



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/1  
8 April 2003

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND  
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Specialized Section on Standardization of  
Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

17-20 June 2003, Geneva

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FORTY-NINTH SESSION

to be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
commencing at 10.00 hrs on Tuesday, 17 June 2003\*

**Note by the secretariat:** Document numbers in square brackets refer to documents expected but not received by the time of the preparation of the agenda. They might be available late or at the meeting as room documents. As soon as they are received they will also be available on the home page of the agricultural standards unit.

<b>1</b>	<b>Adoption of the agenda</b>	<b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Matters of interest arising since the last session</b>	
	(a) UNECE - Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development - United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Commerce - Working Party on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policy - Working Party on Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs	<b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/2</b>

\* The informal Working Groups have the possibility to meet on Monday 16 June 2003. The secretariat will send out further information closer to the meeting.

	(b)	Other organizations: - Codex Alimentarius Commission and Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables - European Union - ISO/TC34/SC14 - OECD Scheme for the Application of - International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables - World Trade Organization	
<b>3</b>	<b>Proposals to revise UNECE Standards</b>		
	(a)	Apples  Comments	<i>TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.3</i> [ <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/3</b> ]  <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/4</b> (Secretariat)
	(b)	Artichokes	<b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/5</b> (European Community)
	(c)	Courgettes	<b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/6</b> (European Community)
	(d)	Kiwi fruit	[ <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/7</b> (New Zealand)]
	(e)	Onions	<b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/8</b> (European Community)
	(f)	Peaches and Nectarines	<b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/9</b> (European Community)
	(g)	Pears  Comments	<i>TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.4</i> <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/10</b> (European Community) <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/4</b> (Secretariat)
	(h)	Strawberries (Maturity requirements)	[ <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/11</b> ] (European Community)
<b>4</b>	<b>Review of UNECE Recommendations</b>		
	(a)	Avocados	<i>TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.11</i> <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/12</b> (European Community)
	(b)	<b>Citrus fruit</b>  Maturity requirements Other proposals Comments	<i>TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.5</i> <i>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.5</i> [ <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/13</b> (Spain)] [ <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/14</b> ] <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/4</b> (Secretariat)
	(c)	Plums, Maturity requirements	<i>TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.8</i> [ <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/15</b> ]
	(d)	Table Grapes Maturity requirements Comments	<i>TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.9</i> [ <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/16</b> (South Africa)] <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/4</b> (Secretariat)
	(e)	Pineapples Maturity requirements	<i>TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.12</i> [ <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/17</b> ]

<b>5</b>	<b>Proposals for new UNECE Standards</b>		
	(a)	Draft UNECE Standard for Shallots	<b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/18</b> (France)
	(b)	Proposal for a new UNECE Standard for Truffles	<b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/19</b> (France)
<b>6</b>	<b>Amendments to the general texts</b>		
	(a)	Standard layout for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Proposal for revision	<i>TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.12</i> [ <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/20</b> (Secretariat)] <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/21</b> (European Community)
	(b)	Status and possible revision of the Geneva Protocol	<i>TRADE/WP.7/2001/6</i> <i>TRADE/WP.7/2001/9, paras. 75 to 81</i>  [ <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/22</b> (Secretariat)]
	(c)	Revision of the working procedures	[ <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/23</b> (Secretariat)]
<b>7</b>	<b>Working group on internationally harmonized produce coding</b>		<b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/24</b> (Secretariat)
<b>8</b>	<b>UNECE Quality Standards and Organic Produce</b>		
<b>9</b>	<b>Cooperation with the OECD Scheme</b>		
<b>10</b>	<b>Publications</b>		
	(a)	Compendium of standards	
	(b)	Promotional booklet on the work and achievements of the Working Party	
<b>11</b>	<b>Follow-up concerning items discussed at earlier sessions</b>		
	(a)	Exchange of information on non-conformity cases	<i>TRADE/WP.7/2000/11/Add.21</i> <i>TRADE/WP.7/2001/9, paras 87 to 88</i>
	(b)	List of countries accepting/not accepting code marks	<i>TRADE/WP.7/2000/11/Add.22</i> <i>TRADE/WP.7/2001/9, para 89</i> <b>TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/25</b> (Secretariat)
<b>12</b>	<b>Application of UNECE Standards</b>		
<b>13</b>	<b>Workshops, seminars, training courses and other activities concerning capacity building for the application of quality standards</b>		
	(a)	Report on presentations given by the secretariat in Russia and South Africa.	
	(b)	Information about other capacity building activities	
<b>14</b>	<b>Other business</b>		
<b>15</b>	<b>Future work and meetings</b>		
	(a)	Date and place of the next session	
	(b)	Future work	
		Preparation of the	
<b>16</b>	<b>Election of officers</b>		
<b>17</b>	<b>Adoption of the report</b>		

