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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 Co-ordination of
Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables
Forty-fifth session, 26 to 29 October 1999, Geneva

Item 3 (c) of the Provisional Agenda

PROPOSALS TO REVISE UN/ECE STANDARDS
CITRUS FRUIT

Position document transmitted by Greece

Background: At the last session a revision of the standard was adopted by the Specialized Section which was subsequently adopted by the Working Party. No consensus was found on the question of maturity requirements and the inclusion of provisions for green skinned oranges. Delegations were invited to send comments to the rapporteurs Israel and Germany.

POSITION OF GREECE FOR CITRUS FRUIT

We believe that the proposal for the green colour of the oranges will lead to the reduction of the quality and the encouragement of the producers to collect and the traders to sell unripe oranges. There will be enormous difficulties for the inspection services to enforce the quality standards. The orange colour of the oranges is a very effective criterion to judge the maturity.

There will be confusion for the consumer, who will not know which oranges to buy, the green coloured or the orange coloured.

This will disturb an already saturated market and more problems will be created in trade. The criteria which are used for the definition of the ripeness of the citrus fruit depend on the production area and the variety. This must be taken into consideration when defining these criteria as follows:

- For the variety of W.Navel, we propose a minimum of 33 percent for the juice content. The ratio between sugar and acid must be at least 6,5:1.
- For Grapefruit, which are used mostly for juice, we believe that it is not necessary to determine a ratio between sugar and acid.
- In our view, the orange colour has for many years been an essential, simple, obvious and well-known criterion to objectively determine the ripeness of oranges. The orange colour is an easy criterion for the consumer and is also a world-wide practice in trade.
- For the “sizing” we propose to retain it as it is, because these codes have been established for many years and it is an acceptable common tool in trade world-wide.