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**THE STANDARDIZATION OF PERISHABLE PRODUCE
AND QUALITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE
UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

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Expert Group Meeting on the Harmonization of Norms and Standards for Selected Agricultural Commodities to Facilitate Trade in the ESCWA Region

**UN House,
Beirut
Lebanon
27-29 April**

**Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development
in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**

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1. UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (UN/ECE)

1.1 History and goals

UN/ECE was set up in 1947 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to develop economic activity and strengthen economic relations among European countries and between them and other countries of the world.

- UN/ECE is one of five regional commissions (the others are: ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA), UN/ECE acts as a regional arm of the United Nations.
- UN/ECE encourages greater economic co-operation among its members.
- UN/ECE provides a forum for governments to develop conventions, regulations and standards. These serve to harmonize action and facilitate exchanges between member countries by eliminating obstacles or simplifying procedures.

As such UN/ECE provides consumer guarantees of safety and quality, helps protect the environment, facilitates trade and the greater integration of member States at the regional and international level.

At present UN/ECE has 55 member States.

1.2 Areas of activity

UN/ECE's main areas of activity are environment, transport (e.g., ATP, Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs), statistics, economic analysis, timber, development of trade, industry and enterprise, sustainable energy and human settlements. By publishing extensive economic analysis and statistics, UN/ECE encourages the exchange of views and the sharing of experience leading to greater mutual understanding and contributing to policy convergence. UN/ECE provides technical assistance to transition countries and sub-regional groupings, thus enabling them to benefit fully from its analytical, statistical and normative work.

2. UN/ECE STANDARDS FOR PERISHABLE PRODUCE AS TRADE FACILITATION

2.1 History

The UN/ECE Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development was established in 1949. Within its framework, and that of specialized expert groups, national experts on standardization and quality control develop the standards. The Geneva Protocol on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables and Dry and Dried Fruit was signed in 1954 (see Appendix 1) . It defines general rules for the commercial standardization of fruits and vegetables. All standards follow the standard layout (see Appendix 2) which was defined on the basis of the protocol. The standards define minimum quality requirements, commercial quality grades (Extra Class, Class I and Class II), tolerances for defects and requirements for presentation, packaging and marking.

2.2 Goals of the work

UN/ECE standards harmonize existing national commercial quality standards for perishable produce to:

Facilitate fair international trade and prevent technical barriers to trade:

Standards are indicative of actual commercial practice and define a common trading language for sellers and buyers. Negotiations and the establishment of a contract become easier and more transparent. In case of conflict, standards can be used as a reference point for international arbitration.

Improve producers' profitability and encourage production of high quality produce:

Standards allow producers to reduce costs at the production and sales levels and simplify their inventories because they have only one standard to comply with. The standards give them an indication of what is acceptable on international markets and they can produce, sort, pack and label their products accordingly.

Protect consumers' interest:

Consumers profit from an increased quality of the produce and transparency of the market. The presentation, packaging and marking requirements ensure that they receive relevant information on the produce.

The standards are intended for application at the point of export/dispatching control.

2.3 Work achieved

Close to 100 standards have been adopted in different areas:

- Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (46)
- Dry and Dried Fruit (17)
- Potatoes (3)
- Eggs and Egg Products (5)
- Meat (3)
- Cut Flowers (8)

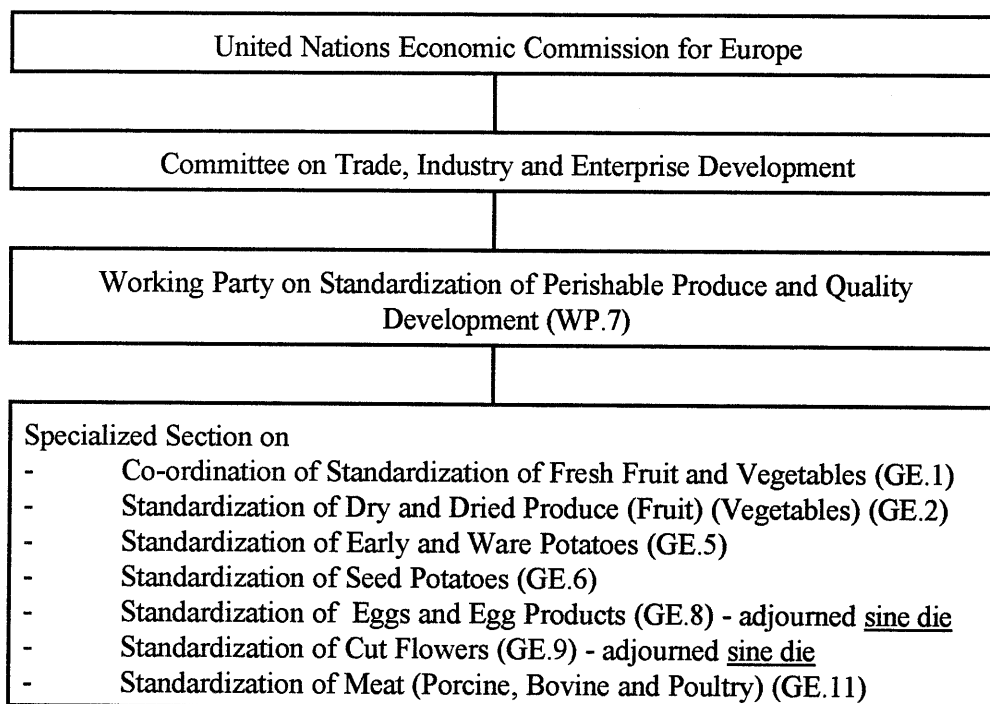
The complete list of UN/ECE standards is contained in Appendix 3.

Workshops on the harmonization of national standards with international commercial standards and quality control procedures have been organized in countries in transition as a means of trade facilitation.

3. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK

3.1 Structure of the subsidiary bodies

The following graphic presents the various subsidiary bodies which participate in the elaboration of UN/ECE standards:



3.2 Secretariat

The secretariat servicing WP.7 and its Specialized Sections is situated in the Trade Facilitation Section of the UN/ECE Trade Division.

This section is also responsible for the service of the United Nations Centre for facilitation of procedures and practices for administration, commerce and transport (UN/CEFACT).

Address of the secretariat:

UN/ECE Trade Division	Phone:	+41 22 917 2450
Agricultural Standards	Fax:	+41 22 917 0041
Palais des Nations	Email:	agrstandards@unece.org
Room 432	Homepage:	http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm
1211 Geneva 10		
Switzerland		

The homepage contains all relevant information about UN/ECEs work in this area as well as the texts of the standards.

3.3 Schedule of meetings

Working Party (WP.7)	3 days	annually
Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (GE.1)	4-5 days	annually
Dry and Dried Fruit (GE.2)	4-5 days	annually
Early and Ware Potatoes (GE.5)	2-3 days	biannually
Seed Potatoes (GE.6)	3-4 days	biannually
Meat (GE.11)	3 days	annually

Official languages: English, French and Russian.

Meetings take place in Geneva, or in a different place at the invitation (and cost) of a host country.

Documentation/ proposals received up to 10 weeks before the meeting will be translated and distributed.

In addition to the official meetings, informal working groups or meetings of rapporteurs are organized by host countries.

3.4 Attendance of meetings

As the purpose of commercial standardization is trade facilitation, the work greatly benefits from the attendance a wide range of United Nations member countries as participants and interested organizations as observers. The work procedure for the elaboration of a new UN/ECE standard or the revision of an existing standard gives a wide range of opportunities to consult all interested parties and come to a generally accepted compromise (see Appendix 4).

3.4.1 Participants

Any member State of the United Nations can attend as a participant if it has an interest in the standardization work either as a producing, importing or exporting country.

Participants may

- propose amendments for the revision of existing standards, according to their needs or interests;
- propose the elaboration of commercial quality standards for items of economic importance to them or their region;
- serve as members of the bureau (Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson)
- serve as expert rapporteurs for the elaboration or revision of UN/ECE standards;
- express objections to the decisions of the Working Party by formal reservations included in the texts of the standards, or noted in the reports of the Specialized Section, the Working Party or the Committee on Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development.

Countries beyond the UN/ECE region that have participated are:

Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, India, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Thailand, South Africa.

3.4.2 Observers

The following organizations participate as observers:

- European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO)
- European Union
- International Organization for Standardization (ISO)
- International and regional trade organizations, e.g.,
 - CIMO (Confederation of Importers and Marketing Organization in Europe of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables)
- Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme (Codex Alimentarius),
- Non-governmental organizations, e.g.,
 - CLAM (Comité de Liaison de l'Agrumiculture Méditerranéenne),
 - COLEACP (Comité de Liaison - Europe - Africa - Caraïbes - Pacifique - pour la promotion des fruits tropicaux, légumes de contre-saison, fleurs, plantes ornementales et épices).
 - European Article Numbering Association (EAN)
 - European Union of the Potato Trade (EUROPATAT)
- World Trade Organization (WTO)

Observers may:

- propose amendments for the revision of existing standards, according to their needs or interests;
- propose the elaboration of commercial quality standards for items of economic importance to them or their region;
- serve as expert rapporteurs for the elaboration or revision of UN/ECE standards;

3.5 Cooperation with other organizations

3.5.1 Cooperation with the European Commission

The European Union uses UN/ECE standards as a basis for its regulation. The ECE quality certificate is recognized as equivalent to the EU form for third countries. Close cooperation is maintained between the European Union Meeting of Governmental Experts on Standardization and the UN/ECE groups to ensure harmonization.

3.5.2 Cooperation with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

The OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables has adopted the UN/ECE standards and elaborates explanatory brochures based on them. The brochures include color photographs illustrating specific defects and serve as a tool for interpreting the provisions of the standards as well as promoting their international uniform application.

3.5.3 World Trade Organization

UN/ECE participates as an observer in several WTO committees.

3.5.4 FAO/WHO Joint Food Standards Programme (Codex Alimentarius)

The UN/ECE Working Party cooperates closely with the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme (Codex Alimentarius) especially with the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables to achieve harmonization of standards and to avoid duplication of work.

APPENDIX 1

GENEVA PROTOCOL ON STANDARDIZATION OF FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES AND DRY AND DRIED FRUIT

The Governments that have notified the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe of their acceptance of this Protocol adopt the general provisions set forth below concerning the standardization of products and undertake to ensure that they are put into effect for international trade between European countries within one year from their adoption.

*
* *
*

General provisions to be applied in Europe for the commercial standardization and quality control of fresh fruit and vegetables and dry or dried fruit dispatched in international traffic

This text defines the general characteristics to be possessed at the export control stage by marked produce dispatched in international traffic between or to European countries and normally intended to be sold or delivered in its original condition to the consumer.

I. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

Each product for which commercial quality standards are established shall be defined in a relevant standard by the name of the genus and species to which it belongs (Latin botanical reference followed, as the case may be, by the author's name). These standards shall be drawn up in conformity with the corresponding standard layout annexed hereto, specifying the condition in which the product is marketed: fresh, dry or dried.

However, a group of products may be the subject of a more general standard in so far as the characteristics of the products permit.

II. GENERAL PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

A. Minimum requirements

In all classes, allowances being made for the specific provisions and tolerances established for each class, produce shall satisfy minimum general requirements as regards, in particular, healthiness, cleanliness, appearance, humidity, absence of extraneous odour and/or flavour, development and/or maturity. The state of the produce shall be such as to withstand handling and transport and arrive at its destination in good condition.