**PROPOSED TIME TABLE**

16	June	10.00 – 13.00	Working Groups
		15.00 – 18.00	Working Groups
17	June	10.00 – 13.00	Items 1 – 3
		15.00 – 18.00	Items 3 – 4
18	June	10.00 – 13.00	Items 4 – 5
		15.00 – 18.00	Items 5 – 6
19	June	10.00 – 13.00	Items 7 – 16
20	June	10.00 – 13.00	Item 18

**Item 1: Adoption of the agenda**  
**TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/1**

According to the Commission's Rules of Procedure, the first item on the provisional agenda shall be the adoption of the agenda.

**Item 2: Matters of interest arising since the last session**  
**TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/2**

Delegations will be informed about the work of interest that has taken place in different groups within and outside UNECE.

(a) *UNECE*

- Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development
- United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Commerce
- Working Party on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policy
- Working Party on Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs

(b) Other organizations:

- Codex Alimentarius Commission and Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
- European Union
- ISO/TC34/SC14
- OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables
- World Trade Organization

**Item 3: Proposals to revise UNECE Standards**

(a) *Apples*

Standard in force: *TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.3*

Proposal: [TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/3]

Comments: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/4** (Secretariat)

Proposals are expected concerning minimum sizes for weight and maturity requirements. Questions from Russia (2003/4) were collected from producers/ traders in the St. Petersburg area by the secretariat.

(b) *Artichokes*

Proposal: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/5** (European Community)

The standard in force was last revised 1996.

(c) *Courgettes*

Proposal: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/6** (European Community)

The standard was last revised in 2000 to introduce provisions concerning miniature produce.

(d) *Kiwi fruit*

Proposal: **[TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/7** (New Zealand)]

Proposals are expected on the inclusion of maturity requirements.

(e) *Onions*

Proposal: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/8** (European Community)

The standard was last revised 2001 where the following amendments were decided:

- moving the requirement on small cracks from the minimum requirements to classification;
- moving the requirement on hollow or tough stems from classification to the minimum requirements;
- aligning the text with the standard layout concerning pests and layout for marking of onions dispatched in bulk;
- increasing the allowed length of the stems from 4cm to 6cm (because this decreases risk of infections);
- introducing clarifications concerning presentation in bulk and for stringed onions.

(f) *Peaches and Nectarines*

Proposal: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/9** (European Community)

Proposals are expected on the following issues:

- use of size "D";
- maturity indicators (information from the United Kingdom on the use of the brix level, the concept of "well matured fruit" (Chile));
- comments on the proposal from the Ukraine.

(g) *Pears*

Standard in force: *TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.4*

Proposal: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/10** (European Community)

Comments: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/4** (Secretariat)

Proposals are expected concerning maturity requirements. Questions from Russia (2003/4) were collected from producers/ traders in the St. Petersburg area by the secretariat.

(h) *Strawberries (Maturity requirements)*

Proposal: **[TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/11** (European Community)]

The standard was last revised 2002. Proposals are expected on maturity requirements.

**Item 4: Review of UNECE Recommendations**

*(a) Avocados*

Standard/Recommendation: *TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.11*

Proposal: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/12** (European Community)

The recommendation (concerning maturity requirements and minimum size for the hass variety) finishes its trial period in November 2003.

