



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
29 May 2018

Original: English

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## Economic Commission for Europe

Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards

### Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Specialized Section on Standardization  
of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

Sixty-sixth session

Geneva, 30 April - 2 May 2018

## Report of the sixty-sixth session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

### I. Introduction

1. Ms. Ulrike Bickelmann (Germany) chaired the meeting of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables.
2. The Chief of the Market Access Section of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Mr. Mika Vepsäläinen, welcomed the delegates to the sixty-sixth session on behalf of the new director of the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, Ms. Ivonne Higuero. He expressed his appreciation for the Section's active engagement which had resulted in a large portfolio of standards used and implemented at national, regional, and international levels, and with impact worldwide. He stressed the importance of safeguarding the quality of fresh fruit and vegetables in trade which was essential to prevent food loss and ensure also that domestic markets received safe and nutritious produce. The work of the Specialized Section on the produce standards, the new basic standard and best handling practice along the entire supply chain help reduce loss and ensure that producers, traders, and retailers can benchmark their procedures and policies against international best practice.
3. He also noted that the secretariat had obtained funds to work on food-waste reduction measures. This project which is led by UNECE together with the four other Regional Commissions of the United Nations, provides the Specialized Section with the opportunity to share knowledge, exchange best practices and develop capacities. It offers opportunities for the development of innovative solutions and real impact on a food system in needs for more sustainability to face the challenges of climate change, population growth, and declining resources. Fighting food loss, he said, was one of the key targets of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 12) on responsible consumption and production. The work of the Specialized Section carried a realistic potential to become key contribution for achieving that goal.

4. He thanked the Specialized Section for advancing its work in many areas closely related to standardization and stressed the relevance of this group for other UNECE programmes? as well as the country offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), national and donor-led projects. He highlighted one of the outcomes of these joint efforts which was the increased focus of a whole sub-region (Central Asia) on agricultural quality issues with closer collaboration among countries and the establishment of an informal Central Asian working group acting as coordinator. He also welcomed delegates from Uzbekistan who participated in this meeting for the first time. Uzbekistan, he explained, had adopted close to 80 UNECE agricultural standards. This being a very important and encouraging step, UNECE will ensure that the country as well as others indicating their interest will be accompanied in the implementation phases. Another important area of cooperation, he highlighted, was with the UN/CEFACT agricultural domain group which could lead to close collaboration on the electronic quality certificate.

5. He thanked all participants for their active participation throughout the year and for their support in training events, stressing that this helped advance the quality agenda worldwide and was an essential contribution to the sustainable development of all countries.

## **II. Attendance**

6. Representatives of the following countries attended the meeting: Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Morocco, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan.

7. The following specialized programme participated in the session: Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme.

8. The European Commission was also represented.

9. A representative of the following intergovernmental organization participated in the session: the OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables.

## **III. Adoption of the agenda**

10. The delegations adopted the provisional agenda with amendments.

## **IV. Matters arising since the last session**

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

11. The Chief of the Market Access Section explained that all United Nations bodies, including UNECE, had taken significant budget cuts in their 2018-2019 budgets including posts and a significant reduction of operational budgets which includes printing, travel and consultancies. This resulted in the need to use available resources more efficiently. Some of the resource gaps will be bridged through project funds for capacity-building. He informed delegations that the next session of the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards would take place on 3 to 4 May and focus on the review of a new study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Georgia and the follow-ups to previous countries studies on

Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan, and the Republic of Moldova. He informed delegates that the previous UNECE capacity-building project, which ended in December 2017, had been very positively evaluated in an external evaluation. Linking the Specialized Section's work with other projects and organizations had intensified partnerships, increased the work's impact, strengthened its connection to the SDG targets and allowed for greater financial efficiency.

12. He also mentioned that at UNECE level, an institutional mapping was currently being carried out to identify the focus of the organization on 8 SDGs to allow for more effective results and impact. UNECE's work on agricultural standards is meant to contribute mainly to SDG 12 on sustainable production and consumption, SDG 17 on global partnerships and SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth. SDG 12 had been the topic of the conference on "Rooting for Sustainable Food" organized at the November 2017 session of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7). Speakers from this Specialized Section delivered key messages on sustainable practices and possible ways forward to reach SDG 12. In November this year, a follow-up conference will focus on sustainable practical solutions to advance SDG 12 to bring about changing impact.

