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COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards
(Fifty-ninth session, 4 to 6 November 2003, Geneva)

Item 15 of the provisional agenda

PROGRAMME OF WORK

Note by the secretariat: In this document the secretariat presents a draft for the work programme of the Working Party for 2004 and 2005 as well as the calendar of meetings for 2004. Delegations are invited to make further proposals during the session. The finalized document will be published in an addendum to the report.

1. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2004 - 2005

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 04: TRADE FACILITATION AND AGRICULTURAL STANDARDS

04 (B) AGRICULTURAL QUALITY STANDARDS

04 (B).1 Activities of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Description: The Working Party together with its at present four active Specialized Sections prepares and revises standards, recommendations and interpretative brochures for the marketing and control of commercial quality of selected perishable produce. It also discusses general strategic and policy relevant subjects related to standardization of perishable produce, possibilities for technical assistance and cross-sectorial work as well as organizational matters.

Work to be undertaken:

- (a) Elaboration of new standards for dry and dried produce, fresh fruit and vegetables, and meat.

Duration: Continuing according to the needs of participating countries.

- (b) Revision of selected standards and recommendations.

Duration: The revision and updating of standards is a continuing task to adapt standards to developments of technology and the market and to harmonize with other regulations and standards.

- (c) Review of the status of the acceptance and application of UNECE Standards

Duration: Continuing.

- (d) Operational activities: workshops on harmonization of standards and control procedures for perishable produce to assist countries in implementing the standards and participate in world trade. It is expected that a workshop on supply chain globalisation will be held in Santiago de Chile in cooperation with UN ECLAC and EAN International in 2004. Other capacity building workshops in 2004 are planned in Moldavia and Georgia in accordance with extra budgetary means that can be secured.

Duration: Workshops will be planned according to the needs of countries.

- (e) Interpretation of the provisions concerning quality tolerances in the standards for fresh fruit and vegetables in cooperation with the OECD Scheme.

Duration: Continuing.

- (f) Investigation of quality assurance systems for perishable produce

Duration: Continuing.

(g) Updating of the home page of the agricultural standards unit containing all standards and up to date information on the work of the Working Party.

Duration: The system will be continually enlarged and updated.

- (h) Co-operation with other organizations dealing with agricultural standards to ensure harmonization and avoid duplication of work.

Duration: Continuing.

- (i) Work on the review of the Geneva Protocol and the standard layout.

Duration: 2004

- (j) Identify and evaluate possibilities of cooperation with the other regional commissions. (see also (d))

Duration: Continuing

- (k) Identify and evaluate possibilities for cross sectorial activities within UNECE and with other organisations.

Duration: Continuing

04(B).2 Activities of the specialized sections of the Working Party

04(B).2.1 Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

- Revise UNECE Standards for Kiwi fruit, Peaches and Nectarines, Table grapes, Early and Ware Potatoes, Apples, Citrus fruit, Plums (others might be added according to needs of countries)
- Work on new UNECE Standards for Shallots, Truffles and Ceps (others might be added according to needs of countries)
- Update the standard layout for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables
- Check the compatibility of the control certificate and the UNECE layout key for trade documents
- Develop templates for inclusion of varieties in the standards for Pears, Plums and Table Grapes.
- Review the use of code marks, possibility for internationally harmonized marks
- Codify the provisions of several UNECE Standards
- Cooperate with WHO on a strategy on diet, physical activity and health
- Cooperate with the OECD Scheme on the development of explanatory material and internal quality
- Develop workshops, seminars, training courses and other activities concerning capacity building for the application of quality standards in accordance with needs of clients and available funds.

- Review of the General conditions of sale for fresh fruit and vegetables

04(B).2.2 Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce

- To review the UNECE Standard for Dates
- To create new UNECE Standards for:
 - Blanched Almonds
 - Inshell Macademia Nuts and Macademia Kernels,
 - Inshell Peanuts and Peanut Kernels
 - Inshell Pecans and Pecan Kernels
 - Dried Peaches
 - Dried Peppers
 - Dried Tomatoes
 - Elaboration of a sampling plan – review of the work done by the OECD Scheme
 - Review of the UNECE General conditions of sale for dry (shelled and unshelled and dried fruit)

04(B).2.3 Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat

- Publication of the UNECE standard for Sheep (ovine) Carcasses and Cuts.
- Publication of the UNECE standard Beef (bovine) Carcasses and Cuts.
- Publication of the UNECE standard Chicken (gallus domesticus) Carcasses and Parts.
- Continue work on the draft UNECE Standard for Llama Carcasses and Cuts
- Begin work on a draft UNECE standard for Goat (caprine) Carcasses and Cuts.
- Finalise the revision of the UNECE standard for Pork (porcine) Carcasses and Cuts.
- Development of colour chips/ marketing cards with the goal of achieving a harmonized standard in the future.
- Pilot study on implementation of the bovine standard; evaluation of possibilities to facilitate conformity assessment.
- Detailed review of the porcine standard including a new coding system
- Evaluation of the possibility to elaborate standards for other species (e.g., Turkey, Veal, Camel)
- Evaluation to include products with added ingredients and size reduction in the standards.

04(B).2.4

(a) Specialized Section on Standardization of Early and Ware Potatoes,

This Specialized Section was adjourned sine die. Its activities will be dealt with in the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

(b) Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes

- Proposal for a paragraph on IPPC for the introduction
- Proposal for destination tolerances
- Global list of varieties ; concept of variety
- Further development of Annex VIII: Assessment Key for percentage tuber surface area coverage of

- blemish diseases
- Relationship between the UNECE, EPPO and NAPPO standards
- Sizing issues
- Recommended best handling practices
- The impact of GMO's on the Standard
- Superficial necrosis caused by virus
- Further development of the pest list and mentioning of standard test methods
- Prototype training course for seed potato certification
- UNECE label
- Discussion of grading equipment
- Tuber rots, destination tolerances, quality assurance
- Discuss dispute settlement procedures
- Separation of quality and quarantine pests
- Inclusion of test methods/ referencing methods
- Concerns of seed buyers
- Definition of the complete control procedure for the certification of seed potatoes
- Standardization of methods

04(B).2.5 Standardization of eggs and egg products

No activities planned.

04(B).2.6 Standardization of cut flowers

No activities planned.

04(B).2.7 General conditions of sale for fresh fruit and vegetables and for dry and dried fruit

These texts will be reviewed in the relevant Specialized Sections.

NOTE: For the above activities (04(B).2.5.-04(B).2.7) the regular sessions of the Specialized Sections have been discontinued. Review, revision and updating of existing standards and conditions of sale may require sessions in future as needed.

2. TENTATIVE CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2004

Meeting	Session	Location	Date
Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes (GE.6)	33	Geneva	22 to 24 March
Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat (GE.11)	12	Geneva	19 to 22 April
Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (GE.1)	49	Geneva	*10 to 14 May
Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce (Fruit) (GE.2)	50	Geneva	**14 to 18 June
Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development (WP.7)	59	Geneva	1 to 3 October

* Working groups will have the opportunity to meet on 9 May 2004.

** Working groups will have the opportunity to meet on 13 June 2004.