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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 Meat
27-29 March 2000, Geneva

REPORT ON ITS NINTH SESSION

Executive summary

Participation: Eleven countries, the European Community and one non-governmental organization were represented.

UN/ECE Standard for bovine carcasses and cuts: The General Requirements, the Bovine specific section and the individual product specifications were finalized and will be forwarded to the Working Party for adoption as a new UN/ECE Standard. Publication issues will be resolved by the rapporteurs and the Secretariat.

UN/ECE Standard for porcine carcasses and cuts: The reformatting of this standard, especially the integration of the new coding system will be finalized by the rapporteurs.

UN/ECE trade mark for meat: Discussions on the subject continued. The Bureau members assisted by the secretariat will create a document to inform and seek advice from the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development (WP.7) as well as the Working Party on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies (WP.6).

Publications: The secretariat will get in touch with the Publication Services of the United Nations to determine the possibilities of publishing the cut specifications of the bovine standard in a high colour quality, loose-leaf A4 format. The rapporteurs will decide on the final format of the publication. As soon as the texts are adopted by the Working Party the standard will be published on the homepage.

Operational activities: the rapporteurs will discuss the development of training courses to assist countries in implementing global, multi-industry solutions for efficient supply chain management for meat products.

Future meetings: The next meetings of the rapporteurs in 2000 have been tentatively scheduled as follows: Sao Paulo (Brazil), 25-27 September; Geneva, 12 November. The next session of the Specialized Section has been tentatively scheduled for 25 to 27 April 2001.

Future work: Future work will include discussion of draft UN/ECE standards for bovine meat and chicken meat as well as a pilot study on the implementation of the bovine standard.

New bureau: Mr. B. Carpenter (USA) confirmed as Chairman; Mr. I. King (Australia) newly elected as Vice-Chairman.

Opening of the session

1. The meeting was held in Geneva on 28 and 29 March 2000. A Meeting of Rapporteurs on Standardization of Bovine Meat took place in Geneva on 27 March 2000.

2. The session was opened by the Deputy Director of the UN/ECE Trade Division, Mr. Hans Hansell, who welcomed the delegations to Geneva. He thanked the delegation of Australia for hosting a meeting of rapporteurs in 1999 and also for printing the draft standard for bovine carcasses and cuts in colour and distributing it to the delegations. He expressed the hope that the standard could be finalized at this session and that progress could be made on defining the modalities for having a UN/ECE quality trade mark for meat. He said that the final publication of the standard should be available on the homepage of the Agricultural Standards Unit. He informed delegations that the Chairman of the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development, Mr. Vilchez-Barros, now served also as Chairman of the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development and had, together with the secretariat, actively promoted UN/ECE's work on standardization of perishable produce at several international conferences.

Participation

3. The session was attended by delegations of the following countries: Argentina; Australia; Austria; Brazil; France; Greece; New Zealand; Poland; Switzerland; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

4. The European Community was also represented.

5. A representative of the following non-governmental organization also participated: EAN International.

6. A list of participants will be published on the home page of the Agricultural Standards Unit (<http://www.unece.org/trade/agr>).

Adoption of the Agenda

Document: TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/1

7. The Meeting adopted the Provisional Agenda with the addition of the following documents

- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/INF.1 (Danish Porc Codes)
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/INF.2 (Letter from Universidade Estadual de Campinas)
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/INF.3 (USDA trade descriptions for poultry meat)
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/INF.4 (AMS news release: specifications for fresh goat)
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/INF.5 (New example)
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/INF.6 (Report meeting of rapporteurs 27 March 2000)
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/INF.7 (Adopted texts)
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/INF.8 (Adopted texts)
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/INF.9 (Adopted texts)

8. The draft English version of the UN/ECE Standard for Bovine Carcasses and Cuts in English including colour photographs has been sent to each delegation by the rapporteur from Australia. This document should be read in connection with documents TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/3, 4 and 5.

Matters of Interest Arising Since the Eighth Session

9. The Meeting took note of document TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/2 summing up the relevant 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.

Report of the Meetings of Rapporteurs

General requirements

Discussion at the last session: see TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/1999/5, paragraphs 16-27

Document for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/3

10. The general requirements were decided at the last session and adopted by the Working Party. The present document contains the newest version of the general requirements as discussed by the Meeting of Rapporteurs in Brisbane. Several new amendments to the General requirements were decided and a new consolidated text is included in Addendum 1 to this report. This text will be forwarded to the Working Party for adoption.