B. Provisions concerning classification

Products may be classified in three classes, designated Extra, I and II, and defined according to their quality

characteristics and the extent to which they have certain defects.

In cases where a three-tier classification is not required, the relevant standard shall so stipulate.

III. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

In the case of produce subject to sizing, sizing may be determined, according to product, by reference to one or more of the following criteria:

Diameter, circumference, length, weight and/or, in relation to these criteria, maximum dimensions of the items of produce in a package;

- Number of items per kilogram
- Number of items in a given package.

IV. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

A. Quality tolerances

A certain percentage, by number or weight, of product not fulfilling the quality requirements of the class concerned may be allowed in each package, but in general this tolerance shall not exceed 5 per cent in the "Extra" class or 10 per cent in classes I and II.¹

Save where exceptionally provided for, the tolerance may not extend to produce affected by rot, visibly mouldy, or with serious bruises, unhealed cracks or any other form of deterioration making the produce unfit for consumption.

B. Sizing tolerances

A certain percentage, by number or weight, of items not corresponding to the stated size and/or the specified size limits may be allowed in each package, but this tolerance shall not exceed 10 per cent in any class.

However, in particular cases, the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development may, where justified and taking into account the nature of the produce, set higher or lower tolerances, or a specific tolerance for particular defects or sizes.

V. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

A. Uniformity

All the produce in each package shall be of the same origin, variety (or commercial type) quality and of

¹ *The packer/exporter should do everything possible to ensure that the produce arrives at its destination in good condition. He should therefore refrain from deliberately exploiting the full tolerances indicated above as they are only to allow for material or human errors which may occur in packing, handling or transport.*

the same crop year. In addition, homogeneity of size may be required in the case of produce subject to sizing.

In the case of produce pre-packed for direct sale to the consumer, a mixture of varieties, commercial types or species may be allowed provided this is appropriately indicated in the marking.

The visible part of the contents of the package shall be representative of the whole.

B. Packaging

The packaging shall be sufficiently strong and the contents so packed as to ensure that the produce is adequately protected.

The packing materials used inside the packages shall be new, clean and not liable to cause internal or external deterioration of the produce. The use of paper or stamps with commercial markings is authorized subject to the proviso that non-toxic ink or adhesive shall be used for the printing or labelling.

Subject to the tolerances allowed for each type of produce, packages shall not contain any foreign matter.

C. Presentation

If necessary, the mode or modes of presentation are defined in each relevant standard.

Dispatch in bulk in a transport unit may be authorized only for specified types of class II produce which are sufficiently resistant to withstand such carriage. The conditions for such authorization shall be set out in each relevant standard.

VI. PROVISIONS CONCERNING MARKING

Each package shall bear, grouped on the same side, in legible and indelible characters, visible from the outside, particulars of the identity of the packer and/or sender, the nature of the product, its origin, commercial characteristics and, if so desired, a check mark.²

For orders dispatched in bulk in a transport unit, these particulars shall be shown on a document accompanying the goods and conspicuously displayed inside the transport unit.

VII. Each government accepting this Protocol undertakes to take the necessary steps under its domestic law to adapt its commodity standards to the general provisions set forth above in the Protocol. In so doing it also undertakes to refer to the individual standards to be prepared by the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development on the basis of the foregoing general provisions, and shall have regard as far as possible to the particular provisions thereof.

VIII. On the expiry of the time-limit laid down, the Working Party shall examine the observations of each country on the manner in which these commitments have been met and the difficulties encountered.

² *Package units of produce pre-packed for direct sale to the consumer shall not be subject to these marking provisions but shall conform to the national requirements. However, the markings referred to shall in any event be shown on the transport packaging containing such package units.*

IX. The Working Party shall be responsible for:

- drafting new individual standards and, when necessary, amending the existing standards in the light of experience;
- setting any necessary time-limits for their complete application in each country;
- making arrangements concerning the organization of national controls with a view to achieving uniformity of methods and results;
- laying down the procedure for the revision of the individual standards in the light of the technical and economic evolution of the European market.

X. The Working Party shall also be responsible for drawing up, whenever it thinks best, the clauses of an international agreement calculated to confer a definite status on the European system of standardization of fruit and vegetables.

ANNEX I

SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS

A. Packaging and dispatch

Produce shall be suitably loaded and stowed in the transport unit and the conditions of transport shall be such as to ensure that it arrives at its destination in the best possible condition, having regard to its nature, the season, the type of transport and the length of the journey. The use of packagings conforming to the provisions of United Nations/ECE Resolution No. 222 on the standardization of packagings for the international transport of fresh or refrigerated fruit and vegetables is recommended.

B. Official checks in the exporting country

(a) Organization

The standards to be applied and the control regulations shall be issued by an appropriate government body. This provision shall in no way limit the buyer's rights of control.

The actual checking may be carried out by official bodies or by duly authorized associations, establishments or persons.

(b) Procedure

Compliance with the standards shall preferably be checked when the goods are packed or loaded for departure. However, checks may be undertaken during carriage, before the goods cross the frontier of the exporting country.

To reduce journey time as far as possible, it is recommended that checking of compliance with the standards should if possible be carried out in conjunction with any other checks or Customs inspections to which the exported goods are subject, conforming to the provisions of the United Nations/ECE International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods.

Where the goods are found to be in order, the competent authority shall issue a certificate of conformity, completed in the form shown and attached hereto. This certificate shall accompany the goods.

(c) Penalties

Without prejudice to any other penalties imposed by the inspecting authorities, produce shall be accepted for international traffic only if it conforms to the relevant standards.

