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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
Early and Ware Potatoes
(19-21 March 2001, Geneva)

Item 3 of the Provisional Agenda

**Review of the UN/ECE Standards on
Early and Ware Potatoes (FFV 30, 31)**

Transmitted by Israel

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Israel's proposal for the 15th session of the Specialized Section
on Standardization of Early and Ware Potatoes

The following are Israel's standpoints concerning several items on the agenda for the 15th session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Early and Ware Potatoes, to be held in Geneva on 19-21 March 2001.

Item 3 Review of the UN/ECE standards on Early and Ware Potatoes (FFV 30, 31)

Israel proposes to amend Section IV - Provisions Concerning Tolerances, B – Size tolerances, in both standards, (FFV 30,31) to read: “10 per cent by weight of tubers not satisfying the requirements....”

The reasons behind this proposal are as follows:

1. A thorough performance survey of different sizing machines proves that five percent size tolerance is indeed attainable under ideal conditions. Practically, however, it is very difficult to achieve, even as an average, a sizing tolerance of 5% in sizing of ordinary tuber lots.
2. In most mechanical sizing machinery, sizing accuracy is directly, and positively, related to mechanical damage. The higher the accuracy aimed for – the higher the percentage of damaged tubers. This is even truer for new potatoes, whose skin is so much more sensitive.
3. In all other UN/ECE standards of fruits and vegetables the sizing tolerance is 10%, and there seem to be no reason whatsoever why potatoes should be different.

Item 4 Definition of cooking types and eventually a colour scheme for marking of cooking types on consumer packages

1. Israel has no doubt about the importance of an agreed definition of cooking types, and about the contribution of a uniform colour scheme to consumer's convenience. The classification of the various varieties into the different types, however, will be quite difficult. The only existing source of this information is the national catalogues of potato varieties, which today use several cooking type scales.
2. Israel proposes that the Specialized Section approaches the European breeding companies and ask them to use the EAPR cooking type scale in the potato varieties description they supply to their respective national catalogues.
3. If and when this is achieved, the EAPR scale will be adopted by the Specialized Section, and will be included in the standard. The provisions concerning marking will, at that time, be amended to include an obligation to mark the cooking type, according to the national varieties catalogue (or an equivalent document) of the country in which the variety had been bred.
4. The question of a uniform colour scheme can be dealt with only after the completion of

the previous stage.

Item 6 Proposals for a definition for long varieties and reactions from the trade to the indicative list of long varieties of an irregular shape.

1. It is well known that tuber shape of the same variety changes between years, seasons, growing conditions and locations. The relations between the length of the tuber and the average of its short axes may vary considerably, especially in long or long-oval varieties. The only general source of information of these varietal characteristics, available today, is the description of a variety as released by its breeder. However, varieties such as Nicola, Ditta, Exquisa or Sieglinde, which are considered “long” in the trade (and may appear even as very long in practice), are described as “long-oval” in those lists.
2. Israel proposes that a variety will be defined as long one if it described as long or long oval in the national catalogue of potato varieties (or an equivalent document) of the country in which the variety had been bred.
3. Israel supports the inclusion in the standard of an indicative list of long varieties with irregular shape, including the three proposed varieties.

Item 9 National legislation for early and ware potatoes

The legislative situation in Israel, concerning the standardization of potatoes, has not changed since last reported to the Section, namely: there is a very old standard for potatoes, which is quite outdated. A new proposal for a national standard, compatible with the UN/ECE standards, is still under preparation and revision, prior to formal and legal confirmation.