11. Major changes besides editorial corrections concern:

- Numbering: In order to avoid confusion with the species specific sections, the number "0" was added to all section numbers (0.1.0,...).
- 1.0 Foreword: A new sentence was added encouraging participation in the further development of the standard.
- 2.0 Scope/
Application: A table concerning class codes for present and future standards on meat was included (e.g. 1 for beef; 3 for pork). These numbers will also be used preceding the section numbers for the species specific sections.
- 4.8.1 Logo It was decided to delete this section from the general requirements until the question has been discussed conclusively (see also para.....)
- 4.9 EAN/UCC The present example was renumbered example 1 and the UN/ECE code used will be changed to reflect a possible case. In the numbering below the bar code the species code and the item number will be highlighted. A new example 2 concerning different use of the codification system (coding only basic information in a bar code and communicating other information via EDI) was added.

12. The delegation of EAN International informed that the Application Identifier (AI) for the UN/ECE standard code has been adopted by the EAN Technical Committee.

Bovine specific section

Discussion at the last session: see TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/1999/5, paragraphs 28-34, 44(a)

Document for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/4

13. The document represents the outcome of the discussions on the bovine specific section held at the rapporteurs' meeting in Brisbane. Several new amendments to the bovine specific section were decided and a new consolidated text is included in addendum 1 to this report. This text will be forwarded to the Working Party for adoption.

14. Major changes besides editorial corrections concern:
- Numbering: The number "1" (class code for bovine) was added to all section numbers to distinguish the bovine specific section from other sections.
 - 4.3 Marbling The section was extended to provide further information about the use of the recommended systems.
 - Beef specific coding The section was combined with the section on specified use codes and moved to the end of the text to make it easier to read. Further explanations concerning the codes for lean and fat colour and packaging, as well as an example, were included.
15. The delegation of the European Community said that according to regulation 820/1997 provisions allowing for a total traceability would soon become binding within the European Union. He said that it could be useful if the UN/ECE standard also addressed these issues.
16. This was agreed in principle by other delegations and it was said that in fact provisions for traceability were included in the bovine specific requirements but that they were not included in the UN/ECE code.
17. The delegation of EAN International said that the EAN system already allows traceability to be communicated. Different application identifiers as well as guidelines on traceability have been adopted to implement the EU regulation. He suggested that a flag indicating whether traceability could be required might be included in the UN/ECE code and depending on that flag the mechanisms already provided by the EAN system could be used. He said that trying to code all kinds of traceability issues in the UN/ECE code would make this code longer and lead to a duplication of codes.
18. It was agreed to include the flag for traceability in the digit currently used for Grade/Classification. The specifics of traceability could be described in an annex to the standard if needed.
19. It was agreed that in general annexes should be used to describe items that are part of a specific area of the market place (e.g. type of breed).

Summary text for individual product specifications

Document for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/5

20. The document contains a summary text of the individual product descriptions and forms part of the carcasses and cuts specification section. Australia (AUS-MEAT) developed photos and prepared draft copies for all countries attending the session of the Specialized Section in March. These are in English only and were forwarded direct to the different delegations.
21. Several new amendments were decided and a new consolidated text is included in addendum 3 to this report. This text will be forwarded to the Working Party for adoption.
22. The following changes were adopted:
- Title page: Change title to "Bovine Carcasses and Cuts".
 - In the foreword add: "The descriptions contained in this document indicate one way of accurately producing the cut. Other production methods yielding equivalent results may be used."
 - The list of countries needs to be completed with all countries who worked on the standard. Replace "America" by "United States" and "England" by "United Kingdom". Add EAN International.