C. The provisions of this Protocol are without prejudice to:

- the application of health and phytosanitary regulations in force in the importing country;
- checks on the conformity to the standards which could be carried out at a later stage by the importing country.

EXPLANATORY NOTES ON THE USE OF THE CONTROL CERTIFICATE

The following notes are intended to help inspectors to use the control certificate.

- Box N° 1** Name and address of the exporter or exporting firm. An identification code issued or approved by the official service may also be used.
- Box N° 2** Name and address or identification symbol marked on the package if different from that entered in section 1; if it is identical, there is no need to complete this section. When there are several packing agents, the entry "various" may be used.
- Box N° 3** Title or acronym of the official national control service.
- Box N° 4** Name of the producing country if the inspection takes place in that country. In the case of re-exported goods or goods of various (domestic and foreign) origins, the country of origin should be indicated in section 9, immediately after the nature of the produce; section 4 should be left blank or a line should be drawn through it.
- Box N° 5** Name of country to which the produce is being sent. However, if the country of final destination is not yet known at the time of inspection - particularly in the case of transport by sea or air - this entry may be replaced by the indication "unknown".
- Box N° 6** Number of wagon, registration number of lorry, number of container, name of vessel (possibly indicating "by sea") or "by air".
- Box N° 7** Specify any national regulations relating to the export of the produce in question.
- Box N° 8** Number and type of packages (boxes, trays, cartons, etc.). Specification of the type of package is optional.
- Box N° 9** Type of produce (apples, peaches, etc.) followed by the name of the country of origin where produce is re-exported or is of various origins (national and foreign). Name of the variety (Golden Delicious, Dixired, etc.) when specified by the standard.
- Box N° 10** Specify the quality class: EXTRA, I or II.
- Box N° 11** Specify the total net or gross weight of the consignment as indicated on the weighing slip or consignment note.
- Box N° 12**
- Customs office of departure: specify the place where the consignment must be cleared. This entry is optional.
 - Duration of validity: specify the number of days for which the certificate is valid, i.e. up to the point of departure from the exporting country (including the day of inspection). The number of days is fixed by the competent national authorities on the basis of criteria specific to each country (nature of produce, season, place of production, etc.).
 - Inspector: name of the person who inspects the consignment.
 - Signature: signature of the person who inspects the consignment.
 - Place and date of issue: place where the goods are inspected and date on which the certificate is issued.
- Box N° 13** Reserved for any additional observations. The inspector should delete this box when no observations are entered.

CONTROL CERTIFICATE

1 Exporter:	CONTROL CERTIFICATE No.....		
This certificate is for the exclusive use of control services.			
2 Packer as indicated on packing (if other than exporter):	3 Control service		
	4 Country of origin*:	5 Country of destination:	
6 Identification of means of transport:	7 Space reserved for national regulations **:		
8 Number (and kind**) of packages:	9 Nature of produce (variety when specified by the standard):	10 Quality class:	11: Total weight in kg gross/net ***
12 The above mentioned Inspection Service certifies that on the basis of an examination by sampling the consignment referred to above conforms, at the time of inspection, with the quality standards in force.			
..... Customs office of departure **	 Place and date of issue	
Duration of validity **** days			
..... Inspector (name in block capitals)			
Signature:		Seal of Inspection Service	
13 Observations			

- * When the produce is re-exported, indicate its origin after the nature of produce
- ** Optional
- *** Delete where inapplicable
- **** Valid up to point of exit of the exporting country (including day of inspection)

ANNEX II

NOTE ON THE INTERPRETATION TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION AND PACKAGING OF THE PRODUCE

1. In the course of the discussions which took place during its Sixth Session (24-27 October 1955), the Working Party found it desirable to define clearly the interpretation to be given to the provisions of the Protocol on the Standardization of Fruit and Vegetables (document AGRI/WP.1/40/Rev.1) as far as they concern the presentation and packaging of the produce.
2. The Protocol establishes as a general rule that both the produce itself and the conditions under which it is packaged and transported have to be such as to allow the produce to reach its destination in good condition. In every case it falls to the exporter to choose a form of packaging and presentation which will assure proper protection for the produce to be delivered, taking into account the degree of liability to damage of the product in question, the duration of the journey, etc.
3. The Working Party specified that:
 - consignment "in bulk" (see "Definitions" below) is normally applicable only to produce in Class II which is sufficiently resistant to withstand this form of transport;
 - consignment "in bulk" is not normally allowed for produce in the "Extra" class and in Class I. In these classes consignment "in bulk" is strictly prohibited for all fruits but may be used in the case of certain particularly resistant vegetables, such as cabbages;
 - consignment "in bulk in packages" (see "Definitions" below) in principle applies only to produce in Classes I and II and only in exceptional circumstances may it be accepted for produce in the "Extra" class which has a low unit value.

Definitions

The term "in bulk", without further qualification, means direct loading into a means of transport.

The term "in bulk in packages" means that the produce is put into packages without any particular arrangement, in layers or otherwise.

4. In view of the need to encourage exporters to adopt the most economic type of packaging and transport - it being explicitly understood that the quality of the produce must be maintained until it reaches the consumer - the Working Party decided that the individual standards should lay down in every case the exceptions to the above provisions which may be made for certain products. The individual standards should also establish the provisions to be applied for each class of produce as regards sizing and with respect to the manner in which the produce is packed (in rows or layers or in bulk in packages).

