Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7)

Ms. Agnieszka Sudol, Chair of the Working Party 7

Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards

21-22 June 2021
Palais des Nations, HYBRID session
• Fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts and dried fruit, seed potatoes, meat
• Over 100 commercial quality standards used by governments, the EU, and companies for domestic, import/export trade
• Plus:
  • Guides, illustrative material, publications, code mark registry

Quality is a way to
• Increase trade
• Find new trading partners all over the world
• Prevent food loss

Organized in:
• 4 specialized sections under a coordination group with over 1,100 experts (public and private sector) and 5 intergovernmental meetings per year

Quality for Agricultural Trade Since 1949
Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7)
2020 Review

• 5 regular meetings held on-line due to Covid-19
  - 4 on-line follow-up meetings of working groups
  - 6 meetings of the working group to finalize the draft of Code of Good Practice

→ 10 new or revised standards adopted and published

■ 4 explanatory posters and 1 explanatory brochure adopted and published

■ UNECE Minimum Quality Specifications for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables adopted and published

👥 New 2021 Program of Work adopted by the Working Party
WP.7 – New Programme of Work - approved

Aim - develop:

• (a) Market transparency - define a common trading language, with minimum quality requirements for agricultural produce that facilitate fair and sustainable trade, prevent technical barriers to trade and contribute to economic growth [SDG 8]; Specialized section’s continuing work on standards

• (b) Food security - Promote the sustainable production and consumption of quality agricultural produce, including the prevention of food loss [SDG 2, 12]; Cross-cutting themes for all Specialized Sections (e.g. traceability, food loss, better quality production to prevent and reduce food loss, sustainable food production and standards).

• (c) Collaboration – capacity building activities with other public and private sector international bodies (in support of previous activities) [SDG 17]. During period 2019-2020, 2 training activities with Specialized Sections (if funds) and foster the nexus approach.
2020 Meetings

Regular sessions:

• Fresh Fruit and Vegetables annual session: 6-8 May 2020, on-line
• Dry and Dried Produce annual session: 15-17 June 2020, on-line
• Seed Potatoes annual session: 25-26 June 2020, on-line
• Meat annual session: 12-13 October 2020, on-line
• Working Party annual session: 16-17 November 2020, on-line

FAO-UNECE joint event and official launch of FeedUP@UN:

• Roundtable on Food for partnerships - sustainable, resilient and climate-proof food supply chains

Issue-Based Coalition (IBC) on Sustainable Food Systems:

• UNECE and the IBC on Sustainable Food Systems – The sustainable food systems approach to address food security, nutrition and health risks: Sharing tools and practical solutions – September 2021 webinar
• UNECE and IBC on Sustainable Food Systems (FAO, WFP, WHO, UNICEF, UNECE, WMO) – December 2021 webinar
Increased sales opportunities
• Expanded destination markets & customers’ network
• Entered new markets with improved product quality, leading to increased export volume
• In 2018, more than 200 tons of fresh plums were sold to EU countries and the Russian Federation

Increased productivity
• Increased adherence to international food quality requirements
• Improved productivity & acquired modern equipment
• More than 1,000 farmers certified according to the EU organic regulation and other organic standards

Improved produce quality
• Improved produce quality through the installation and use of new equipment
• Enhanced focus on food safety
• Introduced Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles for improved food safety of produce

Increased production
• One company alone: increased production to 1,000 tons of products per year, versus less than 500 tons five years ago
• Increased responsibility to customers throughout the production process
• Reduced level of defects (waste) in dried fruit production
THANK YOU!