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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  
Dry and Dried Produce (Fruit)

Forty-seventh session, 19 to 22 June 2000, Geneva

Item 2 of the Provisional Agenda

MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING SINCE THE FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Note by the secretariat

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

### THIRD SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

The following excerpt is taken from the report of the Committee (ECE/TRADE/231, paragraphs 34 to 37):

#### 6(b) Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development

Documentation:           TRADE/WP.7/1998/9   Report of the Fifty-Fourth Session of the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development  
                                   TRADE/1999/3       Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development: Note by the secretariat

34.     The Vice-Chair of the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development (WP.7), Mr. David Priester (United States), gave an overview of the results of its November 1998 session, as well as of the sessions of its specialized sections on early and ware potatoes and meat which had taken place since then. In addition, he reported on cooperation with the European Union and various international organizations (the OECD and the WHO/FAO Codex Alimentarius Commission) and informed the Committee of the new Internet World Wide Web site created by the secretariat, which contains the texts of the standards, as well as information on meetings (<http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm>). The Committee then endorsed this report of the fifty-fourth session of the Working Party.

35.     The Chair of the Committee, Mr. Vilchez-Barros, who also serves as Chair of the Working Party, informed the Committee of the efforts being undertaken to promote UN/ECE commercial produce standards internationally to increase their use and avoid duplication which can occur when existing work is not known:

- Spain would provide unofficial translations of UN/ECE standards into Spanish to promote their dissemination in Latin America.
- The Working Party had been represented at an expert group meeting on agricultural standards organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). For this meeting, ESCWA had translated 25 UN/ECE standards into Arabic and these were currently being examined by Governments for adoption as ESCWA standards.
- Contacts had also been established with the other United Nations regional commissions (for Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific).

36.     The delegation of the European Community, speaking also on behalf of the 15 EU Member States, stated that the Community continued to place high priority on UN/ECE work on agricultural standards. The European Community further proposed that the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development consider a possible transfer to the UN/ECE of the work being done by the OECD on interpretative brochures for UN/ECE standards. The delegation invited the secretariat to prepare a working document to define the modalities for undertaking this work, including a clear description of the costs (extra personnel, production of the brochures) and how these costs might be financed. This document should be prepared in time for discussion at the next session of the Specialized Section on Coordination of Standardization of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables from 25 to 28 October 1999 and for consequent consideration by the Working Party, which will

meet from 3 to 5 November 1999. The delegation of the United States supported this request. The Committee then approved the request for this study.

37. The Director of the Trade Division said that the secretariat would undertake the study requested but that it was of the highest importance to the UN/ECE not to jeopardize its excellent institutional relationship with the OECD. She then invited member States to keep the OECD and its secretariat informed of their requests to the UN/ECE, as well as of further developments. The delegation of the European Community noted that they had already, repeatedly, stated their opinion on this matter in OECD meetings and would continue to do so. The delegation of the United States said that they would keep the OECD secretariat informed on this issue.

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

**Excerpt taken from the report TRADE/WP.7/1999/7, paras. 12-23:**

#### **Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce (Fruit)**

Documents: TRADE/WP.7/GE.2/1999/12 - Report of the forty-sixth session  
TRADE/WP.7/1999/3 - Cashew Kernels

12. The Chairman of the group Mr. W. Staub (Germany) presented the report on the forty-sixth session of the Specialized Section.

*Consideration to extend the trial period for the UN/ECE Recommendation for Walnut Kernels for one further year.*

13. The Specialized Section discussed this recommendation intensively. A compromise on quality classes and the colour chart for walnut kernels was found. A new version of the colour chart was provided to the rapporteurs and the secretariat by the delegation of the United States. This chart will be further discussed in the Specialized Section.

14. The Working Party adopted the text contained in TRADE/WP.7/GE.2/1999/12, Appendix 4 as a UN/ECE Recommendation for Walnut Kernels for one further year. The recommendation will be published in TRADE/WP.7/1999/7/Add.3.

*Consideration to adopt the UN/ECE recommendation for Inshell Walnuts as a revised UN/ECE standard.*

15. The delegation of France entered a reservation on the tolerances for mouldy walnuts as follows: "Reservation of France requesting 2% for Extra Class, 3% for Class I and Class II."

16. The Working Party adopted the text contained in TRADE/WP.7/GE.2/1999/12, Appendix 5, with the reservation entered by France as a UN/ECE Standard for Inshell Walnuts. The standard will be published in TRADE/WP.7/1999/7/Add.4.

17. The Chairman encouraged the Specialized Section to discuss the tolerances again at its next meeting in order to try to come to a solution or compromise so that this reservation can be lifted.

*Consideration to adopt the revised UN/ECE Recommendation for Cashew Kernels as a new UN/ECE standard.*

18. The Working Party adopted the revised recommendation as a new UN/ECE Standard for Cashew Kernels. The new standard will be published in TRADE/WP.7/1999/7/Add.5. The Chairman welcomed the very active participation of India in the development of this standard.

*Revision of the standard layout*

19. The Specialized Section discussed a proposal from Germany for the revision of the standard layout. The text will be finalised at the next session. New text for the annexes was proposed by Spain and will be discussed at the next session.

20. The Chairman said that if in the course of this revision changes to the Geneva Protocol were deemed necessary then these had to be presented to the Working Party by the Specialized Section.

*Future work*

21. The following items have been placed on the agenda for the next session:

- review of the UN/ECE standards for Pistachio Nuts;
- review of the UN/ECE Recommendations for Hazelnuts;
- review of the UN/ECE Recommendation for Walnut Kernels;
- work on the standard layout and its annexes;
- work on a dictionary of defects (rapporteur Italy);
- elaboration of a sampling plan.

22. The Specialized Section has decided not to create a standard for pitted dates because it was felt that provisions for pitted dates could be included in a future revision of the UN/ECE standard for dried dates.

23. The Working Party approved the report of the Specialized Section including the future work.