## **(b) Recent developments in other organizations**

13. The representative of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme briefed delegates on the recommendations of the 20th Session of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV20), held in Kampala, Uganda, from 2 to 6 October 2017. She recalled that, despite lengthy discussions on acceptable levels for tolerances for decay in "Extra" Class, the delegations at the CCFFV20 had not reached a consensus on the matter. She expressed the hope that substantive progress could be made at this Specialized Section meeting, as that would facilitate the advancement of the draft Codex standards at CCFFV21.

14. The representative of the European Commission reported on) activities of the European Union (EU) related to marketing standards, noting that the European Commission's delegated act modifying EU specific marketing standards should be published at the end of 2018. He explained that it would include the changes adopted recently by the UNECE. He also mentioned that the requirement for the labelling of the country of origin for fresh fruit and vegetables which are sold as ready to eat was currently under discussion with the EU Member States. An independent evaluation of the EU activities related to marketing standards will be conducted this year and will include in particular an evaluation of the relation between the EU activities and the activities of the international standard-setting bodies and the possibilities to avoid duplication of work.

15. The representative of the OECD thanked the Chair and UNECE for the opportunity to update delegates on current activities of OECD. Brazil officially joined the OECD Fruit and Vegetables Scheme in February 2018. The OECD Scheme is currently working on five explanatory brochures: leeks (Rapporteur-Germany), tomatoes (Rapporteur-Netherlands), passion fruit (Rapporteur-Kenya), berry fruits (Rapporteur-Slovak Republic) and root vegetables (Rapporteur-Slovak Republic). The OECD also informed delegates that Kenya volunteered to undergo a Peer Review this year and thanked Germany, Austria and Switzerland for translating five brochures into German (pears, apples, table grapes, chicories, plums). The brochures are available at the OECD website. The OECD also informed delegates that Spain would host the OECD Heads of National Inspection meeting in Seville next week, where OECD will be discussing internet sales of fruit and vegetables, traceability and organic fruit and vegetables, among other topics. The OECD is also enhancing its capacity-building activities and joint workshops. Last year OECD organized a joint workshop with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Thailand and this year there are plans to have a workshop in Brazil and try to organize joint work with UNECE and CODEX. The OECD will also participate in the

harmonization meetings organized by the Netherlands (June 2018) and Slovak Republic. (September 2018).

## V. Revision of standards

### (a) Citrus fruit

16. The Specialized Section reviewed the proposals contained in the document which had been separated into the various citrus fruit species to facilitate discussions at the informal and formal meeting. During the review, the Specialized Section considered the possible alignment of certain provisions to the relevant Codex standards and a restructuring of the current format of the standard into a core text with species-specific annexes. As many delegations preferred the current format of the standard, it was agreed to keep it as currently structured. The Specialized Section decided neither to adopt the proposed new sizing provisions nor the use of the text of the Standard Layout in the section on size tolerances. In both cases, the original text of the standard was retained. Provisions with regard to the uniformity in size for mixtures of varieties/types would only be included in the uniformity section (see Standard Layout, edition 2017 - [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trade/agr/standard/fresh/StandardLayout/SL\\_FFV\\_2017\\_e.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trade/agr/standard/fresh/StandardLayout/SL_FFV_2017_e.pdf)). All agreed changes will be reflected in the post-session document on the UNECE web site ([www.unece.org/index.php?id=47819](http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47819)) and all open issues will be placed in square brackets for discussion at the 2019 session of the Specialized Section.

17. Lengthy discussion took place on the proposed amendment of the standard's current minimum colour requirements as indicators of maturity. It was pointed out that colour is not necessarily connected to maturity and is thus not a reliable maturity requirement. The Specialized Section took note that there might also be a need to take into consideration buyers and consumers who are paying less attention to the colouring of the fruit skin and are more concerned with its eating quality. Some delegations pointed out that placing less emphasis on colour requirements and, thus, the need for postharvest degreening of citrus fruit, could also improve the possibility of increasing the trade of organically produced fruit (which did not always allow chemical post-harvest degreening) as well as produce of different climatic conditions or impacted by climate change. Consumer preferences, some delegations noted, seemed to change and the standard needed to take this into consideration. Some delegations expressed the opinion that it was also important to consider the food waste aspects when opting for the continued inclusion of minimum colouring requirements and the condition and the shelf life of the produce at the point of destination. It was also questioned by some delegations whether all fruit needed to meet all the maturity requirements and whether colour really needed to be a dominating requirement under the maturity heading. Some delegations noted that it might be sufficient for the traded produce to meet the maturity criteria such as the minimum juice content, the minimum sugar content or the sugar-acid ratio to be sold in a particular market. Some delegations suggested that a standard for international trade could focus, for example, on the definition of the minimum organoleptic criteria and leave the colouring requirements to be defined between buyers and sellers.

