts of both standards need to be discussed in-depth at the national

level. Delays in translating the documents into English and French made it difficult for delegations to have a productive discussion of the draft standards at the session.

18. To advance work on the revision of standards for eggs and egg products, the delegation of Russia offered to host an international seminar; provisionally mid-September 2008. The Specialized Section asked the Russian delegation and the secretariat to collect comments on the draft texts of the two standards to discuss them at the seminar. Ideally, the outcome of the seminar should be draft texts of the standards for eggs and egg products ready for approval by the 2009 session of the Specialized Section.

19. Should there be a need for additional consultations on the standards after the seminar in Russia, the delegation of Poland offered to host a meeting of rapporteurs at the end of 2008 or beginning of 2009.

20. The delegation of Russia asked if the secretariat could arrange to draw up a paper explaining conditions under which transition countries could export eggs and egg products to the EU market.

IX. NEW UNECE STANDARD FOR EDIBLE MEAT CO-PRODUCTS (Agenda item 6)

Documentation: Draft new UNECE standard for edible meat co-products
(ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.11/2008/6)

21. The Chair introduced the draft proposal prepared by the Working Group formed by Australia, France and the United States of America on a new UNECE standard for edible meat co-products. The Working Group proposed the new name “edible meat co-products” to identify the standard, since this name is defined as animal products other than red or white muscles, which allows the grouping of the terms offal, fancy meats, variety meats and edible by-products in one single concept.

22. The Specialized Section reviewed the text of the draft standard and proposed the following changes/amendments:

(a) In section 1.1, “UNECE standards for meat products”, define the species code “90” to identify the standard for edible meat co-products.

(b) In section 2, “Minimum requirements”, remove the text “and tastes” in category “Free of offensive odours and tastes”.

(c) In section 3.5.2 as “Co-product category”, define data field 3, using two digits to represent it. Reassign the codes for each category as follows:

Co-product category code (data field 3)	Category	Description
00	Not specified	
10	Beef	
11	Veal	
30	Porcine	
40	Ovine	
42	Lamb	
50	Caprine	
52	Kid	
80	Equine	
99	Others	Any other co-product category agreed between buyer and seller

(d) In section 3.5.4 “Feeding system”, introduce a new category “6 - Specialized/Functional”, with description “Special enriched feeding system aimed to change either some characteristics of the product or its nutritional profile”.

(e) In section 3.5.6 “Post-slaughter system”, introduce two new categories, reassigning the categories accordingly:

- i. “1 – Washed”, with description “Raw and washed with fresh water”.
- ii. “5 – Scalded and bleached”, with description “This processing may have bleach added”.

(f) In paragraph “Mandatory information” of section 3.9.1, introduce the attribute “(optional)” into category “slaughter date”. Footnote 3 should read “Durability information is processing date either a use-by date or a best-before date as required by each importing country.”

(g) In section 4.1 “Definition of the code”, adapt table to reflect changes introduced through section 3.5.2 “Co-products category”. The new structure of the code reflects section 3.5.2 in field no. 3, represented with two digits. It also redefines field no. 5 as “Field not used”, with only one digit. The example of the “Definition of the code” in section 4.2 reflects these changes accordingly.

23. The Specialized Section also decided to introduce the following amendments into section 5, “Edible meat co-products descriptions”:

(a) Replace the text “high-risk” by “specified-risk” in every place where this is mentioned.

(b) The description of beef co-product “Tongue Swiss cut – 6030” should read: “Tongue Swiss cut is derived from a tongue short cut (item 6010) by the removal of the fat from the ventral surface of the tongue, the tip of the epiglottis, the hyoid bone, sublingual salivary glands and the M. mylohyoideus of the tongue blade”.

- (c) In the description of the co-product “Tongue root fillet – 6045”, replace the “cephalicus” muscle by “thyroidal or hyoidial” muscle.
- (d) Rename co-product “Sinew - 6203” to “Skirt sinew - 6203”.
- (e) From co-product description “Diaphragm membrane – 6270”, remove the text “with the pleura and peritoneal covering”.
- (f) From the description of co-product “Skirt membrane (tunic tissue) – 6271”, remove the text “associated with the thin skirt (diaphragm)”.
- (g) Rename co-product “Bung - 6495” to “Rectum (bung) - 6495”.
- (h) The description of veal co-product “Tongue Swiss cut – 6520” should read:
“Tongue Swiss cut is derived from a tongue short cut (item 6510) by the removal of the fat from the ventral surface of the tongue, the tip of the epiglottis, the hyoid bone, sublingual salivary glands and the M. mylohyoideus of the tongue blade”.
- (i) For co-product “Intestine - 6626”, remove “for a few minutes” from option “Scalded scraped and stiffened by plunging in boiling water for a few minutes”.
- (j) For co-product ovine “Cheek”, replace product code “6524” by “7028”.
- (k) For each species, add the following new definitions for co-products derived from “Blood”:

Blood stabilized – (Bovine - 6450; Veal – 6640; Ovine – 7470; Porcine – 7674)
Stabilized blood, preserved or not with sodium chloride (NaCl), cooled or frozen.

