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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  
11<sup>th</sup> session, 8-10 April 2002, Geneva

Item 3(b) of the provisional agenda

**Draft UN/ECE Standard for Ovine Carcasses and Cuts  
Draft Ovine Specific Standard**

Transmitted by Australia

**Note by the Secretariat** : This document contains the draft ovine specific section of the standard including comments made at the last session as well as the results of several discussions of the rapporteurs since the last session.

**UNECE STANDARD FOR MEAT**  
**SECTION 4A - OVINE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS**

**Concerning the Standardization, Marketing, and Commercial Quality of  
Ovine Carcases and Cuts moving in International Trade**

**4A.1.1.0 FOREWORD**

**ABOUT THE CONTENTS**

This publication contains the Ovine Specific Requirements (Section 4A) of the UN/ECE Standard for Ovine Carcases and Cuts.

This standard has been split into two sections:

**Section 4A:** UN/ECE Ovine Specific Requirements

**Section 4B:** UN/ECE Ovine Carcase and Cuts Descriptions

For the complete text the two sections should be read in conjunction together with the General Requirement'

The text of this publication defining an International language for ovine carcase and cuts has been carried out under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

Following the recommendation of the Specialized Section on the Standardization of Meat, the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development adopted the text to facilitate international trade. Reference: Trade/WP.....

It is intended to introduce the UN/ECE trademark to ensure product integrity for the description of meat cuts for utilization by organizations that have been audited and certified by an accredited authority.

The object of this standard is to describe all ovine meat items commonly traded in international commerce. Trade industry members who believe additional items are needed or that existing items are inaccurate or no longer being traded are encouraged to contact:

Foods Standard Officer

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Standard is to define and describe commercial quality and merchandising requirements of ovine carcase and cuts, moving into International trade as fit for human consumption. It is recognized that many other requirements of food standardization and veterinary control must be complied with to market ovine product across international borders. The standard does not attempt to prescribe those aspects which are covered elsewhere, and throughout the standard, such provisions are left for national or international legislation, or requirements of the importing country.

Section 4B of the standard includes photographs of carcasses and selected commercial cuts to facilitate a better understanding of its provisions with a view to ensuring a wide application in international trade.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The UN/ECE Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat would like to acknowledge the Contributions of the following delegations during the development of this publication:

Argentina	Italy
Australia	Japan
Austria	Lithuania
Bolivia	Netherlands
Brazil	New Zealand
Canada	Paraguay
China	Poland
EAN International	Russian Federation
European Union	Slovakia
Finland	Spain
France	Switzerland
Germany	United Kingdom
Greece	United States of America
Hungary	Uruguay

**LEAVE AS SPACE**

#### **4A.1.2.0 SCOPE**

This standard applies to carcasses and / or associated meat cuts from ovine animals, marketed as fit for human consumption.

#### **4A.1.3.0 FIELD OF APPLICATION**

The purpose of this standard is to define certain aspects of quality and cutting requirements of ovine carcasses and cuts intended to be sold in international trade.

The standard contains references to other international agreements, standards and codes of practice which have the objective of maintaining the quality after dispatch and of providing guidance to governments on certain aspects of food hygiene, labelling and other matters which fall outside the scope of this Standard. Codex Alimentarius Commission Standards, Guidelines, and Codes of Practice, should be consulted as the competent international reference concerning health and sanitation requirements.

#### **4A.1.4.0 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

The following requirements are dealt with in the General Requirements Standards for meat carcasses and cuts, which apply to trade in all mammalian meats:

Provisions concerning refrigeration

Provisions concerning condition (1)

Provisions for evaluating fat thickness in certain cuts

Provisions concerning meat and fat colour and pH

Provisions concerning origin and production history

Provisions concerning packing, storage and transport

Labelling information for marketing units for meat

Authority for conformity assessment (2)

EAN.UCC codification system

(1): Certain markets have specific regulations regarding the removal of spinal cord, nervous and lymphatic tissue. As these requirements are subject to regular review individual market requirements should be determined prior to trade commencing.

