

**Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards  
Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes**

**Fortieth session**

Geneva, 14-16 March 2011

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**Information on the results of the meetings of the Bureau**

**Meeting of the Bureau of the Specialized Section  
on Standardization of Seed Potatoes, Changins,  
Switzerland, 19 January 2011**

**Note by the Chairman**

At the invitation of the Swiss Authorities, the Bureau held its meeting on 19 January 2011 at the premises of the Agroscope research station Changins-Wädenswil in Changins. The following persons participated: Pier Giacomo Bianchi (Italy), Henri Gilliland (Switzerland), Brice Dupuis (Switzerland), Ruedi Schwaerzel (Switzerland) and Serguei Malanitchev (UNECE).

The Bureau went through the provisional agenda and the documents for the March 2011 meeting of the Specialized Section and made the following points.

**2. Matters of interest since the last session**

At its November 2010 session, the Working Party decided to retain "UNECE" in the title of UNECE standards and to withdraw "United Nations Economic Commission for Europe" from the upper part of the cover page of the standards. That decision was taken on the basis of the advice from the UN legal service. The cover page for the UNECE Standard for Seed Potatoes will therefore look as presented in the annex.

The Working Party approved the revised version of the working procedures which can be consulted at: <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcomeE.htm>. Paragraphs 19 and 20 of this document contain revised provisions on intersessional approval.

The Working Party also asked the specialized sections to start work on revising the Geneva Protocol and to report to the 2011 session. The Specialized Section will consider this item on the basis of a paper (INF.1) to be prepared by the secretariat. Once the revised version of Geneva Protocol is adopted, there may be a need to reflect it in the introductory part of the Standard.

**3. Information on the results of the meetings of the Bureau**

The Chair will report on the results of the Bureau meetings in Bandung (October 2010) and in Changins (January 2011).

#### **4. Standards and list of diseases and pests**

No proposals for extending the list have been received by the secretariat.

The Specialized Section may wish to discuss and decide where to reflect defects like shrivelled and misshapen tubers or tubers damaged by tuber moth or low temperatures. Would Annex VIII be the appropriate place to show the limits allowed for this type of defects? Countries are invited to bring to the March meeting photographs of the defects that they think could be reflected in Annex VIII.

#### **5. Internal temperature-shock injuries**

The Bureau expects the delegations of Canada, United Kingdom and the United States to make proposals on the definition of and tolerance for low-temperature injuries.

The delegations of Egypt, India, Indonesia and Pakistan will be invited to share their experience in receiving tuber lots affected by low-temperature as well as by high-temperature injuries.

#### **6. Silver scurf**

The Specialized Section will discuss this item on the basis of the paper presented by the delegation of the United States in Bandung (GE.6/2010/5). The Bureau thought that it would be interesting to hear the opinion of delegates from warm-climate countries about the proposals put forward in that document.

#### **7. Practices in cutting tubers for internal defects during inspection**

Reference is made to paras. 9 and 10 of the Bandung Extended Bureau report. The Specialized Section will reconsider this issue in the light of its decision about internal defects (e.g. item 9 of Annex III says: "Tuber moth: Tubers affected by galleries covering more than 20 % of the cut surface"). The delegation of the United States will be invited to introduce the discussion.

#### **8. Crop rotation practices**

Would the Specialized Section like to reflect its decision (taken in Bandung) to discontinue the discussion of this topic by wording point 6 of Annex II as follows: "Depending on the circumstances and character of potato production in the country, requirements for isolation **and rotation** of the crop may be considered."?

#### **9. Questionnaire on varietal identity and purity**

The questionnaire is ready to be sent out. It would be helpful to have the replies worked into a paper for discussion at the Extended Bureau meeting in Prague in October 2011.

## **10. Statistical comparability of the post-harvest evaluation results**

The delegation of the United Kingdom will be asked to present the amendments to Annex XI agreed upon in Bandung. The Bureau thought that a practical interpretation of this Annex would be very helpful, for example a recommendation on the number of tubers sampled per weight or surface unit. Is there a need to carry out a survey of national practices in taking samples for post-harvest control? Would the delegation of the United Kingdom volunteer to draw up a short questionnaire for such a survey?

## **11. Reproductive cycles**

The Bureau asked the secretariat to circulate the questionnaire to be prepared by the delegation of Germany. The countries which are new to the work of the Specialized Section will also be asked to complete the original questionnaire on the comparison of the EU, UNECE and national classification schemes.

## **12. Validity for conformity (grade inspection) certificate**

The Specialized Section will decide on setting up a group which would propose ways of reflecting in the Standard national regulations on the validity length of the conformity certificate.

## **13. Demonstration trials**

The Lorkh Institute has confirmed its offer to organize demonstration trials in Korenevo, Moscow region. The demonstration trials protocol (document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.6/2011/4), slightly revised by the Bureau, is available on the web at: [www.unece.org/trade/agr/meetings/ge.06/2011-in-session.html](http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/meetings/ge.06/2011-in-session.html). The delegations interested in sending their samples to Russia can contact the secretariat to find out what is needed to ship their samples to Moscow.

## **14. Update of information on the national certification schemes**

The Bureau would appreciate it if the delegates could look at the results of the 2003 survey of the national certification schemes available at [www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcomeE.htm](http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcomeE.htm) and decide if that information is useful. Proposals on whether this information should be updated and how are welcome at the March meeting of the Specialized Section.

## **15. Promotion of the Standard and programme of meetings**

Looking at the planned events for 2011-2014, as they are listed in GE.6/BUR/2010/6, the Bureau suggested that an Extended Bureau meeting be held back-to-back with the World Potato Congress (Edinburg, 27-30 May 2012) instead of the annual March 2012 session in Geneva.

The delegation of the Czech Republic was asked to let the Specialized Section know the dates of the Extended Bureau meeting in Prague in October 2011.

The Bureau asked the secretariat to reflect in the promotional leaflet the recent changes made to the standard and to present the draft to the Specialized Section in March for discussion. The updated leaflet should ideally be printed in English, French, Russian, Arabic and Spanish.

## **16. Future work**

The Chair will introduce the items for future work and the delegations will decide on priorities and rapporteurs.

## **17. Other business**

The delegation of Belgium has drawn the attention of the Bureau to the increasing occurrence of wet rot in seed potato lots exported from Europe. Should the Specialized Section decide to reconsider the tolerance of 1 % for wet rot in the Standard, it would be helpful to know national tolerances for this disease. To prepare the discussion on wet rot the secretariat will ask countries to reply to the following question:

"What is the tolerance for wet rot in your certification scheme?"

# **UNECE STANDARD S-1**

concerning the certification and  
commercial quality control of

## **SEED POTATOES**

**2010 EDITION**



**UNITED NATIONS**  
New York and Geneva, 2010