Published 1958
Revised 1985

APPENDIX 2
STANDARD LAYOUT FOR UN/ECE STANDARDS
concerning the marketing and commercial quality
control of Fresh fruit and vegetables moving in international trade
between and to UN/ECE member countries

NOTE: *This standard layout was adopted by the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce at its Forty-first session in October 1985 and approved by the Committee on Agricultural Problems at its thirty-seventh session in 1986. It was elaborated in close co-ordination with the revision of the Geneva Protocol on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables and Dry and Dried Fruit. This standard layout will provide the frame for current and future work on UN/ECE standards for fresh fruit and vegetables.*

UN/ECE STANDARD FFV-...
concerning the marketing and commercial
quality control of

.....
moving in international trade between and to
UN/ECE member countries

I. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This standard applies to of varieties (cultivars) grown from [Latin Botanical reference followed where necessary by the author's name] to be supplied fresh to the consumer, for industrial processing being excluded.

..... [Additional provisions concerning the definition of the produce may be included under this heading]

II PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

The purpose of the standard is to define the quality requirements of at the export control stage³, after preparation and packaging.

A. Minimum requirements

In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the must be:

- intact [depending on the nature of produce, a deviation from the provision is allowed]
- sound; produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter [with regard to traces of soil, a

³ *The delegations of Germany, the United Kingdom and Austria maintained their opinion that the standards should apply at all stages of marketing, but agreed that the corresponding footnote should no longer appear in the various standards covered by this Standard Layout.*

- deviation from this provision is allowed depending on the nature of produce]
- practically free from pests
- practically free from damage caused by pests
- free of abnormal external moisture
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

[Additional provisions may be made for specific standards depending on the nature of produce].

The produce must be sufficiently developed, and display satisfactory ripeness, depending on the nature of produce.

The development and condition of the must be such as to enable them:

- to withstand transport and handling, and
- to arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination.

B. Classification

..... are classified in two or three classes defined below⁴ .

(i) ***"Extra" Class***

..... in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

They must be:

.....
[Provisions depending on the nature of produce].

They must be free from defects with the exception of very slight superficial defects provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package.

(ii) ***Class I***

..... in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial type.

They must be:

.....
(Provisions depending on the nature of produce).

⁴ For special standards where it does not appear necessary to establish a classification, only the minimum requirements apply.

The following slight defects, however, may be allowed provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package:

.....
(Defects allowed, depending on the nature of produce).

(iii) **Class II**

This class includes which do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes but satisfy the minimum requirements specified above.

They must be:

.....
(Provisions depending on the nature of produce)

The following defects may be allowed provided the retain their essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

.....
(Defects allowed, depending on the nature of produce).

III. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Size is determined by (diameter, length, weight, circumference depending on the nature of produce).

..... (Provisions on minimum and maximum sizes and size range depending on the nature of produce, the variety, the commercial type and possibly the individual classes).

IV. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

Tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each package [or in each lot for produce presented in bulk] for produce not satisfying the requirements of the class indicated.

A. Quality tolerances

(i) **"Extra" Class**

5 per cent by number or weight of not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class I or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

..... [Possible tolerances for individual defects depending on the nature of produce].

(ii) **Class I**

10 per cent by number or weight of not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class II, or exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

..... [Possible tolerances for individual defects depending on the nature of produce].

(iii) **Class II**

10 per cent by number or weight of satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements, with the exception of produce affected by rotting or any other deterioration rendering it unfit for consumption.

..... [Possible tolerances for individual defects according to the nature of produce].

B. Size tolerances

For all classes [for individual standards, however, different provisions according to the individual classes may be laid down]: 10 per cent by number or weight of not satisfying the requirements as regards sizing.

..... [Possible provisions concerning admissible limits of deviations for sized or unsized produce].

V. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

A. Uniformity

The contents of each package [or lot for produce presented in bulk] must be uniform and contain only of the same origin, quality and size (if sized). [In addition for individual standards uniformity concerning variety and/or commercial type may be laid down depending on the nature of produce].

..... [Other possible provisions depending on the nature of produce].

The visible part of the contents of the package [or lot for produce presented in bulk] must be representative of the entire contents.

B. Packaging

..... must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly.

The materials used inside the package must be new, clean and of a quality such as to avoid causing any external or internal damage to the produce. The use of materials, particularly of paper or stamps bearing trade specifications is allowed provided the printing or labelling has been done with non-toxic ink or glue.

Packages [or lots for produce presented in bulk] must be free of all foreign matter.

C. Presentation

Specific provisions relating to the presentation of the produce may be included at this point.

For individual standards more stringent provisions concerning the presentation in the "Extra" Class may be laid down.

VI. PROVISIONS CONCERNING MARKING

Each package⁵ must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legibly and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside:

(for transported in bulk (direct loading into a transport vehicle) these particulars must appear on a document accompanying the goods, and attached in a visible position inside the transport vehicle).

A. Identification

Packer) Name and address or
and/or) officially issued or
Dispatcher) accepted code mark. ⁶

B. Nature of produce

- Name of the produce if the contents are not visible from the outside
-
- [Name of the variety and/or commercial type according to the nature of produce].

C. Origin of produce

- Country of origin and, optionally, district where grown, or national, regional or local place name.

D. Commercial specifications

- Class
- Size (if sized)
-
- [Other possible particulars depending on the nature of produce].

E. Official control mark (optional)

Adopted in 1985
Last revised 1996

⁵ See Geneva Protocol, footnote 2, under "Marking".

⁶ The national legislation of a number of countries requires the explicit declaration of the name and address. However, in the case where a code mark is used, the reference "packer and/or dispatcher (or equivalent abbreviations)" has to be indicated in close connection with the code mark.