(2): This point refers to the Accredited Certifying Authority covered in the *General Requirements* for individual countries.

#### **4A.1.4.1 Provisions concerning external fat**

External fat is measured in accordance with the provision outlined in the General Requirements. This standard provides for the codification of ovine cuts in international trade to have external fat levels specified to the following categories:

- Not specified
- Peeled, denuded, surface membrane removed
- Peeled, denuded
- 0 - 3 mm maximum fat thickness or as specified
- 3 - 6 mm maximum fat thickness or as specified
- 6 - 9 mm maximum fat thickness or as specified
- 9 - 12 mm maximum fat thickness or as specified

- 12-15 mm maximum fat thickness or as specified
- 15 mm and over or as specified
- Other

**4A.1.4.2 Provisions concerning meat colour.**

Any requirement for the measurement of lean or fat colour is to be agreed between buyer and seller.

**4A.1.4.3 Provisions concerning Origin and Production History**

There are a number of alternative methods that can be used to deliver traceability, to meet the purchasers requirements.

Traceability requires a verifiable method of identification of ovine animals, carcasses, cartons and cuts. The identification numbers must be applied and recorded correctly guaranteeing a link between them. If used, traceability procedures must be agreed by the Authority for Conformity Assessment referred to in paragraph 0.4.8. of the General Requirements.

The EAN·UCC System is one option that provides a global language of traceability by means of multi-industry standards for identification and communication for products, services and locations. They may be used by organisations for traceability purposes across the supply chain to track and trace ovine products between the farm and the consumer. For information on using the EAN·UCC System please refer to the “Traceability of Beef” guidelines obtainable from EAN International or national EAN organisations.

Contact addresses for EAN·UCC System details:

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**4A.1.4.3.1 Ovine Category**

The standard provides for categorization of ovine into the following categories:

		<b>Not specified</b>
	<b>LAMB</b>	Young ovine under 12 months of age or which does not have any permanent incisor teeth which has been fed on a predominantly milk or milk substitute diet.
	<b>LAMB</b>	Young ovine under 12 months of age or which do not have any permanent incisor teeth.

	<b>HOGGET</b>	A young male ovine or female ovine having one but no more than two permanent incisor teeth.
	<b>MUTTON</b>	Female ovine and castrate male ovine having no more than one permanent incisor teeth.
	<b>EWE MUTTON</b>	Female ovine (only) has one or more permanent incisor teeth.
	<b>WETHER MUTTON</b>	Castrate ovine male (only) has one or more permanent incisor teeth.
	<b>RAM</b>	Adult entire or castrate male ovine having more than one permanent incisor teeth.

*Other Ovine Categories may be specified using individual country grading criteria.*

#### 4A.1.4.3.2 Production, Feeding and Animal Identification Systems

- **Not Specified**
- **Intensive Systems** describe production methods, which include restricted stocking, housing and feeding regimes. Specific standards need to be defined between buyer and seller.
- **Non-Intensive Systems** describe production methods which include relatively unrestricted access to natural forage, 'forage fed', for the majority of the animals lives. Specific standards need to be defined between buyer and seller.
- **Organic systems** describe production methods, which follow internationally recognized standards or national standards if they are more restrictive. Specific standards need to be defined between buyer and seller.
- **Other systems** must be described by the seller.

#### 4A.1.4.3.3 Slaughter Systems

- **Not specified**
- **Conventional** - stunning prior to bleeding is the accepted conventional system.
- **Kosher** - appropriate ritual slaughter procedures must be satisfied.
- **Halal** - appropriate ritual slaughter procedures must be satisfied.
- **Other** - any other authorized method of slaughter must be specified by seller/buyer.

