Traceability of Agricultural Produce
Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7)

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Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6)
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Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7)

Overview

Specialized Sections on Standardization of:

- **Fresh Fruit and Vegetables** (58 standards and guides)
- **Dry and Dried Produce** (27 standards and guides)
- **Meat** (16 illustrated standards, plus 2 egg standards)
- **Seed Potatoes** (1 standard and guides)

What?

- Develop and revise standards
- Produce explanatory brochures and guides

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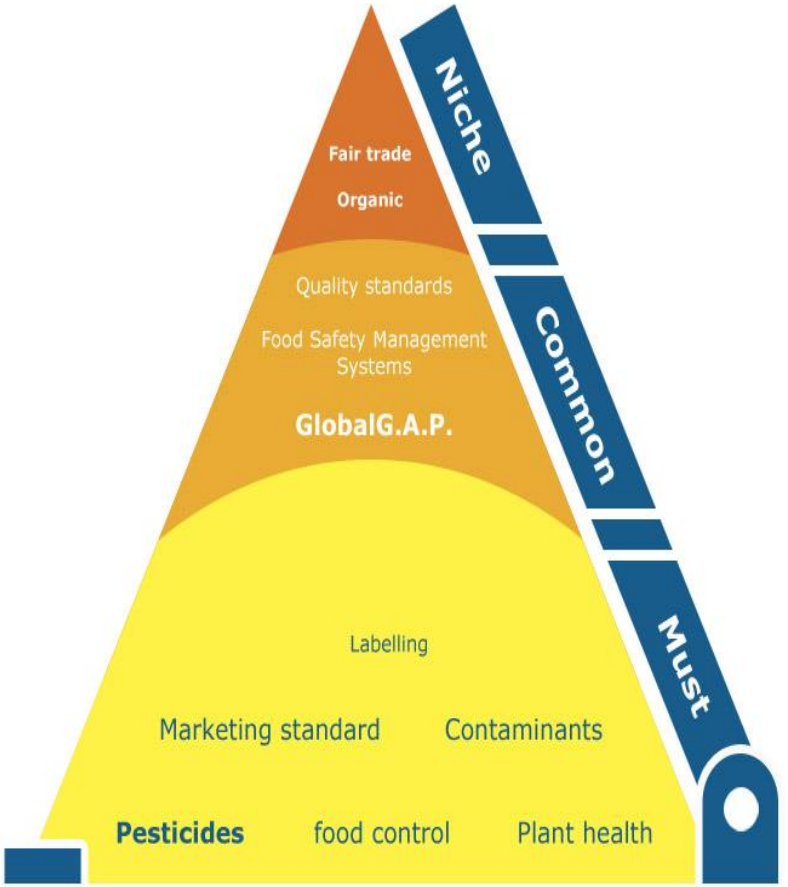
UNECE agricultural standards explained

UNECE standards are

- **Voluntary marketing standards for international trade**

- **Incorporated into national legislation**
  - As export requirements to ensure that the produce have a certain quality level
  - As a requirement for the domestic, export and import markets

- **Incorporated into commercial contracts**



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WP.7 promotion and capacity building

What?

- Organize trainings on implementation and use of the standards.
- Organize seminars and analysis on related issues (trade, marketing, traceability, food safety)

Result:

- **Over past 8 years trained over 1600 participants in use of UNECE standards and related inspection procedures.**
  - Overview - Activities in 2015:
    - **Case study** on **dried apricots** export (Tajikistan)
    - Training on **cross-border trade in nuts and dried fruit** (Turkey, July)
    - Seminar on **food safety for meat** (Geneva, Sept.)
    - Conference on **traceability of agricultural produce** (Geneva, Nov.)

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Traceability of Agricultural Produce

WP.7 conference on 3 November 2015

- **Background:** Traceability data helps ensure food safety, and authenticity (limiting fraud), enable precise and fast recalls, premium pricing (marketing), supply chain optimization and transmission of information to consumers.
- Regulators and customers require constantly **more information** on traceability (origin, production methods, ingredients, etc.), at increasingly **short time-spans**.

- **Objective**: Review challenges and present concrete solutions for traceability of agricultural produce, discuss how agricultural quality standards can support traceability efforts.

Traceability of Agricultural Produce

Key points

- **Integration of traceability systems is the key challenge**, within and between companies. There are already:
  - Many different traceability systems, but they often don't communicate with each other.
  - Many data carriers and tools for data transmission (barcodes, data bars, Quick Response Code, RFID).
- **Large retailers want one traceability system for all types of products** (food, toys, electronics, cosmetics, etc.), fulfilling different traceability needs.
- **Data storage and confidentiality remains another important issue**
  - a traceability network (cloud-based approach) could be a way to solve this.

Traceability of Agricultural Produce

Some key sectoral issues

- **Seed sector**:
  - fraud reduction and royalty payments to growers
- **Fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts, dried fruit**:
  - products get repackaged and traces are lost
  - difficult to follow all movements along the supply chain.

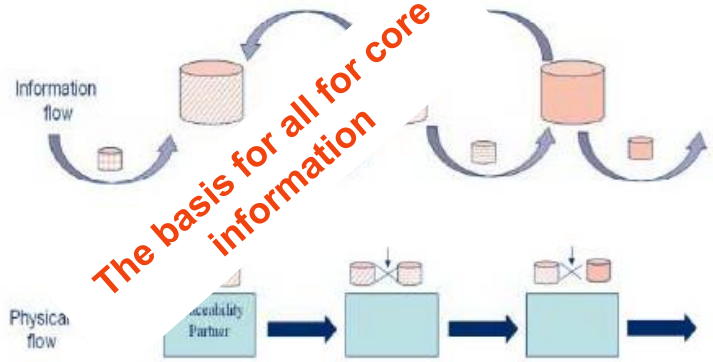
NOTE: one solution - looking into standardizing lot numbers especially for products that get repackaged along the supply chain

- **Meat:**
  - Close to full traceability within integrated production networks (e.g. horizontally integrated poultry example), is possible.
  - For extended supply chains with many transactions, it remains challenging.