- It was agreed that a table containing the names of cuts in several languages should be included (at least in English, French, Russian and Spanish, possibly different Spanish versions for South-American countries). The information will be provided by the countries who wish their language to be included.
- Item No. 1000: Change "1000-1" to "1001"
- Item No. 1010: Allow rib numbers from 0-10 ribs and adapt the item no. accordingly.
- Item No. 1020: Amend "75mm" to read "50mm".
- Item No. 1500: Use item no. 1501 for option B.
- Item Nos. 1510, 1520, 2483: Replace "(1500)" with "(1500 or 1501)"
- Item No. 1643: Add a specification for cutting lines for the brisket set.
- Item No. 1680: create 3 item no. as follows:
 - 1680 Forequarter
 - 1681 Hindquarter
 - 1682 Forequarter/Hindquarter
- Item No. 6449E Delete 6449E (beef bones) from the standard. It was considered that there was no significant international trade in these products and they did not belong to meat cuts. If necessary a specific standard for these and similar products could be drafted at a later stage.
- Item No. 2234: Use 2230 (5-ribs) in the heading and adapt the picture accordingly.
- Item No. 2244: Use 2240 (5-ribs) in the heading and adapt the picture accordingly.
- Item No. 1604, 2234, 2244: Add a note as follows:

“NOTE: This item is also frequently prepared from a pistola hindquarter.”
- In the alphabetical list of muscle names, assign item numbers 0000-0108.

Reformatting of the porcine standard

Discussion at the last session: see TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/1999/5, paragraphs 13-15, 44(d)

Document for this session: TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/6 (United States)

23. At the last session the Specialized Section agreed to use a new structure for its standards (separating general from specific requirements) and decided to review the porcine standard to integrate it into the new framework.

24. The delegation of the United States presented a document outlining how the standard could be reformatted. He said that the changes were only editorial. The document from was adopted in principle. Additionally it was decided that the section numbering for the porcine specific section should start with "3" in line with the class code for porcine meat.

25. It was realized that the coding system used in the present porcine standard would have to be adapted to the system outlined in the general requirements (it uses only 11 digits, e.g. the present cut code has only got 2 digits).

26. The delegation of Poland said that the codes should be kept in line with those in the present standard because they were already used in trade by several countries and it would be difficult to change them.

27. It was decided to give the task to review the coding system to the rapporteurs who would report back to the Specialized Section at its next session. It was said that in the next three to five years it might be necessary to review the porcine standard more extensively to update it and keep it aligned with trade practices.

UN/ECE trade mark

Discussion at the last session: see TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/1999/5, paragraphs 38-43

Discussion at the Working Party: see TRADE/WP.7/1999/7, paragraphs 93-94

28. Initial discussions on preparing a draft protocol on conformity assessment and a possible UN/ECE trade mark were held at the last session of the Specialized Section as well as at the meeting of rapporteurs. The principle of the cooperation between the Specialized Section and the Working Party on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies (WP.6) was agreed by WP.7.

29. At the meeting of rapporteurs text concerning the trade mark was drafted for inclusion into the general requirements in section 4.8.1.

30. It was clarified that the UN/ECE standards for meat intend to define a common trading language for buyer and seller to facilitate trade. The standards include only basic mandatory requirements (refrigeration, condition, packaging, labelling, etc.) and are not to be confused with veterinary requirements and other standards for meat which focus on meat quality.

31. The standards do not prescribe to the trading partners what has to be done but recommend how the trade could be organized in a comprehensive way. They define a standard product and allow for additional requirements to be included in the trade agreement (e.g. organic production, traceability).

32. In this context a UN/ECE trade mark would guarantee that the product traded is specified according to the language defined in the standard and complies with the specifications it is sold with. This could be simple conformity with the general requirements and the cuts specifications or also conformity with additional requirements (as described in the annexes to the standards). This would allow these products to be identified and give a competitive advantage to companies using the mark and thus promote the use of the standard.

33. In the discussion it was identified that a protocol for the creation of a trade mark needs to address the following items:

- (1) An enterprise intending to mark their products with the trade mark needs to be certified by an accreditation body to prove that:
 - (a) it complies with the standard (uses the specification language)
 - (b) the products conform to the specification.
- (2) The accreditation body certifying enterprises needs to prove (it still has to be clarified to whom) that it has a system in place that enables it to certify enterprises in a way that ensures a standard quality of accreditation (e.g. conforming to ISO 9002:1994 and ISO guide on certification)
- (3) How conflicts are resolved.

34. It was discussed how the accreditation bodies could be selected. Several suggestions were made:

- an accreditation body could be named by each country (the country guaranteeing the quality);
- the decision could be left to an agreement between buyer and seller who would agree on one of the established auditing companies for the conformity assessment;
- the UN/ECE could have a memorandum of understanding with ISO (International Organization for Standardization) on the choice of accreditation bodies as well as the resolution of conflicts.