Blood defibrinated – (Bovine - 6451; Veal – 6641; Ovine – 7471; Porcine – 7675)
Defibrinated blood, preserved or not with sodium chloride (NaCl), cooled or frozen.

Blood plasma – (Bovine - 6452; Veal – 6642; Ovine – 7472; Porcine – 7676)
Product of stabilized blood after removal of blood cells, preserved or not with sodium chloride (NaCl), cooled or frozen.

Blood serum – (Bovine - 6453; Veal – 6643; Ovine – 7473; Porcine – 7677)
Product of defibrinated blood after removal of blood cells, preserved or not with sodium chloride (NaCl), cooled or frozen.

24. The delegation of the United States requested the addition of the following pork cuts to the list of co-products for porcine:

Pork stomach (pepsin) lining – (Code to be defined)

The thin lining of a portion of the pork stomach. It is deep red in colour. It displays characteristics similar to the honeycomb tripe from ruminant animals. This item is usually harvested as washed only.

Pork ovaries – (Code to be defined)

Ovaries are the reproductive gland of the female animal, and or attached to the uteri at the furthest ends of it. They are rounded and approximately 2.5 cm in size.

Pork clear plate – (Code to be defined)

Layer of pork fat removed from the loin of a pork carcass with or without skin.

Fore feet – 4175

Fore feet (trotters) are prepared from a forequarter (item 4021) at the carpal joint, severing the fore foot (trotter) from the shoulder. The fore feet shall be practically free of hair and hair roots. Skin shall remain.

To be specified:

- Skin removed

Hind feet (hind trotters) - 4176

Hind feet (hind trotters) are removed from a leg at the tarsal joint severing the hind foot (trotter) from the leg. Skin shall remain.

To be specified:

- Skin removed

25. As this document could not be translated into French and Russian before the meeting, the delegations of France and the Russian Federation will submit their specific comments and editorial amendments once they have cleared them with their own branches and industry. The comments should be submitted to the secretariat not later than 30 June 2008.

26. The secretariat will prepare a list of the missing images, which will be sent to the Working Group by mid-May 2008. The group should then return the missing images to the secretariat by 30 June at the latest.

27. Other changes introduced into the text of the draft standard for edible meat co-products are marked in document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.11/2008/6-Revised, downloadable from the UNECE website: http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/meetings/ge.11/document/2008_06_Rev.doc.

28. The Specialized Section decided to submit the text of the proposal for a new UNECE Standard for Edible Meat Co-Products to the Working Party at its forthcoming session for approval.

**X. NEW UNECE STANDARD FOR DUCK MEAT – CARCASSES AND PARTS
(Agenda item 7)**

Documentation: Draft new UNECE standard for duck meat – carcasses and parts
(ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.11/2008/7)

29. The delegation of China introduced the draft of the standard discussed at the rapporteurs' meeting held in Moscow in November 2007. The new draft includes the information that was required by various delegations in Moscow, notably the product blood and the images for different carcasses and parts.

30. The Specialized Section reviewed the text of the draft standard for duck meat and proposed the following changes/amendments:

(a) From section "2 Minimum requirements", remove the text "and tastes" in category "Free of offensive odours and tastes".

(b) In section "3.5.2 Duck category", amend the description of category "2 - Young ducks" to read "8" instead of "9" weeks. The number of days (56) was also introduced in the description to make explicit reference to the maximum age accepted for the category.

(c) In section "3.5.3 Production system", delete category "1-Conventional" and create instead a new category "1-Indoors", with the description "Ducks are raised in heated, ventilated growing houses without access to the outdoors". The delegation of France requested the creation of the new category "5-Superior quality". The new description will be submitted to the secretariat not later than mid-June, following discussions with the French industry.

(d) Footnote 8 should be amended to reflect the latest European Commission Regulations which supersede European Union Regulation (EEC) No. 1538/1991 and (EC) No. 1804/1999. Poland will provide the secretariat with the latest information.

(e) In section "3.7.2 - Other product claims" add a new category "Duck breed" to the standard.

31. The Specialized Section also decided to introduce the following amendments into section "5 - Carcasses and Parts descriptions":

(a) The delegation of Poland proposed the creation of a new part named "Foie gras liver", which should be based on the weight of the liver. Since this product is traded under different conditions, the delegation of France requested not to include this part in the standard until they had consulted with the industry. They would inform the Specialized Section accordingly.

(b) Insert the new part "Partially eviscerated duck" with the following description "Partially eviscerated duck are carcasses from which the heart, liver, lungs, gizzard, crop, and kidneys have not been removed".