**APPENDIX 3
LIST OF UN/ECE STANDARDS**

Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

<p>Annonas Apples and pears Apricots Artichokes Aubergines Asparagus Avocados Beans Bilberries Broccoli Brussels sprouts Cabbages Carrots Cauliflower Chinese cabbage Cherries</p>	<p>Citrus fruit Courgettes Cucumbers Cultivated mushrooms Edible sweet chestnuts Fennel Fresh figs Garlic Horse-radish Kiwifruit Leeks Lettuce, curled-leaved endives and broad-leaved endives Mangoes Melons Onions Peaches and nectarines Plums</p>	<p>Radishes Raspberries Rhubarb Ribbed celery Scorzonera Shelling peas Spinach Strawberries Sweet peppers Table grapes Tomatoes Watermelons Witloof chicory</p>
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Dry and Dried Produce (Fruit)

<p>Apples, dried Apricots, dried Cashew kernels (in preparation) Dates, whole Figs, dried Grapes, dried Hazelnuts, inshell Hazelnut kernels Pears, dried</p>	<p>Pine nuts, decorticated peeled Pistachio kernels, decorticated and decorticated peeled Pistachio nuts, unshelled Prunes Sweet almonds, decorticated Sweet almonds, unshelled Walnut kernels Walnuts, unshelled</p>
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Potatoes

<p>Early Potatoes Seed Potatoes Ware Potatoes</p>

Meat

<p>Bovine carcasses and commercial cuts (in preparation) Porcine carcasses and commercial cuts Poultry meat</p>

Cut Flowers

<p>Carnations Chrysanthemums Cut flowers Cut foliage Gladioli Multi-floral carnations Roses Strelitzias</p>

Eggs and Egg Products

<p>Certain hen's egg products for use in the food industry Chilled eggs in shell Eggs in shell Eggs in shell for processing Preserved eggs in shell</p>

APPENDIX 4
PROCEDURE FOR THE ELABORATION/REVISION OF A STANDARD

<p>1. A proposal with a justification to elaborate a new UN/ECE Standard or to revise an existing UN/ECE Standard is transmitted by an interested party and agreed by the Specialized Section and the Working Party.</p> <p>A rapporteur or an informal working group is given the task to elaborate a draft text. (→ 2.)</p>
<p>2.* If a consensus is reached in the Specialized Section the text is forwarded to the Working Party for consideration to adopt it as a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UN/ECE Recommendation for a two-year trial period (usually the case for new standards or major revisions) (→ 3.); or - UN/ECE standard (usually the case for minor revisions) (→ 3.). <p>If no consensus can be reached, the Specialized Section can decide to further discuss the text at subsequent sessions or to send it back to the rapporteur/informal working group; (→ 2.)</p>
<p>3.* The Working Party considers the proposal of the Specialized Section. It can, if there is consensus, agree to the proposal of the Specialized Section and adopt the text as a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UN/ECE Recommendation for a two-year trial period** (→ 4.); or - UN/ECE standard (→ End of the procedure) <p>If no consensus is reached it can refer the text back to the Specialized Section with a justification (→ 2.)</p>
<p>4.* After completion of the two-year trial period the recommendation is discussed again in the Specialized Section. It can decide on amendments and, if there is consensus, forward it to the Working Party for consideration to adopt it as a UN/ECE standard. (→ 5.)</p> <p>If no consensus is reached, the Specialized Section proposes to the Working Party to extend the trial period for one further year. (→ 5.)</p>
<p>5.* The Working Party discusses the proposal of the Specialized Section. It can, if there is consensus, agree to the proposal of the Specialized Section and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopt the Recommendation as a UN/ECE standard (→ End of the procedure); or - extend the trial period for the Recommendation for one further year (→ 6.) <p>If no consensus is reached it can refer the text back to the Specialized Section with a justification (→ 2.)</p>
<p>6.* After completion of the extended trial period the recommendation is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopted as a UN/ECE Standard (→ End of the procedure); or - referred back to the Specialized Section as a draft (→ 2.)

* In any case, reservations against the whole text or parts of it may be entered by participants to express disagreement without preventing the text to be forwarded to the Working Party or adopted as a recommendation or standard.

** If a revised standard is adopted as a recommendation, the original standard remains in force but the new text can already be used in trade.



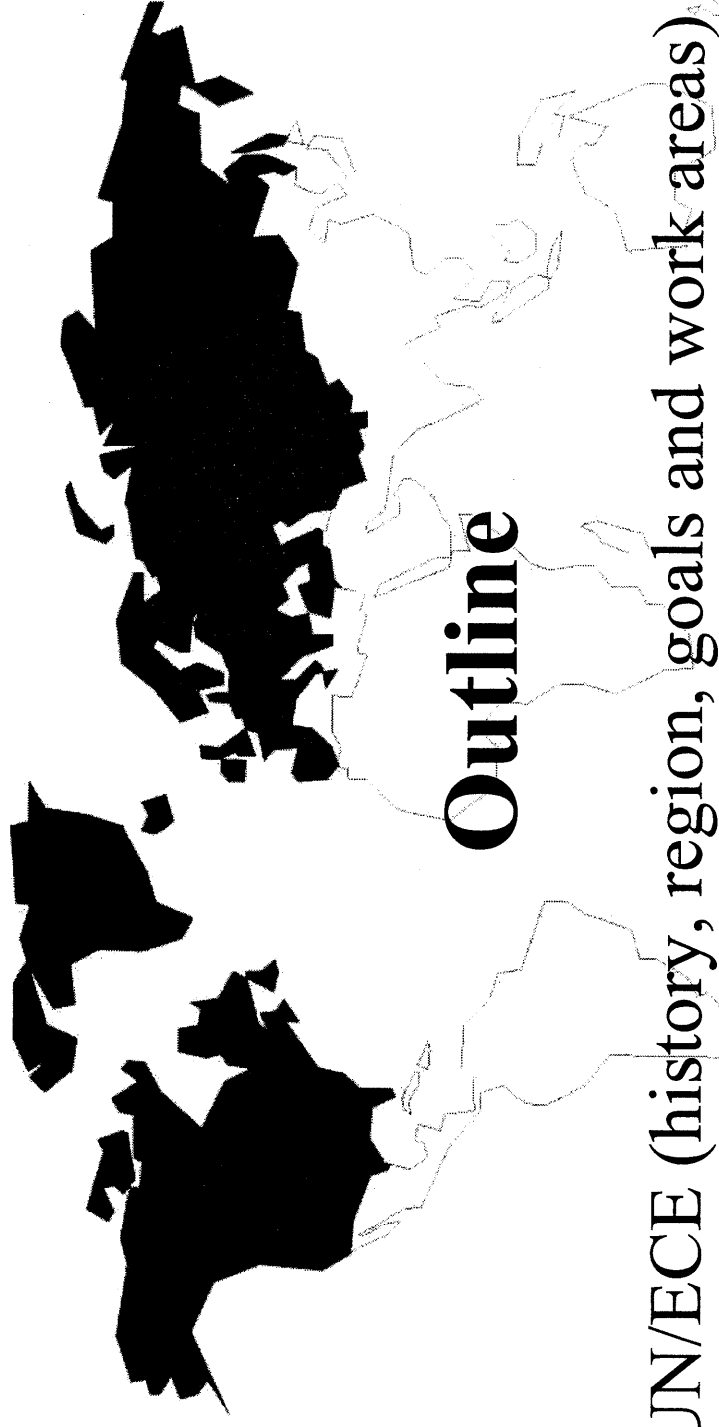
Standardization of Perishable Produce in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

