



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
6 July 2022

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat

Thirtieth session

Geneva, 28 (p.m.) – 30 September 2022

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Provisional agenda and annotations*

Session to be held in a hybrid mode (with interpretation) at the Palais des Nations, Geneva and online, starting on 28 September 2022.

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Matters arising since the last session:
 - (a) United Nations, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and subsidiary bodies;
 - (b) Recent developments in other organizations.
3. Alignment of the Economic Commission for Europe cut codes with the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS codes).
4. Fat content in meat.
5. Marbling assessment and technology.
6. Revision of standards: Porcine meat – carcasses and cuts.
7. Development of new standards: International standard for animal protein derived from connective tissue.
8. Eating quality.
9. Discussion on the possible development of a livestock language.
10. Sustainable Development Goal 12 and sustainable practices: International minimum sustainability guidelines for the meat sector.

* Delegates attending the meeting are invited to register online through the link available on the meeting web page: <https://unece.org/trade/wp7/ge11-30th-2022>. Official documents for the meeting will be available on the same web page six weeks before the meeting. In the event of difficulties with electronic registration, please contact the secretariat by email: olga.kharitonova@un.org.

11. Capacity-building and promotional activities.
12. Other business.
13. Future work.
14. Election of officers.
15. Adoption of the report.

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda

The delegations will adopt the agenda.

Documentation: Provisional agenda and annotations (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.11/2022/1)

2. Matters arising since the last session

(a) United Nations, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and subsidiary bodies

The secretariat will present developments at the level of the United Nations, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards as well as the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7) having an impact on the work of the Specialized Section.

Documentation: Report of the seventy-sixth session of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2021/2)

(b) Recent developments in other organizations

Representatives of other organizations and country delegates will inform the Specialized Section about activities taking place in their agencies or countries that are of relevance to the work of the Specialized Section.

3. Alignment of the Economic Commission for Europe cut codes with the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS codes)

Following a proposal at its 2020 session, the 2021 session of the Specialized Section continued the discussion on mapping ECE cut codes to the six-digit HS codes. A paper on how this is done in Australia was presented, and the delegates of Germany and Poland confirmed that a similar system was used in their countries. The Specialized Section decided to establish a rapporteur's group (Australia, Poland, the United States of America), and to capitalize on the opportunity of closer collaboration with the World Customs Organization (WCO) on the topic.

The secretariat organized a meeting between WCO and the group of rapporteurs in October 2021, and at the ensuing rapporteur's group meeting in November 2021 it was decided to progress with updating the Bovine Meat – Carcasses and Cuts standard to include a six-digit HS code column in the cuts list. It was also concluded that updating the pork and ovine standard would be feasible without considerable work.

The Specialized Section will review the proposal of how to proceed with aligning the ECE cut descriptions and the HS codes.

Documentation: Alignment of the ECE standards and the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.11/2022/3)

Proposal for how HS codes could be included in the ECE Standard for Bovine Meat – Carcasses and Cuts (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.11/2022/4)

4. Fat content in meat

At its 2020 session, the Specialized Section discussed the issue of how much fat meat could contain to still be considered meat. This impacted among others the determination of customs duties. It was decided to explore this further and determine whether parameters would be needed to define the acceptable fat content. Several countries indicated that they faced similar issues and noted that the topic was also linked to the definition of the relevant HS codes which currently existed only for pig fat but no other species. The Specialized Section decided to continue work on this topic and to create a working group. The working group would submit its proposals to the 2021 session of the Specialized Section. However, no proposal was received from the working group in 2021.

The Specialized Section is invited to discuss fat content in meat (and meat content in fat) and related HS code classification issues and decide on potential follow-up action.

Documentation: Report of the twenty-eighth session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.11/2020/2)

Revision of the Standard for Porcine meat, carcasses and cuts (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.11/2020/4)

5. Marbling assessment and technology

The delegation of France will present work done by the beef sector in France on marbling, including the building of a new marbling scale, development of a new smartphone application (Meat@ppli) to assess marbling, and work on new feed systems to facilitate marbling deposits.

The Specialized Section is invited to consider the potential merits of working on marbling, as a proposal for future work.

