



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
19 July 2016
English
Original: Russian

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs

Seventy-second session

Geneva, 4-7 October 2016

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

ATP Handbook

Inclusion in the ATP Handbook of comments to article 7 of ATP on the carriage of fresh fruit and vegetables

Transmitted by the Government of the Russian Federation

Summary

- Executive summary:** Fresh fruit and vegetables require protection from the effects of high or low temperatures and ventilation, and so special transport equipment is required for their carriage at certain times of the year.
- There are no provisions in ATP concerning the carriage of fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Action to be taken:** Include in the ATP Handbook a comment to article 7 of ATP on the conditions of carriage of fresh fruit and vegetables in the case of bilateral or multilateral agreements between Contracting Parties to ATP.
- Related documents:** *Codex Alimentarius. Fresh fruit, vegetables and fruit juices.*
- Rules on the carriage of perishable goods by rail, approved by Order No. 37 of the Ministry of Transport, of 18 June 2003 (registered with the Ministry of Justice on 19 June 2003 as No. 4762).



Introduction

1. The Russian Federation, supported by Spain, Italy and Finland, has on multiple occasions proposed that provisions on the carriage of fresh fruit and vegetables be included in ATP.

2. At the 70th session of WP.11, the Director of the Sustainable Transport Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Ms. Eva Molnar, also mentioned the need to include fresh fruit and vegetables in ATP, proposing that the absence of such provisions be discussed because it, together with other issues, was preventing some Contracting Parties to ATP making full use of the Agreement and other countries that were planning to become Contracting Parties from joining it without delay.

At the same session, the Working Party discussed a proposal made by the Inland Transport Committee that it should “consider the possibility of extending the scope of the Agreement to fresh fruit and vegetables” (ECE/TRANS/WP.11/231, para. 71) and noted that: “... an important percentage of the exports of Algeria, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia are comprised of fruit and vegetables and the exclusion from ATP of fresh fruit and vegetables [...] is a serious obstacle to the use of ATP by the two Contracting Parties Morocco and Tunisia as well as to accession [to ATP] by Algeria and Jordan. (INF.6, 2014, Use of ATP in North Africa and the Middle East. Note by the secretariat)”

3. However, at the 71st session of WP.11, Denmark, Sweden and Morocco opposed the inclusion of provisions on fresh fruit and vegetables in ATP.

4. Denmark also argued at the 71st session that the purpose of ATP was to safeguard food safety, not quality, and that fruit and vegetables posed no problem to food safety.

5. The Russian Federation cannot agree with Denmark, on the following grounds:

- Firstly, the preamble to ATP (before chapter 1) in the English, French and Russian versions notes: “The Contracting Parties, desirous of improving the conditions of preservation of the quality of perishable foodstuffs during their carriage”, which expresses the intrinsic objective of ATP;
- Secondly, an examination of the standards concerning fresh fruit and vegetables of the Russian Federation and contained in *Codex Alimentarius. Fresh fruits, vegetables and fruit juices* shows that they include requirements to guarantee the absence of damage to fresh fruits and vegetables caused by low or high temperatures;
- Thirdly, the quality and safety of foodstuffs are inextricably linked. With spoilage and diminished quality, fresh fruit and vegetables may not only lose their properties to a greater or lesser extent; they can also become dangerous for humans, as pathogenic bacteria develop;

Safety is possible only if quality is maintained;

“Quality” and “safety” are a single package, but can also be independent terms.

The Russian Federation considers, a priori, that fresh fruit and vegetables require protection from low or high ambient air temperatures and, for carriage at certain times of the year, special transport equipment must be used.

6. Understanding, on the one hand, the difficulty of achieving consensus on this issue between all the participants in the Working Party and, on the other, the importance of the issue, the Russian Federation proposes, as a compromise, to introduce a commentary to article 7 of ATP concerning the possibility of using special transport equipment for the carriage of fresh fruit and vegetables to protect them from the effects of high or low

ambient air temperatures at certain times of the year in the context of the bilateral and multilateral agreements provided for in article 7 of ATP.

7. In line with paragraph 74 of the Report on the work of the 71st session of the Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs, held in Geneva from 6 to 9 October 2015 (ECE/TRANS/WP.11/233), the Russian Federation has prepared an official document on this issue to be discussed at the 72nd session of WP.11.

Proposal

8. Add the following comment to article 7 of ATP:

“Comment:

Bilateral and multilateral agreements may also, in the case of carriage of fresh fruit and vegetables at certain times of the year, provide for the use of special transport equipment to protect the fresh fruit and vegetables from the effects of high or low ambient air temperatures.

The recommended temperature conditions in special transport equipment for the carriage of fresh fruit and vegetables are as follows:

- 1. Apricots, oranges, thick-rind water melons, cherries, grapes, late-season pears, grapefruits, pomegranates, early potatoes, green head cabbages (early and mid-season), cauliflowers, vegetable marrows, gooseberries, bulb onions, table carrots, mandarins, peaches, table beets without tops, plums, currants, black cherries, garlic, late-season apples: from +2 to +5°C;*
- 2. Pineapples, aubergines, melons, lemons, cucumbers, tomatoes (pink stage): from +6 to +9°C;*
- 3. Tomatoes (turning stage): from +11 to +13°C;*
- 4. Bananas: from +13 to +14°C.”*

Costs

9. None. The proposal to introduce a comment to article 7 in the ATP handbook is a recommendation and does not imply any expansion of the scope of ATP.

Enforceability

10. No problems are foreseen.

Feasibility

11. No problems are foreseen. The use of special transport equipment for the carriage of fresh fruit and vegetables is recommended at certain times of the year, when fresh fruit and vegetables require protection from the effects of high or low ambient air temperatures.