



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

TRADE/WP.7/GE.5/2003/2
13 January 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

Early and Ware Potatoes

(Sixteenth session, 24 - 25 March 2003, Geneva)

Item 2 of the Provisional Agenda

CORRIGENDUM

MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING SINCE THE FIFTEENTH SESSION

Note by the Secretariat: This document contains the discussions on the work of the Working Party at the 5th and 6th sessions of the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development and the discussion of the work of the Specialized Section at the 57th session of the Working Party.

FIFTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

The following excerpt is taken from the report of the Committee (ECE/TRADE/280, paragraphs 50 to 55):

"Item 9 - Agricultural quality standards"

Documentation:

TRADE/WP.7/2000/11	Report of the 56 th session of WP.7
TRADE/2001/4	Summary of main activities and developments of the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development (WP.7)

50. The secretariat gave an overview of the work carried out by the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development (WP.7) and its specialized sections since the last session of the Committee.

51. The following items were highlighted:

- The successful meeting of rapporteurs on Seed Potatoes held in Moscow at the invitation of the Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology. In this respect the secretariat thanked the Russian authorities and the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations Office at Geneva for the assistance in organizing this meeting.
- The adoption and publication of a UNECE Standard for Bovine Carcasses and Cuts.

52. The Committee, at its last session, had requested the secretariat to evaluate possibilities for reallocating resources within the Trade Division to the agricultural standards unit for the development of explanatory material (see ECE/TRADE/262, paragraph 37).

53. In response to this request, at the last session of WP.7, the Director of the Trade Division reported that additional resources had been requested for the work on agricultural standards but that the zero growth budget of UNECE made it unlikely that a new post would be created in the near future. She also emphasized that the secretariat would be prepared to support this work, provided that the required additional staff member could be obtained, either via extra budgetary resources, or via a decision by member States as to which lower priority activities should be discontinued in order to free the required resources. (see TRADE/WP.7/2000/11, para. 89).

54. The delegation of the Russian Federation emphasized the high priority that it attached to this work and its global impact, as seen from the number of countries from outside the UNECE region participating actively in the work. He also stressed that it was important for UNECE standards to be applied to a greater extent in Russia and the CIS in order to encourage the production of high quality produce and to facilitate trade. He also suggested achieving this by using the UNECE experience in this area to organize training courses for quality inspectors as well as for national standard-setting bodies.

55. The Committee **endorsed** the report of the fifty-sixth session of the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development (TRADE/WP.7/2000/11) and **noted** the summary of main activities and developments (TRADE/2001/4).

SIXTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

The following excerpt is taken from the report of the Committee (ECE/TRADE/300, paragraphs 46 to 52):

Item 10 – Agricultural quality standards

Documentation:

TRADE/2002/8

Summary of WP.7 progress achieved since the November 2001 session

TRADE/WP.7/2001/9

Report of the fifty-seventh session of the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development (WP.7)

46. The Secretary to the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development (WP.7) presented documents TRADE/2002/8 and TRADE/WP.7/2001/9. As additional information to the revised and new standards listed in these documents, he reported that during the last year a number of standards had been updated to adapt them to new trade practices. New standards for pineapples and ovine carcasses and cuts were close to completion. A solution to the mentioning of trade marks in UNECE Standards had been adopted and work on the review of the Geneva Protocol (which defines the context of the Standards) and the harmonization of produce coding had started.

47. The Committee had, at previous sessions, discussed possible support by UNECE for the work on explanatory brochures which is currently done under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Scheme. The secretariat reported that, at present, the UNECE was not able to allocate the additional resources necessary for undertaking this work to the Agricultural Standards Unit, but that the cooperation with the OECD Scheme functioned very well.

48. A seminar on Safe and High-quality Food for International Trade had been co-organized on 4 and 5 April 2002 in New Delhi by the UNECE with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and EAN India, at the invitation of the Government of India. The seminar had focused on building the capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises to apply international standards and participate in international supply chains. The seminar was well received and it is planned to organize a follow-up event in 2003 in Bangkok together with ESCAP and, possibly, further seminars, one of which could be in a central Asian member State of the UNECE.

49. The delegation of the European Community said that it continued to consider the UNECE work on agricultural standards as very important and relevant. Many EC standards within the framework of the Common Agricultural Policy are based on these UNECE standards. The delegation also indicated its encouragement for making the standards better known in other parts of the world. It noted the excellent cooperation with the FAO and the OECD Scheme. However, it hoped that it would be possible for UNECE to support the development of explanatory brochures to speed up this work in the future.

50. The delegation of Switzerland said that the work of WP.7 and its specialized sections was a positive example of how the UNECE and the Committee could make a contribution that was recognized in international trade.

51. The delegation of the Russian Federation thanked the Chairman of WP.7, Mr. Vilchez-Barros, for his contribution to UNECE work on agricultural standards, which had helped WP.7 become a global forum in this area, with participation of experts from all continents. He particularly stressed the importance for his country of the standards for seed potatoes and meat and the use of UNECE agricultural standards in negotiations with trading partners. He also expressed the wish to see more operational work by the UNECE secretariat, i.e. the organization of training courses on how to apply the standards.

52. The Committee **endorsed** TRADE/WP.7/2001/9 and **noted** TRADE/2002/8. The points raised by the European Community and the Russian Federation would be discussed by the WP.7 bureau.

57th session of the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development (now renamed Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards)

The following excerpt is taken from the report of the Working Party (see TRADE/WP.7/2001/9, paras. 61-64)

Item 5 Specialized Section on Standardization of Early and Ware Potatoes

Document: TRADE/WP.7/GE.5/2001/8 (Report of the 15th session)

61. The secretariat informed the Working Party on the outcome of the fifteenth session of the Specialized Section.

(a) Amendments to the standards

Document: TRADE/WP.7/GE.5/2001/8, paras. 25, 30

62. The Working Party adopted the proposed amendments concerning the definition of long varieties and the inclusion of an indicative list of long varieties of an irregular shape. The texts will be published as addenda 8 and 9 to this report (TRADE/WP.7/2001/9/Add.9 and Add.10).

63. It was clarified that potatoes were usually associated with one breeder who would have to give a description of the variety when demanding its protection. The Specialized Section had decided to base its definition on the statement of the breeder because other definitions might depend on where the variety is grown.

(b) Explanatory brochure

Document: TRADE/WP.7/GE.5/2001/8, paras. 43 to 47 and 52

64. The Specialized Section stated that there was an urgent need to ask the OECD Scheme to develop a revised explanatory brochure for Early and Ware Potatoes. The representative of the OECD Scheme said that this request had been discussed and agreed at the plenary meeting of the Scheme in October. Poland and Belgium have confirmed that they will serve as rapporteurs for this brochure.