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COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Working Party on Standardization of
Perishable Produce and Quality Development

Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat
10th session, 25-27 April 2001, Geneva

Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda

Summary Report from the Meeting of Rapporteurs

Transmitted by the United States of America

Note by the secretariat : This document summarizes the outcome of the meeting of rapporteurs on standardization of meat which was held in São Paulo, 24 to 27 September 2000.

**United Nations/Economic Commission for Europe
Specialized Section on the Standardization of Meat
Meeting of Rapporteurs
Meeting Notes**

The UN/ECE's Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development, Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development, Specialized Section on the Standardization of Meat Meeting of Rapporteurs was held in Campinas and São Paulo, Brazil, from September 24 to 27, 2000.

This meeting was attended by representatives of Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Greece, Japan, New Zealand, Paraguay United Kingdom, United States and Uruguay.

The European Community was also represented.

The following non-governmental organizations were also represented: EAN Brazil, EAN International, and Foodbrands America.

The Specialized Section on Meat (Porcine, Bovine and Poultry) has developed standards for poultry meat in 1986 (including an explanatory brochure) and for porcine carcasses and cuts in 1998.

This meeting proved to be one of the most successful meetings for the committee ever. Major accomplishments of the meeting included:

- Finalization of a beef cutting and quality standard that has been under development since 1994. This beef cutting and quality standard was developed under the leadership of primarily Australia and the United States. The committee agreed to have all final editorial comments and changes as well as cut description language translations to the Australian representative by November 1. In addition, any "year 1" changes to the bovine standard should be sent to the UN/ECE Standards Officer by January 29, 2001, for translation before the April 2001 Meeting of Experts.
- Initiation of work of a draft international lamb cutting and quality standard that is being developed by New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom.
- Initiation of work of a draft international chicken standard that is being developed under the leadership of the United States, France and the United Kingdom.
- Presentation of a conformity assessment document being developed under the leadership of Australia and the United States. The committee agreed to have all comments on the conformity assessment document to the UN/ECE Standards Officer by November 1.

The Rapporteurs made considerable progress on the lamb cutting and quality standard during the meeting. A final draft will be ready for submission to the Meeting of Experts for consideration at the April 2001 meeting.

The UN/ECE working group for poultry met for the first time during this trip. Members were introduced and the background and objectives for the standard were explained. All members present believed that the US standard provided an excellent starting point for the international standard, and that little additional work would be needed regarding the product grid. Some additional purchaser options are needed, and a number of new product styles will need to be defined.

A time schedule for developing the discussion draft was proposed and accepted. This schedule calls for submission of a first-round of comments on Draft A by November 15, 2000, achievement of committee consensus on Draft B by December 30, and the delivery of a clean Discussion Draft B to the UN by January 29, 2001. Looking past this January deadline, the committee agreed that its intention would be to have the experts thoroughly review and provide comments on Discussion Draft B to the working group members at the April 2001 Meeting of Experts in Geneva, Switzerland. The working group will attempt to resolve all issues identified by the experts before the close of its working group meeting in September 2001. The working group plans to advance a final standard with a recommendation for adoption by the experts at the April 2002 Meeting of Experts. This would allow an international poultry standard to be officially issued by the UN early in 2003.

Clearly, much of our work lies before us, but the committee now has a committed international membership with a clear sense of direction and an esprit de corps.

As a separate issue, the interest of the US meat industry in developing and testing an internet-compatible extensible markup language (XML) standard for electronic meat supply chain trading was proposed to EAN representatives. An informal plan was developed whereby USDA, MeatXML, a nonprofit consortium that has asked for USDA involvement, and UCC/EAN will seek to integrate our efforts early in 2001. One possible scenario would be that the US meat industry would use the public domain transaction schema developed and tested by UCC/EAN. In turn, the US meat industry would define and test meat product description schema based on existing US or UN/ECE standards that would "plug into" the existing UCC/EAN XML transaction model. Once developed and tested, the meat description schema would be added to the public domain for use by meat traders worldwide.

Meeting Attendees

Australia: Sr. Ian King, Executive Director of AUSMEAT.
Bolivia: Enga. Maria Lourdes Abularach S., Independent Consultant.
Belgium: Mr. Miodrag Mitic, Project Manager, EAN International.
Brazil: Predro De Felicio and Nelson J. Beraquet, UNICAMP.
China: Dr. Zhou Guanghong, Vice President, Nanjing Agricultural University.
Greece: Mr. Dimitrio Liangos, Head of Animal Production Service, Ministry of Agriculture.
Japan: Mr. H. Asaki and Mr. K. Masaru, ALIC Argentina.
New Zealand: Sr. Jim Gooch, Planning Manager, AFFCO New Zealand.
Paraguay: Ing. Massimo Coda, Miembro Comision de Carne, Asociacion Rural del Paraguay.
European Commission: Mr. Thorkild Rasmussen
United Kingdom: Mr. Ken Jones, Industry Consultant.
U.S.A.: Mr. Barry Carpenter, Mr. Craig Morris, Mr. Douglas Bailey, USDA/AMS.
U.S.A.: Mr. Billy Lloyd, Regulatory Affairs Liason, Foodbrands America.
Uruguay: Ricardo Robaina.

Notable Meetings/Events

Saturday, September 23

Committee Chairman Mr. Barry L. Carpenter arrives in São Paulo for dinner with Roberto T. Matsubayashi, Technical Manager, EAN Brazil, to discuss EAN Brazil's participation in UN/ECE standards development initiatives.

Sunday, September 24

Mr. Carpenter and most other attendees arrive in Campinas. And in the evening there is a welcome reception/dinner for the UN/ECE participants at Giovaneti V restaurant in downtown Campinas.

Monday, September 25

a.m. Opening session and presentations for full committee.

p.m. Committee split into lamb and chicken sub-groups for working sessions. Conference dinner at Churrascaria Gran Ville.

Tuesday, September 26

a.m. Working sessions formulate conclusions and present findings to full committee. Tour of UNICAMP campus and Meat Technology Center at ITAL.

p.m. Travel to São Paulo. Meetings at EAN Brazil offices. Dinner with EAN Brazil and entire UN/ECE committee.

Wednesday, September 27

Several of the committee travel from São Paulo to Lins to tour Brazilian beef sector. Provided tour of Bertin Group beef packing and processing facility and CFM Agro Pecuaria beef cattle production facility. Bertin is one of Brazil's largest and fastest growing beef, leather, and rendered product companies. Bertin operates eight different facilities in Brazil with the Lins headquarters facility being the largest. The facility produces in excess of 280 thousand cans (12 oz.) of cooked corned beef a day (six days a week) under the labels of Hormel, Safeway, Hereford, Goya, John West, Tesco, and others. The facility slaughters in excess of one thousand head a day with a total corporate kill in excess of 6,250 per day. The facility also processes in excess of 12,000 hides a day.

CFM Agro Pecuaria is a cattle company specializing in the production of both Nelore as well as Montana breed cattle. The facility we visited, on approximately 40 thousand acres, contains approximately 30 thousand cows. Of these, approximately 10 thousand are involved in the Montana breed development programme. The visit included a demonstration of 200 early maturing Nelore cows being selected for pregnancy at 14 months. Of their test herd, approximately 30% are achieving pregnancy at 14 months. The programme goal is to achieve a 70% pregnancy rate at 14 months.

The remaining committee members have a tour of São Paulo and tour the São Paulo chicken sector.