18. Given the complexity of these issues and their pertinence not only for the citrus fruit standard, the Specialized Section stressed that this was an on-going discussion. The Chair encouraged delegations to consult with their national stakeholders taking into consideration the differences in consumer taste, markets and their requirements (e.g. avoidance of chemical degreening), and the need for the UNECE standards to be applicable in all of them to guarantee sufficiently mature produce on the market.

*Citrus fruit variety list*

19. The Chair reviewed and highlighted the outstanding issues requiring clarification. The delegation from Spain stated that it had no objection to “Valencia Delta Seedless” as well as “Valencia Midnight Seedless” being used as synonyms. It was agreed to solve all other outstanding issues within the next month. (Spain and Brazil will notify the secretariat of the outcome of their consultations), and to publish the list on the UNECE web site as a non-exhaustive reference list, open for amendment.

**(b) Cherries**

20. The delegate of Belgium outlined the proposal to increase the minimum size for cherries in Extra Class from the current 20 mm to 22 mm. Most of the countries supported this proposal as well as the suggestion to keep the current minimum provisions for Classes I and II. Spain pointed out that there was still trade in cherries below 22 mm in Extra Class and that her delegation needed to consult with its industry on the varieties that could not meet the 22 mm minimum size. The delegation of Spain will inform the secretariat by 1 June 2018 about the outcome of those consultations.

21. The Specialized Section decided to adopt the amendment of the minimum size of cherries in Extra Class provided that Spain can support this proposal by 1 June 2018. In this case, this version of the proposal would be submitted to the November 2018 session of the Working Party for adoption. In the case that Spain requested an exemption for certain varieties, the adoption of this proposal would be deferred to an intersessional approval procedure. Depending If delegations agree to the new proposals, this amendment will be submitted to the Working Party in November 2018 for adoption.

**(c) Ware potatoes**

22. The Specialized Section reviewed in depth the document comparing the UNECE Standard for Early and Ware Potatoes with the Codex draft standard for ware potatoes (currently at step 5). It was decided to postpone a discussion on the UNECE standard and a possible alignment until after the adoption of the Codex standard. However, the Specialized Section decided to use the comparison document as the basis for comments to be considered by the Codex working group and eventually the CCFFV (21<sup>st</sup> session). It was highlighted that there were important differences between the UNECE standard and the Codex draft, such as the inclusion of serious deformities in Class II (UNECE standard); sprouting up to 3 mm (UNECE standard); or the inclusion in the standard of early potatoes, which in the Codex draft had not been explicitly excluded. Other differences included tolerances for soil and extraneous matter; tolerances for decay in Extra Class, as well as the use of quality classes (absent in the UNECE standard).

23. During the session, the Specialized Section drafted detailed proposals and comments on many provisions of the Codex draft standard together with comprehensive explanations. The UNECE secretariat will publish these proposals and comments under the heading “post-session documents” and submit them with an appropriate disclaimer to the Chair of the Codex electronic working group by 18 May 2018.

**(d) Table grapes – List of varieties**

24. The Chair noted that the current list on the UNECE’s web site contained only small berry varieties which represented a fraction of the trade in table grapes. Therefore, and in light of the fast-changing varieties on the market and the resulting difficulty to regularly

update the list, the Specialized Section decided to delete the list of table grape varieties which had been for information only.

25. The Specialized Section also briefly discussed a proposal by the Netherlands to make the mandatory marking of the variety optional. Several delegations noted that consumers were more interested in the indication of “seedless” or “seeded” or the colour of the grapes. As the delegations required more time to consult on this new proposal, and to reflect on which indications were important for consumers and trade, it was decided to postpone the discussion on the mandatory marking of varieties and other information to the 2019 session of the Specialized Section.

26. The Specialized Section will inform the Working Party of the deletion of the list of varieties of table grapes (on the web site for information only).