35. It was mentioned by the delegation of Poland that one organization might not be enough to certify conformity with the standard. He suggested that for each country a contact address could be provided which would then provide a list of organizations who can certify different aspects of the standard.

36. It was suggested by the delegation of EAN that an auditor be contacted to review how the standard could be audited by an accreditation body.

37. It was questioned by some delegations whether the Specialized Section was the right body to take a decision on the use of the UN logo or whether higher bodies needed to be asked. In the discussion it was agreed that the Specialized Section could make a statement of intent which would then be transmitted to higher bodies for discussion.

38. The rapporteurs were charged to discuss the matter further and to propose a draft protocol to the next session of the Specialized Section.

Publications

Porcine standard

39. It was decided that the porcine standard should be reprinted after all changes due to the reformatting and the introduction of the new coding system have been finalized. The rapporteurs were charged with finalizing the coding system and proposing to the Specialized Section the exact modalities (languages, format, quality) for a reprint. As soon as the texts are finalised the standard will be published on the homepage of the Agricultural Standards Unit.

General requirements

40. It was decided to publish the UN/ECE General Requirements for Meat as a separate booklet in A4 format.

Bovine standard

41. It was decided that the secretariat would get in touch with the publication services of the United Nations to determine the possibilities of publishing the cut specifications of the bovine standard in a high colour quality, loose leaf A4 format. At the next rapporteurs meeting when all information was available a decision on the modalities for the publication would be taken. As soon as the texts are adopted by the Working Party the standard will be published on the homepage.

Preparation of the meetings of rapporteurs and the next session of the Specialized Section Date, place and tasks of the next meetings of rapporteurs

Sao Paulo (Brazil), 25-27 September 2000

42. The delegation of EAN International offered to host a meeting of rapporteurs following the World Meat Congress in Sao Paulo (Brazil) from 25-27 September 2000 or alternatively in Brussels, Cologne or Paris for three days during the first half of October. The delegation of Brazil welcomed the proposal and offered to host the meeting at the Faculty of Food Engineering of the Universidade Estadual de Campinas in Sao Paulo.

43. The delegations of Argentina, Australia, Brazil, EAN International, New Zealand and the United States indicated that they would be able to participate in that meeting. The other delegations are invited to communicate to the secretariat until 1 June 2000 whether they could participate in the decision. The decision where to hold the meeting will be taken by the Chairman on the basis of the information received.

44. A formal agenda for the meeting of rapporteurs will be annexed to this report. It will include the following topics:

- Codification system for porcine meat
- Publication issues for bovine and porcine
- Discussion of a draft standard for ovine meat (to be prepared by New Zealand with Australia, France and the United Kingdom)
- Discussion of a draft standard for chicken meat (to be prepared by the United States with France and the United Kingdom)
- Operational activities

45. It was agreed that the agenda for this meeting with an official invitation letter should also be sent to experts that are not currently participating in the work of the Specialized Section but who might be interested in the species to be discussed at the meeting and who might be present at the World Meat Congress. The Chairman and the secretariat will draft the invitation letter.

46. The other delegations were invited to provide contact addresses to the secretariat. It was recalled that a similar activity a couple of years ago had helped to increase participation significantly.

Geneva, 9th November 2000

47. It was decided that a second meeting of the rapporteurs should be held in connection with the annual session of the Working Party. This session will have the discussion of the UN/ECE trade mark as its only agenda item.

48. The delegations of Australia, the United States will together with the secretariat, prepare a white paper explaining the issues under discussion and suggesting possible solutions. The paper will contain section 4.8.1 (as contained in TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/3) and further explanations about the trade mark. This document will be circulated for comments to the members of the Specialized Section before 15 June 2000. Any comments need to reach the secretariat before 14 August 2000.

49. The document will then be transmitted to Working Party 7 (annual session, 6-8 November 2000) as well as to Working Party 6 on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies. At a later stage comments will also be invited from the legal services of the United Nations and ISO.

50. Depending on the outcome of the discussion at the Working Party and other comments the rapporteurs will work on a recommendation for a protocol to be presented to the next session of the Specialized Section.