*(b) Citrus fruit*

Recommendation *TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.5*

*Proposal to the*

*Working Party (2002)* *TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.5*

Proposals: **[TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/13** (Spain)]

**[TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/14]**

Comments: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/4** (Secretariat)

The working party at its last session decided not to adopt the text proposed by the Specialized Section as a revised UNECE Standard because of comments from Greece and Israel. It was agreed to adopt the text as a UNECE recommendation for a one-year trial period, which will end in November 2003. It was decided that the text should be discussed again in the Specialized Section to improve it while maintaining the principle of the compromise concerning sizing.

Document *TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2002/20/Add.5* contains the text proposed to the working party with some information about decisions taken at the last Codex Committee for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables for possible inclusion in the standard.

Information on the research project on sensory acceptance for citrus fruit, which aims at establishing a relationship between taste and objective parameters for determining quality is expected from Spain.

Questions from Russia (2003/4) were collected from producers/ traders in the St. Petersburg area by the secretariat.

*(b) Plums*

Recommendation/ Standard: *TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.8*

Proposal: **[TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/15]**

The text concerning inter-specific hybrids will end its trial period in November 2003. Information from Chile is expected on the correct varietal names for the hybrids. Maturity requirements for plums will also be discussed.

(c) *Table Grapes*

Recommendation/ Standard: *TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.9*  
Proposal: [TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/16 (South Africa)]  
Comments: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/4** (Russian Federation)

The text concerning maturity requirements and late harvest varieties will end its trial period in November 2003. Information on maturity requirements is expected from South Africa. Questions from Russia (2003/4) were collected from producers/ traders in the St. Petersburg area by the secretariat.

(d) *Pineapples*

Recommendation: *TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.12*  
Proposal: [TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/17]

The recommendation ends its trial period in November 2003. Maturity requirements for pineapples will also be discussed.

**Item 5: Proposals for new UNECE Standards**

(a) *Draft UNECE Standard for Shallots*

Proposal: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/18** (France)

At the last session there was no consensus concerning the definition of produce. A working group (France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom) was formed and new proposal is expected for this session.

(b) *Proposal for a new UNECE Standard for Truffles*

Proposal: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/19** (France)

The European Community proposes to create a new UNECE Standard for truffles.

**Item 6: Amendments to the general texts**

(a) *Standard layout for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables*

Existing text: *TRADE/WP.7/2002/9/Add.12*  
Proposals: [TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/20 (Secretariat)]  
**TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/21** (European Community)

The secretariat and the European Community will propose changes to the standard layout.

(b) *Status and possible revision of the Geneva Protocol*

Background documents: *TRADE/WP.7/2001/6*  
*TRADE/WP.7/2001/9, paras. 75 to 81*  
Proposal: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/22** (Secretariat) – English only

The secretariat will make a proposal based on the proposed changes to the standard layout.

(c) *Revision of the working procedures*

Proposal: **[TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/23 (Secretariat)]**

The revised working procedures had been adopted at the last session of the Working Party. Some text concerning participation still had to be verified by the legal services of the United Nations. The secretariat will inform the meeting on the progress made in this matter.

**Item 7: Working group on internationally harmonized produce coding**

Report of activities: **TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/24 (Secretariat)**

The secretariat will inform the meeting on the discussions held on this issue with the International Federation for Produce Coding and EAN international.

**Item 8: UNECE Quality Standards and Organic Produce**

The topic was discussed at the last session of the working party. It was decided that the secretariat should send out a call to all participants of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables to find out where the standards UNECE had set for the market resulted in problems for organic produce. It was also decided that the secretariat should get in touch with other organizations who might give input on this question such as ITC, UNCTAD, IFOAM, as well as consumer organizations.

The secretariat will report on progress made on this issue.

**Item 9: Cooperation with the OECD Scheme**

The secretariat is of the opinion that the cooperation with the OECD Scheme functions very well and might still be closer for the benefit of international trade. At the moment the OECD Scheme adopts UNECE Standards and creates explanatory brochures based on the standards, which are essential for the harmonized application of the standards. The questions and comments received by the secretariat from users of the standards (e.g. Russia, Ukraine) show that the availability of an official international interpretation of the standards is considered as very important.

