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Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes

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Item 7 of the provisional agenda

FIELD INSPECTION PRACTICES

Submitted by the Chairman of the Specialized Section*

This document is for consideration and approval by the Specialized Section.

It is being issued pursuant to paragraph 5 of the Working Party's Terms of Reference.

* The present document has been submitted after the official documentation deadline by the Trade and Timber Division due to resource constraints.

1. Scope of inspections

All seed potato crops to be certified under the Standard must be inspected during growth.

The Designated Authority (DA) should adopt a risk-based approach to the inspection of ware potato crops growing in the vicinity of seed potato crops.

Other measures, e.g. specifying provenance of seed potatoes which may be planted, may also be deployed to control the health of non-seed potato crops on seed-producing farms.

2. Level and timing of inspection

A minimum of two inspections is recommended on growing plants. Where possible, inspections should start at or shortly before the flowering stage.

The DA shall specify the inspection procedures. In general, the inspection procedure should allow the inspector to inspect at random a representative sample of plants from a crop. The number of plants affected by the diseases listed in annex II, 2 and 3 and those not true to variety or of another variety (annex II, 4) should be recorded separately and each expressed as a percentage of the total number of plants inspected in the crop.

The first generation derived from Pre-basic TC class seed potatoes is recommended to be inspected at a more intensive rate to identify off-types.

3. Laboratory support for crop inspections

Field inspection results will normally be determined by visual assessment of the crop. Inspectors may be supported by appropriate tests when confirmation of the cause of a particular symptom is required.

4. Removal of plants with annex II, 2-4 faults (Roguing)

The DA may permit roguing within specified limits, provided the tolerances specified in annex II are met at the time of inspection. Roguing must include removal of all tubers, as well as the foliage of the plant, to ensure that no affected material will be harvested.

5. Second opinion inspections

Growers will be entitled to ask for a confirmatory inspection to be conducted by another inspector in the case of a disputed inspection.

In terms of including the above provisions in the Standard, there are four options:

1. These provisions could be added as a new annex either after annex II as they relate directly to conditions specified in annex II, or
2. After annex V. Annexes I to V relate to conditions that apply to specific crops and lots and this would then be the first of the non-crop/lot specific annexes. The logic of placing it here is that it relates most closely with the preceding annexes, or
3. Added as an annex immediately before the current annex X, i.e. placed at the end but keeping the summary tolerance table last, or
4. These provisions could be added as supplementary text to annex II. This is probably not the best option because "conditions" should be kept separate from "methods".