51. The Meeting of Rapporteurs is tentatively scheduled for 9 November 2000.

Future Work of the Specialized Section

52. The next session of the Specialized Section in Geneva was tentatively scheduled for 25 to 27 April 2001.

53. The agenda for the next meeting of the Specialized Section will be determined in more detail by the meetings of Rapporteurs. It will include:

- Ongoing maintenance work on the bovine and porcine standards.
- Discussion of a draft UN/ECE standard for ovine meat.
- Discussion of a draft UN/ECE standard for chicken meat
- Discussion of the UN/ECE trade mark
- Operational activities
- Electronic Commerce and Trade Standards
- Pilot study on implementation of the bovine standard

Preparation of the 56th session of the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development

54. The following documents will be transmitted to the Working Party for adoption:

- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/7/Add.1: General Requirements
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/7/Add.2: Bovine specific requirements
- TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/7/Add.3: Bovine cuts specifications
- Document on the UN/ECE trade mark for meat.

55. It was agreed that if possible the Chairman or Vice-Chairman or another member of the Specialized Section would be present at the Working Party to present the results achieved by the group.

Other business

56. The delegation of the United States invited comments on information documents INF.3 on specifications for chicken and INF.4 on specifications for fresh goat meat if possible until June 2000.

Operational activities

57. The delegation of EAN International proposed to develop training courses to assist countries in implementing global, multi-industry solutions for efficient supply chain management consisting of the components:

- coding
- electronic communication
- traceability

58. By placing the UN/ECE standard into a supply chain model and showing how it fits into the Business Process Model it would be possible to promote the standard.

59. The Chairman welcomed this initiative. He said that the purpose of the standards was to become part of trade. As trade was moving more and more towards EDI solutions it was necessary to show how the standard could be integrated into this new technology.

60. The delegation of Brazil suggested to have a pilot study about an enterprise implementing the UN/ECE standard and possibly producing a video on this which could be used for educational purposes.

61. This proposal was welcomed by other delegations but it was said that one should wait with the pilot study until the standard has been adopted by the Working Party and officially published.

Election of Officers

62. The Specialized Section was informed by the delegation of the United Kingdom that Mr. P. Hardwick would not be able to continue serving as its Vice-chairman. Following a proposal by the United Kingdom, which was seconded by France, the Specialized Section unanimously confirmed Mr. B. Carpenter (USA) as its Chairman and elected Mr. I. King (Australia) as its Vice-Chairman.

Adoption of the report

63. The Specialized Section adopted the report of its ninth session on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat.

Annex 1: Action list

Annex 2: Provisional agenda for the meeting of rapporteurs

Addendum 1: General Requirements; to be published separately as TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/7/Add.1

Addendum 2: Bovine specific requirements; to be published separately as TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/7/Add.2

Addendum 3: Bovine cuts specifications; to be published separately as TRADE/WP.7/GE.11/2000/7/Add.3

Annex 1: Action list

Action	Responsible	Date
Document on trade mark issue	Australia, United States, Secretariat	Circulate to GE.11: 15 June 2000 Comments: until 14 August 2000
Comments on chicken and goat meat to United States	all	June 2000
Drafting of a circular letter to invite participation	United States, Secretariat	June 2000
Confirm participation at rapporteurs meeting in Sao Paulo	all	1 June 2000
Clarify publication issues	Rapporteurs, Secretariat	September 2000
Deadline for submission of documents for the 10 th session of the Specialized Section		29 January 2001

Annex 2: Provisional agenda for the Meeting of Rapporteurs

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 Meat

Meeting of Rapporteurs on Standardization of Meat
25-27 September 2000, Sao Paulo (Brazil)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

for the session to be held in the Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Sao Paulo, Brazil
commencing at 10.00 hrs on Monday, 25th September 2000

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Codification system for porcine meat
3. Publication issues for the UN/ECE standards for bovine and porcine meat
4. Discussion of a draft standard for ovine meat (to be prepared by New Zealand with Australia, France and the United Kingdom)
5. Discussion of a draft standard for chicken meat (to be prepared by the United States with France and the United Kingdom)
6. Operational activities: Preparation of a pilot study on the implementation of the UN/ECE Standard for bovine carcasses and cuts
7. Preparation of the agenda for the next session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat (25-27 April 2001, Geneva).