#### **(e) Peaches and nectarines**

27. The delegation from the United States presented the proposal to make the indication of the minimum and maximum sizes if sized by count optional. The Specialized Section reviewed the standard’s sizing provisions. Several delegations expressed their preference for the current provisions, i.e. in favour of the continuing mandatory indication of the minimum and maximum sizes in case of sizing by count. The United States delegation therefore agreed to discuss with its industry on how a closer alignment of industry practice with the standard’s provisions could be advanced.

28. As these issues were more general and concerned other standards as well, the Specialized Section decided to postpone the more in-depth discussion to its 2019 session, i.e. on how to define the uniformity in size when size was done by count as well as how to indicate sizes (metric and imperial system) within the framework of the review of the Standard Layout.

#### **(f) Fresh figs**

29. As an update on last year’s discussions on how to handle fresh figs with white coating under the minimum requirement “clean”, the Rapporteur (Brazil) reported that in December 2017, the members of the OECD Scheme on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables had agreed to consider Brazil’s proposal to revise the OECD Brochure for Fresh Figs to include descriptions and photos on limits allowed. Brazil will start the work at the end of 2018.

#### **(g) Other standards**

##### *Cauliflowers*

30. The delegate of Sweden outlined the proposal to exempt the variety “Fioretta” from the marking provisions concerning sizing as it was a non-head building variety with difficulties meeting the sizing and other provisions of the standard. The Specialized Section discussed the possible exemption of this variety in the definition of produce as well as a possible amendment of the sizing provisions.

31. The Specialized Section decided to amend the definition of produce and to exempt “Varieties of sprouting cauliflowers” from the standard. The amendment will be submitted to the Working Party at its 2018 session for adoption.

*Broccoli*

32. The delegate of Sweden outlined the request for exempting the broccoli variety “Broccoloco” from the sizing provisions as this variety was longer than the maximum size allowed by the standard. The Specialized Section discussed the need for a maximum size in the standard in light of the new varieties on the market. The Specialized Section decided to delete the maximum length provision (20 cm) from the standard.

33. The Specialized Section decided to submit the amendments to the November 2018 session of the Working Party for adoption.

*Sweet peppers*

34. The delegation from Spain explained that the producers of pepper varieties with the occasional hot taste faced difficulties marking them as “sweet peppers”. The Specialized Section reviewed the standard’s marking provisions and the definition of produce and decided to change the fourth indent of the commercial specifications to “this {*name of commercial type or variety*} may have a slightly hot taste or equivalent information, where appropriate “. It was also agreed to amend footnote 1 in the definition of produce to read: “Some of the sweet pepper varieties may have a slightly hot taste. Examples of occasional hot tasting commercial types and varieties are Sivri and Padrón.”. The Specialized Section asked delegations to send additional variety and commercial names they would like to include in this list of sweet peppers with a slightly hot taste by 1 June 2018.

35. The Specialized Section decided to submit the amendments to the November 2018 session of the Working Party for adoption.

## **VI. Standard Layout for United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Standards for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables**

*Simplification of the section on tolerances*

36. The delegate of the United States gave a detailed presentation on the simplification of the tolerances in the United States standards’ application and on ensuring the uniform application of the standards across the country. He pointed out that some standards in the United States included variances in the tolerances based on where the standards were applied, i.e. at shipping point, en route or at destination. He also outlined how the defect limits per class were indicated with fixed parameters and explained the scoring guide on standard defects. This guidance system was available to inspectors during the entire inspection process and provided them with the ability to have a quick overview of all the applicable tolerances and their application to a particular produce at the different stages. He stressed that all United States grade standards had an accompanying inspection manual. The presentation of the United States is available on the UNECE web site.

37. The delegation of the United Kingdom presented its proposals to amend the tolerances in the UNECE Standard Layout for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables; i.e. the introduction of a produce-specific tolerance for decay in Extra Class within a range of 0 to 1 per cent; a 20 per cent tolerance for produce not meeting the minimum requirements in Class II and a 20 per cent tolerance for produce not meeting the sizing requirements in Class II.