6. Revision of standards: Porcine meat – carcasses and cuts

At its 2020 session, the Specialized Section reviewed proposals by the delegations of the Russian Federation and Serbia on the porcine meat standard relating to marbling. It decided to establish a rapporteur's group consisting of the Russian Federation, Serbia and the United States to prepare a proposal. At its 2021 session, the group was expanded with Australia and the discussion was postponed to its 2022 session.

The Specialized Section is invited to review the standard for porcine meat and discuss if there is a need to revise it in line with the proposal provided in 2020 by the delegation of the Russian Federation.

Documentation: ECE Standard for Porcine Meat – Carcasses and Cuts (ECE/TRADE/369/Rev.3)

Revision of the Standard for Porcine meat, carcasses and cuts (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.11/2020/4)

7. Development of new standards: International standard for animal protein derived from connective tissue

At the 2020 session of the Specialized Section, several delegations expressed interest to explore the need for an international standard for animal protein derived from connective tissue. It decided to establish a rapporteur's group comprising of delegates with knowledge and interest in this product for international sales (Russian Federation and other countries) which would present national standards for animal proteins and elaborate proposals to the 2021 session of the Specialized Section. However, no proposal was received in 2021.

The Specialized Section is invited to discuss the potential need for an international standard for animal protein derived from connective tissue.

Documentation: Report of the twenty-eighth session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.11/2020/2)
Revision of the Standard for Porcine meat, carcasses and cuts (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.11/2020/4)

8. Eating quality

The Specialized Section will be provided with an update by the ECE scientific reference group for eating quality of new developments in eating quality research and of the eating quality database. The Specialized Section will exchange views and provide updates.

9. Discussion on the possible development of a livestock language

Following a proposal by Australia at the 2020 session, the 2021 session of the Specialized Section continued the discussion on the possible development of a livestock language. The delegation of Australia informed that the expert group which had developed guidelines on livestock language was expected to present a final draft at the end of September 2021. The delegate from the United States reminded delegations of the previous year's discussions about harmonizing the guidelines with the use of meat terminology and livestock nomenclature of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The Specialized Section welcomed the opportunity to review the final version, once ready. It also decided to explore the ISO equivalent process.

The Specialized Section will hear an update from the delegation of Australia on the guidelines for livestock language.

10. Sustainable Development Goal 12 and sustainable practices: International minimum sustainability guidelines for the meat sector

At its 2021 session, delegations continued earlier discussions on the possible development of a sustainability framework for the meat sector. Delegations reiterated their continued interest in the topic, highlighting it as a critical area for the meat industry and livestock production as well as outlining potential challenges. As several sustainability initiatives exist globally, the Specialized Section agreed to establish a forum for sharing best practice and expertise, in the form of a rapporteur's group that would also serve as a "sustainability response team". The Specialized Section also decided to organize a seminar/webinar in conjunction with or prior to the next session.

Held in the form of a seminar/webinar scheduled for Thursday 29 September 2022, 15:00–17:00 with the participation of outside speakers, this agenda item will discuss sustainability issues in the meat sector, including assessments of the benefits/impact of livestock production, and explore potential actions.

11. Capacity-building and promotional activities

The Specialized Section will share information about capacity-building and promotional activities, and new tools and methodologies facilitating the implementation of standards, including:

- Eating quality training: Australian Beef Carcase Appraisal System (ABCAS) – training course in Spain
- On-Site Correlation and Practice System (OsCap) version 6 coming online: innovation to move to online with Chiller assessment standards
- Meat messaging commercialization: an electronic messaging system to overcome shipping port marks and ensure easier import inspection processes

- Handbook of Australian Meat (HAM) Application (App) – international red meat guide as an application
- Research outcomes on measuring intramuscular fat percentage for sheep meat: how measurement technology has been incorporated into the Australian standards.

Delegations are invited to share information about ongoing activities, as well as needs for future capacity-building.

12. Other business

Any other issues of interest for the work of the Specialized Section can be discussed under this agenda item.

13. Future work

The Specialized Section will discuss its future work.

14. Election of officers

The Specialized Section will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair for a one-year term.

15. Adoption of the report

The Specialized Section will adopt the report of the session (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.11/2022/2).

III. Tentative timetable

Wednesday, 28 September	15:00–17:00	Items 1–5
Thursday, 29 September	11:00–13:00	Items 6–9
	15:00–17:00	Item 10 (seminar/webinar)
Friday, 30 September	11:00–13:00	Items 11–14
	15:00–17:00	Item 15