ESCWA EXPERT GROUP MEETING, BEIRUT 27-29 April 1999

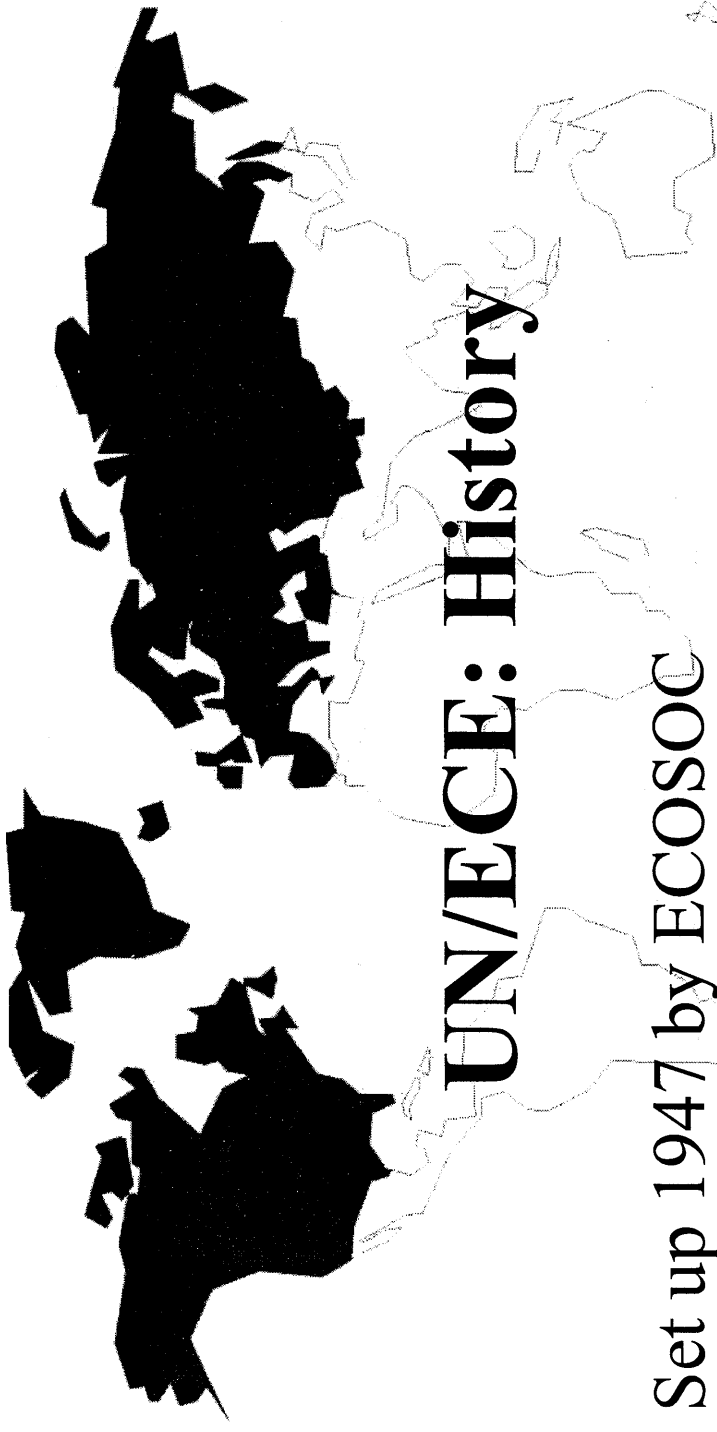
Tom Heilandt

Economic Affairs Officer

UN/ECE Trade Division



- UN/ECE (history, region, goals and work areas)
- UN/ECE standards (history, goals, results, organization and work methods)
- UN/ECE standards on the internet (presentation and outlook)



UN/ECE: History

- Set up 1947 by ECOSOC
- one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations (ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA)
- Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
- About 200 employees



- 55 member States in North America, Asia and Europe
- Among those: 26 countries in transition
- 64% of world production
- 60% of total exports
- 60% of the world's CO² emissions



UN/ECE: Goals

- Encourage economic co-operation
- Provide a forum for governments to develop conventions, regulations and standards
- Facilitate greater integration of member states at the regional and international level (especially for countries in transition)



- Economic analysis
- Statistics
- Energy
- Environment and human settlements
- Transport
- Trade