**4A.1.4.3.4 Post slaughter processing**

- **Not specified**
- **Dressing specification** - if this is required then the specified requirements must be agreed within the contractual terms.
- **Electrical stimulation** - if this is specified the system parameters must be agreed within the contractual terms.
- **Method of carcass suspension** - if different from the traditional Achilles tendon suspension then the required method must be specified.
- **Neck Stringing** - to specify if the carcass is string on or off. Neck stringing of the neck and fore shanks is done to provide for the preparation of specific meat cuts that have defined shapes delivered by the stringing operation
- **Chilling regimes** - if a specific chilling procedure is required then this must be specified
- **Maturation process** - any specific requirement must be specified.
- **Spinal cord removal** - Where the spinal cord has been exposed by the splitting of a carcass or portion of a carcass then the spinal cord should be removed.
- **Other requirements** - must be specified.

**1.4.3.5 Weight ranging of Carcasses / cuts.**

- Not specified
- Specified weight range required

**4A.1.4.4 OVINE SPECIFIC CODING**

The following tables demonstrate the general application of the 15 field, 20\_digit UNECE using the EAN.UCC coding scheme as it applies to ovine species specifications. See ANNEX for details.

**UN/ECE OVINE STANDARD CODING**

<b>Data Field</b>	<b>Code Range</b>	<b>Specified Use</b>	<b>Data Field Ref.</b>
<b>Mandatory</b>			
Ovine Species/Class	0 – 9	1	4
Sub-primal Cut	0 – 9999	0 – 9999	7
Refrigeration	0 – 9	1 – 3	11
<b>Optional – requiring traceability</b>			
Category (Sex/Type/Age)	0 – 9	0 – 8	2
Feeding System	0 – 9	0 – 5	3

Certification	0 – 9	0 – 7	4
• Grade/Classification			
• Third party certification			
• Animal Identification			
Slaughter Systems	0 – 9	0 – 4	5
Post slaughter processing	0 – 9	0 – 1	6
<b>Optional – not requiring traceability</b>			
Marbling	0 - 9	0	9
External Fat	0 – 9	0 – 9	8
Colour (meat/fat)	0 –99	00 –01	10
Weight Range	0 – 9	0 – 1	12
Packing	0 – 9	0 – 7	13
Reserved	000 – 999	None	14

#### 4A.1.4.4.1 Use Codes For Ovine Specific Coding

DATA FIELD	SPECIFY USED CODES	CODE DESCRIPTION
1	<i>Species</i>	
	4	<b>OVINE</b>
2	<i>Category</i>	
	1	specified
	2	<b>LAMB</b> – Young ovine under 12 months of age or which does not have any permanent incisor teeth which has been fed on a predominantly milk or milk substitute diet.
	3	<b>LAMB</b> – Young ovine under 12 months of age or which do not have any permanent incisor teeth.
	4	<b>HOGGET</b> – A young male ovine or female ovine having one but no more than two permanent incisor teeth.



	<b>5</b>	<b>MUTTON</b> - Female ovine and castrate male ovine having no more than one permanent incisor teeth.
	<b>6</b>	<b>EWE MUTTON</b> – Female ovine (only) has one or more permanent incisor teeth.
	<b>7</b>	<b>WETHER MUTTON</b> – Castrate ovine male (only) has one or more permanent incisor teeth.
	<b>8</b>	<b>RAM</b> –. Adult entire or castrate male ovine having more than one permanent incisor teeth.
<b><i>Other Ovine Categories may be specified using individual country grading criteria.</i></b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>Feeding Systems</b>	
	<b>0</b>	Not specified
	<b>1</b>	<b>Intensive</b>
	<b>2</b>	Non-intensive
	<b>3</b>	Organic
	<b>4</b>	Other
<b>4</b>	<b>Certification</b>	
	<b>0</b>	<b>Not specified</b>
	<b>1</b>	Grade/Classification specified.
	<b>2</b>	Third Party Certification specified.
	<b>3</b>	Origin and production history specified
	<b>4</b>	Grade/Classification and Third Party Certification specified.
	<b>5</b>	Grade/Classification and Origin and production history specified
	<b>6</b>	Third Party Certification and Origin and production history specified
	<b>7</b>	Grade/Classification, Third Party Certification and Origin and production history specified
<b>5</b>	<b>Slaughter Systems</b>	
	<b>0</b>	Not specified
	<b>1</b>	<b>Conventional</b> – Stunning prior to bleeding is the accepted conventional systems.
	<b>2</b>	<b>Kosher</b> – appropriate ritual slaughter procedures must be satisfied
	<b>3</b>	<b>Halal</b> – appropriate ritual slaughter procedures must be satisfied
	<b>4</b>	<b>Other</b> – any other authorised method of slaughter must be specified by seller/buyer
<b>6</b>	<b>Post Slaughter Processing</b>	
	<b>0</b>	Not Specified
	<b>1</b>	Specified

