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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 Standardization of  
Meat (Porcine, Bovine and Poultry)

10-12 May 1999, Geneva

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING SINCE THE SEVENTH SESSION

Note by the secretariat

This document summarizes the outcome of the second session of the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development and the fifty-fourth session of the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development.

## **Second session of the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development**

### **Discussion of the work of the Working Party**

The following excerpt is taken from the report of the Committee (ECE/TRADE/222, paragraphs 27 to 32):

“27. The Chairman of the Working Party (WP.7), Mr. M. Vilchez-Barros (Spain), informed the Committee that the Working Party had not met since the last session of the Committee in December. Several meetings of rapporteurs and experts had been held but their decisions would still have to be endorsed by WP.7 at its next session (2-4 November 1998).

28. The Chairman of the Working Party and other delegations expressed their satisfaction with the fact that the post dealing with agricultural standards had now been filled on a permanent basis and also thanked Ms. L. Annovazzi Jakab who had been acting as Secretary to WP.7 and its Meetings of Experts for her excellent work and support during the past years.

29. The Chairman of the Working Party gave a presentation on commercial quality standards for perishable produce and the role of UN/ECE and other international organizations (OECD Scheme, European Union, Codex Committee on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables) in the development of these standards. He also explained the efforts undertaken to harmonize the work of the different bodies.

30. The delegation of the European Community confirmed its continued support for the work of UN/ECE in this area. It noted that EU legislation and UN/ECE standards were already well harmonized and that the European Community advocated that all activities by other international bodies in this area should reinforce UN/ECE standards.

31. The EU representative asked further, if, in view of the uncertainty surrounding the continuation of the OECD scheme for the application of international standards for fruit and vegetables, the Committee could request the Working Party on Perishable Produce and Quality Development to consider if some of the OECD work should be transferred to UN/ECE. The delegation of Turkey said that if additional tasks were taken on by WP.7, additional resources would also be required. In an answer to these remarks, the Director of the Trade Division said that until more information was received from OECD, and before the next session of WP.7, it would be premature for the Committee to discuss this subject in depth. When more information was available, this would be reported to the Committee at its next session in June 1999, which could then, through a reassignment of priorities, decide on the allocation of resources to this work area.

32. The delegate from the Russian Federation announced that he would submit a proposal for a standard on marking of food products to the November session of WP.7.”

### **Prioritization of the work of the Working Party**

At the Committee session the work of WP.7 was given an overall “HIGHER” priority and its individual tasks were prioritized as follows (ECE/TRADE/222, annex II, programme activity 04, B.):

- “Higher:**           Setting of new standards and revisions, enlarging participation of both public and private sectors.
- Broadening the application of UN/ECE standards and recommendations and the implementation of controls at private and public levels.
- Disseminating the texts of UN/ECE standards and recommendations for perishable produce among supplying countries to UN/ECE markets and diffusion among users at different levels: producers, traders, control services, consumers.
- Medium:**           Interpretation and harmonization of standards and control procedures among UN/ECE member countries.
- Lower:**            Cooperation with other international standardization organizations.”

### **Fifty-fourth session of the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development**

The following paragraphs are taken from the report of the fifty-fourth session of the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development (see TRADE/WP.7/1998/9 para. 21 and 22):

#### **“Meeting of Experts on Standardization of Meat (Porcine, Bovine and Poultry)**

Document: TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/1998/5

21.     In addition to the Meeting of Experts in May a meeting of rapporteurs had been held in Brussels on 26 and 27 October 1998. Mr. P. Hardwick (United Kingdom) informed the Working Party on the progress made by the group on developing a standard for bovine meat. He said that in addition to the work on cuts the group also discussed “best practices” which take into account consumer concerns e.g. disease control.

22.     He explained that the group discussed having a UN/ECE trade mark which would guarantee that the provisions of the standard concerning cuts and “best practice” were complied with. This could encourage the use of the standard. The group is still at the beginning of this discussion and further information is necessary especially on the cost of the accreditation procedure.”

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