UNECE has in the past adopted OECD texts (e.g. exchange of information on non-conformity cases). The secretariat proposes to hold a first discussion in the Specialized Section if it could be considered to adopt OECD brochures as official interpretations of UNECE Standards.

**Item 10: Publications**

- (a) Compendium of standards
- (b) Promotional booklet on the work and achievements of the Working Party

**Item 11: Follow-up concerning items discussed at earlier sessions**

(a) *Exchange of information on non-conformity cases*

Questionnaire: **TRADE/WP.7/2000/11/Add.21**

UNECE and OECD will work together on this list as OECD already had an established list of members of the OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables which can serve as a basis and is available on the homepage of the OECD Scheme (<http://www.oecd.org>).



(b) *List of countries accepting/not accepting code marks*

Questionnaire: TRADE/WP.7/2000/11/Add.22

Information received: TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/25 (Secretariat)

The secretariat has compiled the answers to the questionnaire in document 2003/25.

**Item 12: Application of UNECE Standards**

The specialized section will be informed on the status of application of UNECE standards.

**Item 13: Workshops, seminars, training courses and other activities concerning capacity building for the application of quality standards**

(a) *Report on presentations given by the secretariat in Russia and South Africa.*

(b) *Information about other capacity building activities*

**Item 14: Other business**

The last session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Early and Ware Potatoes (GE.5) had decided that in the future discussions on this topic should be held in the framework of another Specialized Section to save administrative effort, travel money for delegations and to be able to discuss topics on early potatoes yearly, without having to meet as a separate group.

Two options were discussed: To join the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (GE.6) or the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables GE.1. The experts left it up to the Working Party to take this decision after consulting with GE.1 and GE.6 and other participants to UNECE meetings on agricultural quality standards.

The following items were mentioned in GE.5 as advantages for joining GE.6:

- Diseases discussed in the group on Seed Potatoes are the same that are mentioned in the standards for early and ware potatoes.
- The quality of seed potatoes determines the quality of early and ware potatoes.
- Some important potato producing delegations only participate in the group on seed potatoes.

The following items were mentioned in GE.5 as advantages for joining GE.1:

- The layout of the UNECE Standards for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables is the same as the layout of the standards for Early and Ware Potatoes.
- All delegates participating in the group on Early and Ware Potatoes also participate in the group on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables. Thus joining the group on Early and Ware Potatoes to the group on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables would save travel money for delegations.
- The number of countries participating in GE.1 is higher than in GE.6.

The majority of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes (GE.6) felt that discussions on early and ware potatoes were more appropriately situated within the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables because the topics discussed had little to do with the ones concerning seed potatoes.

The Specialized Section is invited discuss the subject to assist the decision of the Working Party.

**Item 15: Future work and meetings**

- (a) Date and place of the next session

The next session of the Specialized Section has been tentatively planned to take place from 10 to 14 May 2004 in Geneva. Working Groups will have the opportunity to meet on 9 May 2004.

- (b) Future work

- (c) Preparation of the 59<sup>th</sup> session of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

**Item 16: Election of officers**

According to the Commission's Rules of Procedure and established practice, the Meeting is expected to elect a Chair and a vice-chair. At the last session the Specialized Section elected Mr. D. Holliday (United Kingdom) as Chair and Ms. U. Bickelmann (Germany) as its Vice-Chair.

**Item 17: Adoption of the report**

The Specialized Section will adopt the report of its forty-ninth session on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat.

**NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT:**

Contributions should be sent to the secretariat either on diskette by mail to :

**Food Standards Officer  
UNECE Trade Division  
Palais des Nations  
Office 432  
1211 Geneva 10  
Tel: (41) 22 917 2450 Fax: (41) 22 917 0041**

or by e-mail to:

**agrstandards@unece.org**

Meeting documentation will be available on our homepage:

**<http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm>**