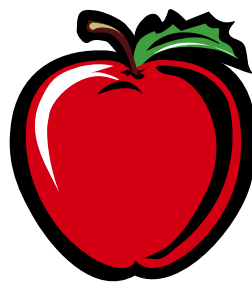


14th International Training Course



„Harmonisation of Fruit and Vegetables Quality Assessment“



REPORT

The 14th International Training Course OECD „Harmonisation of fruit and vegetables quality assessment“ was held from 30 June to 2 July 2009 in Mojmirovce (Slovak Republic).

Programme of the ITC was focused on quality standards interpretation and their application in practice, as well as the inspection procedures on new EC legislation application in fruit and vegetables sector.

They were presented following OECD / UNECE quality standards: strawberries (Mat Kersten, NL), lettuce (Peter Covell, UK) and table grapes (Istvan Ecsedi, Hungary). Part of the programme was practical assessment of the products covered.

OECD (Istvan Ecsedi) and UNECE (Claudio Meza) secretariats informed about latest developments in their organisations.

Following presentations were introduced:

- Importance of Quality Standards in Agricultural Trade, Dorian La Fond, USA
- Organization and control of compliance in Romania to lots of fresh vegetables and fruits in the stage of import - export – Romania
- GMO in fruit and vegetables sector, Jaroslav Remža, Slovakia

New EC Regulation No.1221/2008 – its application in Member States

- Short opinion on the new European regulation, Lajos Németh, HU
- Application of the new EC regulation in UK, Peter Covell, UK
- Application of the new EC regulation in NL, Mat Kersten, The Netherlands
- EACCE: A level of development of foodstuff exports – Saad Benchakroune, Morocco

EC General marketing standard and OECD Scheme membership

- Application of the GMS in EU member states in the light of the OECD Scheme membership, Viera Baricicova, Slovakia

Representative of USDA, Dorian LaFond pointed out in his presentation importance of quality standards in fruit and vegetables international trade,

especially in term of new EC regulation. He advised of quality standards role in international trade as a tool of transparency and their application is one of the key factors of success on demanding market. He focused on alignment of private standards such as GLOBAL GAP, BRC and others to national and international marketing quality standards. Private standards comprise first of all requirements on growing methods and hygiene, pesticides and fertilizers utilisation during the growth period, but they do not comprise marketing quality requirements. National and international standards are exclusively oriented on marketing quality requirements – what means fruit and vegetables sensoric characteristics, (but they are hygiene and level of contaminants requirements defined in Codex Alimentarius standards). It is not possible to substitute national and international marketing standards with private standards, because they are both oriented in different areas. National legislation plays non – fungible role in fruit and vegetables sector and primary goal of private standards is profit increasing for their creators.

Following presentations on new EC legislation in fruit and vegetables sector had showed different approach of member states. It is most likely that all MS will apply new regulation on different way – UK will stop import controls, The Netherland will keep transition period at least to the end of 2009, and up to the January 2010 will apply previous system. Hungary will introduce obligatory UNECE standards for all products, which are covered by General marketing standard according to the EC regulation.

During the technical visit participants visited Polnohospodar Nove Zamky company, one of the major apples and peaches producer in Slovakia.

ITC was attended by 67 delegates from 16 countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Austria, The Netherlands, Cyprus, United Kingdom, Scotland, Romania, Serbia, USA, Kenya, South Africa, Poland, Estonia, Morocco and

Slovak Republic). Representatives of OECD and UNECE were presented on the ITC.

Private sector was represented by Ahold, Makro, Coop – Jednota, SKOR and Kaufland from Slovak and Czech Republic.

Thanks to voluntary contribution of the Slovak Republic to the OECD participation of Kenya was possible on the ITC.

All participants successfully passed final test on quality assessment of covered produces and took over Certificate of attendance during the reception given by Ministry of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic.

15th ITC will be held in June 2010. The programme of the next ITC will take into consideration comments and recommendations of all participants as well as request from OECD Scheme member countries and UNECE WP7 participating countries.