<b>7</b>	<b>Four digit cut code defined in Standard</b>	
<b>8</b>	<b>External fat thickness</b>	
	<b>0</b>	Not specified
	<b>1</b>	Peeled, denuded, surface membrane removed
	<b>2</b>	Peeled, denuded
	<b>3</b>	0 - 3 mm maximum fat thickness or as specified
	<b>4</b>	3 - 6 mm maximum fat thickness or as specified
	<b>5</b>	6 - 9 mm maximum fat thickness or as specified
	<b>6</b>	9 - 12 mm maximum fat thickness or as specified
	<b>7</b>	12-15 mm maximum fat thickness or as specified
	<b>8</b>	15mm and over or as specified
	<b>9</b>	Other
<b>9</b>	<b>Marbling</b>	
	<b>0</b>	Not Specified
<b>10</b>	<b>Lean and Fat colour</b>	
	<b>00</b>	Not specified
	<b>01</b>	Other system specified
<b>11</b>	<b>Refrigeration</b>	
	<b>0</b>	Not Specified
	<b>1</b>	Chilled
	<b>2</b>	Frozen
	<b>3</b>	Deep frozen
<b>12</b>	<b>Weight Range</b>	
	<b>0</b>	Not specified
	<b>1</b>	Specified
<b>13</b>	<b>Packing</b>	
	<b>0</b>	Not specified
	<b>1</b>	Carcases and quarters – Chilled with or without packaging
	<b>2</b>	Carcases and quarters – Frozen/deep Frozen packed to protect the products
	<b>3</b>	Cuts – I.W. (Individually Wrapped)
	<b>4</b>	Cuts – Bulk packaged (plastic or wax-lined container).
	<b>5</b>	Cuts – Vacuum-packed (VAC)
	<b>6</b>	Cuts – Modified Atmosphere Packed (MAP).
	<b>7</b>	Cuts – Other.

#### 4A.1.4.4.2 Codification example:

The item characterised by the 20-digit code 15301016434000105000 would be:

Field 1 Species = 4 (OVINE)

Field 2 Category = 5 (Lamb / Mutton)

Field 3 Feeding System = 3 (Organic)

Field 4 Certification = 0 (not specified)  
Field 5 Slaughter System = 1 (Traditional)  
Field 6 Post Slaughter Processing = 0 (not specified)  
Field 7 Cut = 4910 (Saddle)  
Field 8 External Fat = 3 (3mm fat thickness)  
Field 9 Marbling = 0 (Not Specified)  
Field 10 Lean and Fat Colour = 00 (Not specified) *A subjective measurement that means the same*  
Field 11 Refrigeration = 1 (Chilled)  
Field 12 Weight Range code = 0 (Not specified)  
Field 13 Packing code = 5 (Vacuum Packaged)  
Field 14 Reserved codes = 000

***[Associated pictures are to be included in the final document]***

1. The customer orders, using the UN/ECE Standard for Ovine Carcasses and Cuts coding scheme.

***[picture]***

2. On receipt of the order, the supplier translates the UN/ECE codes into its own trade item codes (i.e., Global Trade Item Number).

***[picture]***

3. The supplier delivers the order to the customer. The goods are marked with the UCC/EAN-128 bar code standard.

***[picture]***

4. The customer receives the order and the UCC/EAN-128 bar code scanned, thus allowing for the automatic update of commercial, logistics and administrative processes.

***[picture]***

5. The physical flow of goods, marked with EAN.UCC standards, may be linked to the information flow using electronic data interchange (EDI – EANCOM® messages).

***[picture]***