www.unece.org/index.php?id=31977

Agricultural quality standards define in what condition agricultural produce should be when it's sold and shipped across borders. Used by governments, producers, traders, importers and exporters, they cover a wide spectrum from fruit and vegetables to eggs and meat.

Meat is a high-value commodity that is heavily, and increasingly, traded in the international marketplace. The UNECE specifically designs its meat standards to play a vital role in exports by providing everyone in the supply chain with a common set of terms and unique numerical meat cut "codes".

When used, the UNECE meat standards both facilitate marketing by bringing confidence to the supply chain and providing assurance to the customer that they are getting exactly what they want. Further, in times of product recalls, these UNECE meat standards facilitate the rapid tracking and tracing of product for rapid removal from the market.

Right now, a UNECE expert team is working on one of our most challenging projects: developing a standard for beef and pork cuts which are traded already cut for direct sale to the consumer: that is, a "steak ready-to-sell" or "from producer to supermarket". Trade in these retail cuts has hugely increased over recent years as supermarkets have been getting rid of their butchery services in the stores.

If these new retail standards are adopted and implemented, the UNECE standards will for the first time be closer than ever to the final consumer to assist them in making sure that they buy exactly what they want and expect.

Read more about what UNECE does:

Agricultural Quality Standards (http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.html)