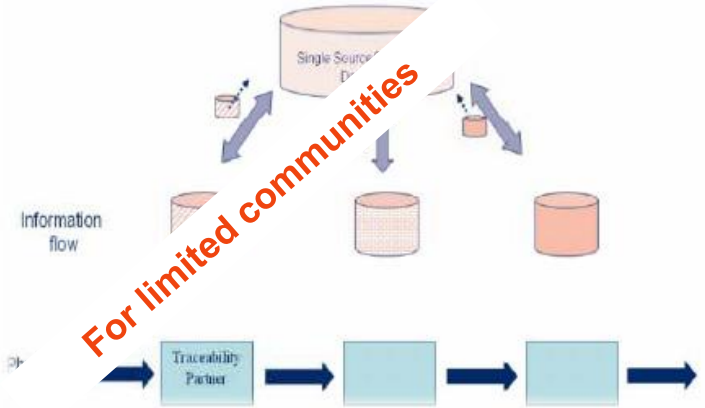
Challenges

Too many ways to organize traceability ?

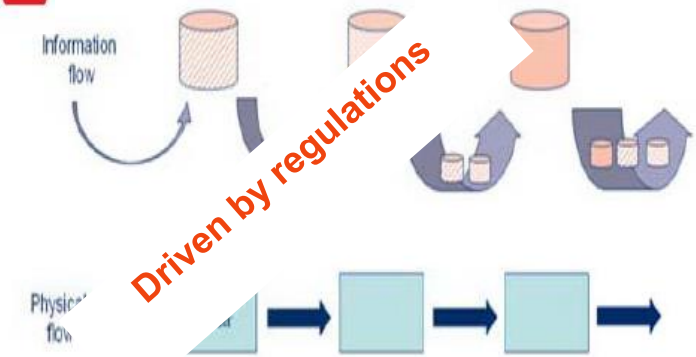
One up – One down



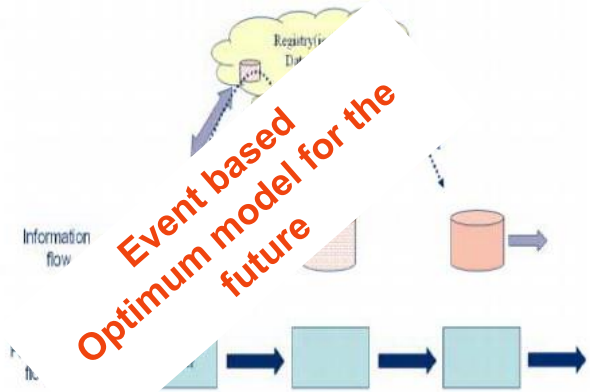
Single source data base



Cumulative tracking



Distributed Information Sources Or traceability network



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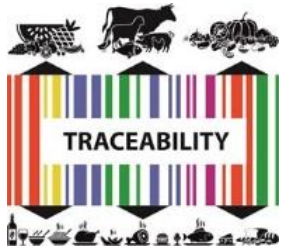


Recent developments (presented)

- **UN/CEFACT**
  - works on **standard for traceability of agricultural produce** (provides “data structure” for traceability information) - based on UN/CEFACT core component library, enables reusing electronic information e.g. from customs declarations, regulatory, transport documents.
- **GS1**
  - launched **global traceability group** (concludes work by end 2016). Group aims to identify the direction for achieving traceability across supply chains and identify ways to enable interoperability of systems.
- **Metro Group and GS1 Germany**
  - Rolled out new traceability system in stores which provides **real time traceability information directly to customers through smart-phone app** (first fish, and meat, soon fresh fruit and vegetables).

Conclusions and way forward

Large spectre of existing and possible future solutions and their possible applications

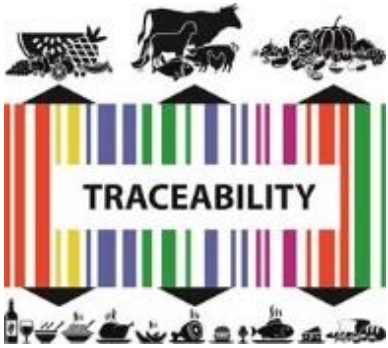
However, very important issues continue to hamper

the full traceability of all products and on a global scale

Company-internal tracking processes especially in large retail supply chains or in fully integrated productions are already in advanced stages and can be developed faster and easier,

- but solutions for those outside the large supply chains remain to be defined in a more coherent and compatible way.
- Systemic challenges: Compatibility in general and inter-operability in particular remains an issue.

Conclusions and way forward



Better define regulator's role in traceability systems (national/international levels) and the **regulator's access to information** in case of fraud or food safety alerts.

To identify solutions:

- that can work across supply chains and past country borders
- would make it possible for authorities to become a more active and informed part of the traceability chain
- define the limit between necessary information and privacy?
- that do not exclude small producers and lower income countries

What could UNECE do to better link traceability efforts and concerns with existing requirements?

WP.7 set up traceability discussion group, to identify areas for further action, including in relation to the traceability information required in UNECE agricultural quality standards.

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THANK YOU