32. The delegation of China expressed its willingness to host a rapporteurs' meeting on Duck before the 2009 meeting of the Working Party.

33. Other changes introduced in the text of the draft standard for duck are marked in document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.11/2008/7-Revised, downloadable from the UNECE website: http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/meetings/ge.11/document/2008_07_Rev.doc.

34. The Specialized Section decided to continue with the work on the standard and to inform the Working Party on the progress of the proposed standard.

XI. PREPARATION OF 2008 SESSION OF THE WORKING PARTY ON AGRICULTURAL QUALITY STANDARDS (Agenda item 8)

A. UNECE Standard for Duck Meat – Carcasses and Parts

35. The delegation of China will collect comments and will transmit them to the delegation of the United States to complete the work on the Standard for Duck. If there are minor comments, the Specialized Section has decided to submit the Standard for Duck, with the amendments, to the forthcoming session of the Working Party for approval. In case of major requests and/or comments, the document will be returned to the Specialized Section for further discussion at its April 2009 meeting.

B. UNECE standard for Edible Meat Co-Products

36. The Specialized Section decided to complete the work on the new Standard for Edible Meat Co-Products and submit the document to the Working Party at its forthcoming session for approval. The secretariat will prepare a list of the missing images of cuts, which will be circulated to the Working Group (Australia, France and the United States) by 30 May. The Working Group should provide the missing images to the secretariat by end of June 2008.

C. Revised UNECE Standards for Eggs-in-shell and egg products

37. The secretariat will inform the Working Party about the progress made in revising the standards for eggs and egg products. The Specialized Section decided to continue with the work through the period 2008-2009.

D. Proposal for a preliminary UNECE Standard for Veal Meat – Carcasses and Cuts

38. The Section decided to continue with the work on the standard for veal. The delegation of France will submit the final list of products by end of August 2008. The secretariat will prepare the list of missing pictures of the standard. Delegations will continue the work on sections 3.6 "Fat limitations and evaluation of fat thickness in certain cuts", 3.8 "Meat and fat colour and pH" and 5 "Carcasses and cuts descriptions".

E. Meetings

- (a) The delegation of Poland offered to host a rapporteurs' meeting on a Goose standard in April 2009. Delegations were asked to inform the secretariat about their potential participation.
- (b) The delegation of Russia offered to host a workshop on the porcine and edible co-products standards, and promised to send a programme for this activity to the secretariat.
- (c) The delegation of the Netherlands offered to host a rapporteurs' meeting on Veal before the April 2009 meeting of the Section.
- (d) The delegation of the United States offered to host a rapporteurs' meeting on Retail Meat Cuts, subject to receiving support from the Section.

39. The next session of the Specialized Section has been tentatively scheduled to take place in Geneva from 27 to 30 April 2009.

40. The agreed provisional agenda for the eighteenth session of the Section is given on the last page of this document. Further proposals should be submitted to the secretariat at least 12 weeks before the next session. The deadline for submitting documents for this session is 15 January 2009.

XII. FUTURE WORK (Agenda item 9)

Documentation: Proposal for a new UNECE Standard for Retail meat cuts (United States) (Informal document INF.1)

41. The Specialized Section proposed the following items for future work:
- (a) Complete the work on the new UNECE Standard for Duck Meat – Carcasses and Parts.
 - (b) Continue the process to finalize the draft of a preliminary UNECE Standard for Veal Meat – Carcasses and Cuts.
 - (c) Complete the work on the UNECE Standard for Edible meat co-products. The secretariat will collect contributions (missing images) from delegations.
 - (d) Complete the work on revising the standards for eggs and egg products.
 - (e) Retail cuts. The delegation of the United States will prepare a paper explaining the main reasons to start work on a new Standard for Retail Meat Cuts.

XIII. OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda item 10)

42. No other business.

XIV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Agenda item 11)

43. The Specialized Section re-elected Mr. Ian King (Australia) as Chairperson and Mr. Craig Morris (United States) as Vice-Chairperson.

XV. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT (Agenda item 12)

44. The Specialized Section adopted its report.

45. The Section agreed on the following provisional agenda for the nineteenth session that has been tentatively scheduled to be held in Geneva from 27 to 30 April 2009.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION (2009)

1.	Adoption of the agenda
2.	Matters of interest since the last session
3.	Status of publications on existing standards
4.	Draft Proposal for a UNECE Standard for Retail meat cuts
5.	Draft UNECE Standards for Eggs-in-shell and Egg products
6.	Draft proposal for a UNECE Standard for Veal meat – carcasses and cuts
7.	Preparation of 2009 session of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards
8.	Preparation of the meeting of rapporteurs
9.	Future work
10.	Other business
11.	Election of officers
12.	Adoption of the report