38. The Specialized Section discussed in detail the proposals which several delegations had reviewed with their industry. While some delegations supported the introduction of a tolerance for decay in Extra Class and an increase of tolerances to 20 per cent in Class II, on a produce-by-produce basis, others opposed the amendments. Several delegations stressed that Extra Class produce was a premium product for which consumers paid the highest prices and, in whose production, producers invested more. Opinions also differed on whether an

increase of the tolerances would increase or decrease food loss. Some delegations noted that such an increase gave the right signal to the market on food loss reduction. Other delegations stressed that marketing standards helped avoid food loss and, therefore, increasing tolerances would also increase loss or, eventually, might shift the food waste problem to the consumer.

39. As no consensus could be achieved, the Specialized Section did not approve the proposals. To advance the discussions, the Chair asked delegations to provide to the secretariat information on how many lots of Extra Class fresh fruit and vegetables had been inspected in 2017; how many lots had been rejected based on decay detected and what was the percentage of decay detected in 2017. Delegations were asked to send this information to the secretariat by 15 October 2018. For ease of reference, a table is annexed to this report.

## **VII. Sustainable Development Goal 12 and sustainable practices: Food loss related to the use of standards**

40. The Specialized Section took note of the food loss study submitted by the Netherlands as a background document. The delegate of Belgium noted that he had presented the findings of a national study on the impact of cosmetic quality standards on food losses in the fruit and vegetable sector at the WP.7 conference in November 2017. Once translated into English, the study would be made available to the Specialized Section.

### *Baseline quality requirements*

41. The Specialized Section discussed in length the development of baseline quality requirements and their possible scope, application, use, target and relationship with product-specific standards. Several delegations stressed that the Minimum marketing quality guidelines (new working title) could be a guidance tool which could be used at different stages of a country's development; as a trading language to develop and facilitate domestic and export trade, local and specific markets; to prepare the ground for the introduction of produce-specific standards; for produce for which no standards existed or did not meet such standards; and as a measure to prevent food loss. As all UNECE tools, the guideline would be voluntary and come into effect only once integrated into national or regional legislation and applied by trade in certain markets. The application of such a guideline should not compete with produce specific standards. The requirements of the importing country would always supersede guideline-specific recommendations or provisions.

42. The Specialized Section thanked the delegations of Germany and the United Kingdom for this first draft and agreed to advance the development of the guidelines in an electronic working group coordinated by the secretariat and including Belgium, Germany, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, United Kingdom and the United States to draft the scope, purpose and field of application of the guidelines as well as the provisions. The suggestion to illustrate the provisions with photos would be postponed until after the approval of the text by the Specialized Section.

### *Code of Good Practice*

43. The delegation from Sweden presented the first draft of the Code of Good Practice on behalf of the working group reviewing the reasons for drafting this Code. She noted that while quality standards could define what a produce should look like and received a lot of attention in the discussions on food loss, it was the handling practices that had yet to be singled out as a potential source of food loss at all stages of the supply chain. Therefore, the rationale of this Code was to guide all parties in the supply chain and help them keep the quality of the produce to be traded and sold without producing waste. This required close

cooperation among all parties and a reference code of good practice as a benchmark and usable tool.

44. The Specialized Section stressed that such a Code could have real impact on food-loss reduction but was still in the development stage. It was agreed that the working group would add an introduction describing the scope, field of application (post-harvest until retail) and target audience (to increase dissemination once completed). It was also agreed to reformulate some provision so that they would encourage good practices and to consider stressing the need to identify and measure food loss. The final Code would consist of a general document with, at a later stage, checklists for the various stages of application to increase its practical use. It was agreed to stress also the financial gains derived from food-loss prevention and reductions and the possibility for farmers to increase their income. The definition of food loss and food waste will follow common international practice and for all practical aspects, the private sector would be consulted to ensure relevance and greater use of the final Code. It was agreed that comments on the current draft should be sent to the Rapporteur (Sweden) by 1 June 2018. At the Working Party session in November 2018, the working group will hold a meeting to review the next draft of the Code.

## **VIII. Code mark registry**

45. The secretariat provided an update on the UNECE code mark registry established at the beginning of 2018 after adoption by the November 2017 Working Party session. The registry currently contained information from 14 countries. Delegations stressed the usefulness of this registry which helped inspection services determine whether codes could be accepted or whether additional information needed to be requested. The secretariat asked delegations for their continued support in expanding the information included and providing any information available on the use of code marks by other countries.