Trade Facilitation

- **UN/CEFACT**
 - Trade facilitation recommendations
 - **UN/EDIFACT**
 - **UN/LOCODE**
- Standardization of perishable produce



UN/ECE Standards: History

- Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development established 1949
- Geneva Protocol on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables and Dry and Dried Fruit signed 1954



UN/ECE Standards: Goals

- Harmonization of existing national standards to:
 - Facilitate fair international trade
 - Encourage high quality production
 - Improve producers' profitability
 - Protect consumers' interests



Standard Layout

- Minimum requirements
- Commercial quality grades (Extra, I, II)
- Tolerances for defects
- Presentation, packaging and marking



List of Standards

- Fresh fruit and vegetables (46)
- Dry and dried fruit (17)
- Potatoes (3)
- Meat (3) and eggs (5)
- Cut flowers (8)



Structure of Subsidiary Bodies

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Trade Industry
and Enterprise Development

Working Party (WP.7)

5 Specialized Sections





International Meetings

- Standards are developed by experts from participating countries in co-operation with experts from observer organizations
- 16 meeting days per year
- Rule for adoption: unanimous consensus among participants



International Meetings: Participants

- Any member State of the United Nations having an interest as producing, importing or exporting country
- Countries beyond the ECE region that have participated:
 - Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, India, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Thailand, South Africa

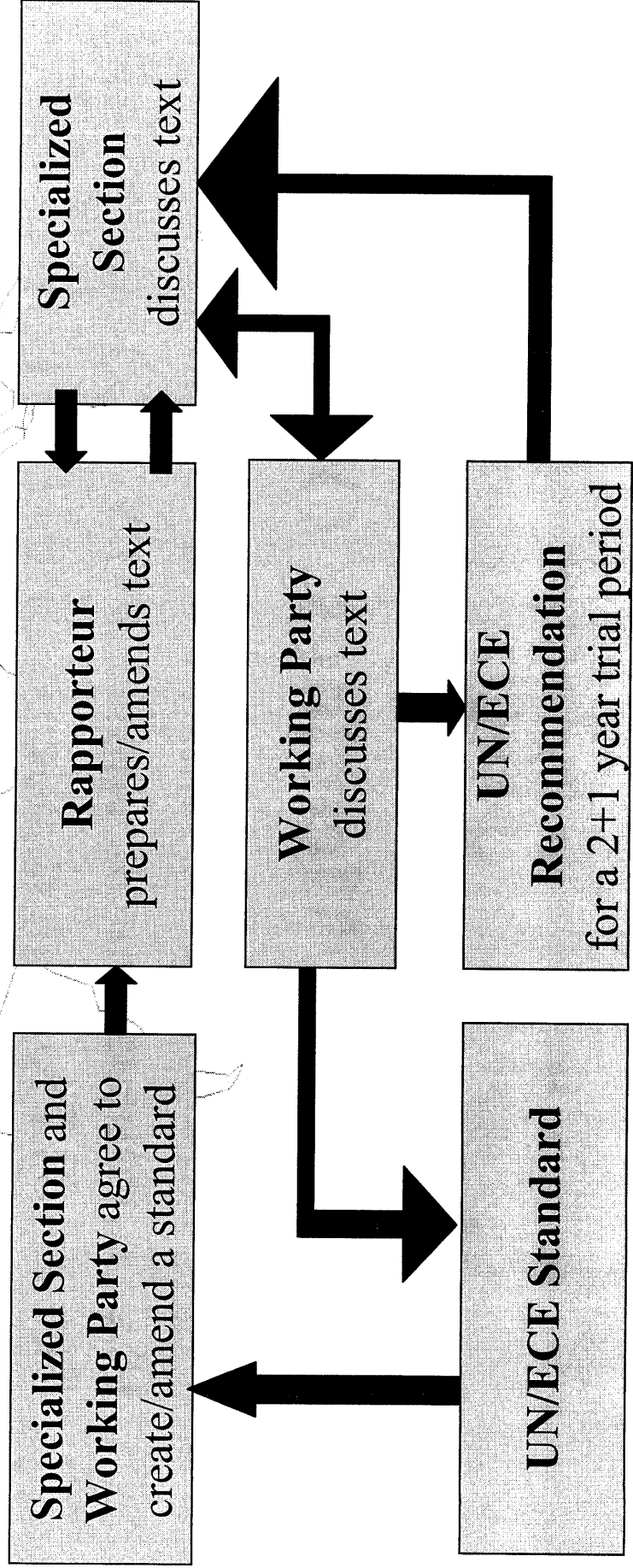


International Meetings: Observers

- Intergovernmental organizations
(e.g. European Union, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Program (Codex), OECD, WTO)
- Non-governmental organizations
(e.g. CLAM, COLEACP, EAN)
- International and regional trade organizations
(e.g. CIMO)



Process of Elaborating a Standard





Reservations

- against the whole text of a standard or parts of it
- allow participants to express disagreement without preventing the adoption of a standard
- can be entered at all stages of the development of a standard
- are published in the text of the standards or in a report of one of the subsidiary bodies



Application of UN/ECE Standards

- the Geneva Protocol recommends that countries adapt their national legislation to align it with the provisions of the standards
- the scope of application is enlarged through co-operation with other organizations



Co-operation with other organizations

- **European Union:** uses UN/ECE standards as a basis for its regulations
- **FAO/WHO (Codex Alimentarius):** takes UN/ECE standards into account when elaborating Codex standards
- **OECD Scheme:** uses UN/ECE standards and develops explanatory brochures based on them
- **WTO:** UN/ECE has observer status in several committees



UN/ECE standards on the internet

- [Http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm](http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm)
- texts of standards and information about the working groups
- in the future: electronic discussion groups