

## TRADE/WP.7/GE.1/2003/INF.8 (Finland)

### PROPOSAL FROM FINLAND TO ELABORATE A STANDARD FOR CEPES (BOLETUS EDULIS)

Finland proposes for the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables to elaborate an UN/ECE-standard for cepes (*Boletus edulis*, *Boletus pinophilus* and *Boletus reticulatus*).

*Boletus edulis*= cep, king bolete, edible bolete, penny bun

*Boletus pinophilus*= pine bolete, pinewood penny bun

*Boletus reticulatus*= summer bolete, summer king bolete, reticulated bolete

#### General

*Boletus edulis* is a very delicious mushroom that is found throughout North America as far south as Mexico and in Europe from Northern Scandinavia to the southern tips of Greece and Italy. It is also found throughout China.

*Boletus edulis* does not occur naturally in the Southern Hemisphere.

Cepes have a very strong flavour and unlike most mushrooms they maintain their flavour after drying or cooking. They can be eaten fresh, dried or salted and are in great demand domestically and by chefs, soup, stew and mushroom stock manufacturers throughout Europe, North America and Asia.

The main markets for cepes are North America, France, Italy and Germany. The majority of supplies originate in Western Europe, Eastern Europe (eg. Poland), China, Indonesia, USA, Canada and India.

Because of the large quantities of this mushroom which are picked and consumed by individuals it is not possible to gain a good estimate of the current annual world consumption. However, officially 1049 tonnes were sold in France 1987, 2387 tonnes in Italy in 1988 and more than 1000 tonnes in Germany 1987. Consequently can be estimated that worldwide several tens of thousands of tonnes of this mushroom are consumed annually.

(Ian Hall, Invermay Agricultural Centre)

#### In Finland

Mushrooms grow generally all over Finland. The estimated biological crop is about 2 000 million kilograms per year and about 10 % of this crop is suitable for picking. The main species picked for marketing are cepes.

Berries and mushrooms from the nature have a significant impact on the economy of certain eastern and northern regions of Finland. These are regions where unemployment figures are very high and the younger population moves to towns. During the last decade the amount paid to the pickers was about 1,5-2 million euros per year

Traditionally Finns have picked mushrooms for their own use but nowadays the importance of exports is growing rapidly. In Finland there grow about 200 edible mushrooms of which 22 species have been accepted by authorities for commercial use. Ceps are the mostly picked species and their demand is growing all the time. In Finland the demand for ceps is already greater than the supply.

Finland exports ceps mainly to Italy but also to other countries like France and Germany. In a good year the amount exported ceps can be about 350-400 tonnes.

#### The need for a standard

Mushrooms are very delicate products which are liable to deterioration. To guarantee good quality also at the end of the marketing chain it is among other things necessary to classify the produce properly. A standard would also give information for the pickers of what kind of mushrooms to pick and for the sellers e.g. how to pack.

The amounts moving in international trade are quite large so an international quality standard would be a good tool for everybody involved in cep-business.

#### Further measures

If the Specialized Section agrees to start elaborating a standard for ceps we suggest that either we (Finland) draw a draft standard for the next year's Specialized Section Meeting or that countries interested in cep-standard would gather an informal working group for preparing the draft standard.