## **IX. Electronic quality certificates for fresh fruit and vegetables**

46. The UN/CEFACT agriculture domain coordinator informed the Specialized Section on progress made in the area of developing and submitting for approval to UN/CEFACT a project on the development of electronic quality certificates. The domain coordinator, Mr. Frans van Diepen (Netherlands), provided an overview on UN/CEFACT's related work in this area, particularly, the e-SPS certificate. He outlined the process and approach taken towards the development of an e-quality certificate for attesting conformity in the international trade of fresh fruit and vegetables, noting that the project proposals had been drafted and would be sent to the UN/CEFACT Bureau for approval in the coming weeks. Subsequently, different use and user cases would be prepared and work on the certificates' content to define the required new specification for an e-certificate would begin. Should the project be adopted, the aim was to finalize the project for April 2019 and to finish the document and its implementation guidelines by the end of 2019. The immediate aim of this 1.5-years project was the development of an electronic conformity certificate in fresh fruit and vegetables useable in current e-trade and single window environments. In the future, this could be extended to cover other produce or products.

47. He stressed that at this stage, it was important that members of the Specialized Section become part of the project team. Nominations of candidates should be sent to the secretariat by 1 June 2018. South Africa and Brazil indicated their intention to participate in the project group. All preliminary work would be shared with delegates and submitted for comments. The work of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) would be taken into consideration.

48. The Chair thanked the UN/CEFACT Agricultural domain group for all its work and efforts.

## **X. Promotion and capacity-building**

49. The secretariat informed the Specialized Section on completed and upcoming capacity-building activities, including the new project on food-loss reduction, noting the large demand for training on international best practice developed by the groups under Working Party 7 and increasingly related implementation and support measures. The first workshop under the new project was scheduled for September 2018 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Moreover, work on a IT tool had been initiated and first results would be presented towards the end of 2018. The preparatory work for this IT tool was led by the Enterprise Application Center of the United Nations Office of Information and Communication Technology (Bangkok) which the secretariat presented to delegates. The secretariat also stressed the complementarity of the work between UNECE, OECD and Codex Alimentarius, particularly, in capacity-building.

50. Delegation provided information on the following upcoming capacity-building events:

- Harmonization meeting – Zoetermeer, Netherlands, 12 to 14 June 2018.
- UNECE Workshop on standards and best practice to improve quality production and avoid food loss, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 10 to 14 September 2018
- Meeting on Harmonization of Standards, Mojmirovce, Slovakia, 11-13 September 2018
- International meeting on Quality control, Bonn, Germany, 25-27 March 2019

## **XI. Other business**

51. The secretariat briefly presented the SDG poster prepared for use by the delegations of the Specialized Sections; and invited comments on the current wording and its simplification by 1 June 2018.

52. The delegation from Germany outlined two editorial changes to the UNECE Standard for Apples. The Specialized Section approved the immediate inclusion of these minor changes into the standard. The Chair thanked the secretariat for advancing the alignment of all UNECE Standards for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables with the new Standard Layout approved at the 2017 meeting of the Working Party.

## **XIII. Future work**

53. The Specialized Section decided to place the following items on the agenda for 2019:

- Revision of the Standard for Citrus fruit
- Standard Layout – (discussion on the inclusion of marking in the metric and imperial system; and discussion of sizing by count)
- Minimum marketing quality guidelines
- Code of good practice
- Update on e-quality certificates

54. Any other proposals for future work should be sent to the secretariat as early as possible, preferably by 1 February 2019.

#### **XIV. Election of officers**

55. The Specialized Section elected Ms. Ulrike Bickelmann (Germany) as Chair and Mr. Cyril Julius (South Africa) as Vice-Chair. The Specialized Section thanked the outgoing Vice-Chairperson, Ms Kristina Mattsson, for her many years of serving as the Vice-Chair and her much appreciated support for the work and the events organized by the Specialized Section.

#### **XV. Adoption of the report**

56. The Specialized Section adopted the report of the session. The preliminary dates of the next session are: 13 to 15 May 2019.

**Annex**

**Conformity checks on marketing standards for fresh fruit and vegetables, Extra Class – decay**

Country:	Lots labelled Extra Class				
Level of marketing	Number of lots checked	Number of lots rejected	Of rejected lots		
			Number with $\leq 0.5\%$ decay	Number with $> 0.5$ and $\leq 1.0\%$ decay	Number with $> 1.0\%$ decay
Export					
Import					
Whole sale					
Retail					