



## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### CODEx ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

#### 41<sup>st</sup> Session

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#### COMMUNICATION FROM UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (UNECE)<sup>1</sup>

**UNECE and its Specialized Sections for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables; Dry and Dried Produce; Seed Potatoes and Meat develop best practice and tools for international trade. These form the basis for agricultural quality legislation and contractual agreements worldwide in national or regional legislation as well as in commercial contracts. They are used to increase integration into supply chains; foster nutritious quality production, sustainable development and food security through:**

- Quality/marketing standards for fresh fruit and vegetables, dried produce (nuts, dried fruit and dried vegetables); seed potatoes; and meat including poultry and eggs
- Guides; illustrated explanatory material, posters, mobile Apps and colour charts that facilitate the uniform application of standards
- Coding system for the international trade of meat cuts
- International conferences and seminars on topics including sustainable consumption and production; traceability; public/private standards; e-certification and e-trade, food loss/food waste, eating quality of meat and other relevant quality assurance policies and food/consumer quality issues
- Extensive training and advisory technical expert missions

UNECE's activities around agricultural standards and their implementation are multifaceted and have been adapted to respond to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). **UNECE's focus on quality as a necessary ingredient to the sustainable future of safe food is based on its long experience in developing and helping to implement standards in combination with work on, food loss reduction, eating quality and traceability.** UNECE works to increase the sustainability of food production, markets and trade. This contributes to the SDGs by improving quality of food on domestic and international markets; reducing food loss, providing income opportunities; and a better management of natural resources for a more sustainable future. The work is linked to trade, transport and environment issues which is reflected in its business process analysis of priority agricultural supply chains; its analysis of procedural and regulatory barriers to trade; its work on electronic certification and traceability of agricultural produce; and food loss in international trade also in developing countries.

**UNECE marketing standards** set minimum requirements to:

- ensure that consumers worldwide receive nutritious, edible quality produce;
- facilitate fair international and national trade;
- allow producers to improve and maintain product quality throughout the supply chain to prevent food loss and open new international and national opportunities.
- increase transparency on international and national markets;
- allow consumers

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<sup>1</sup> Document prepared by and under the responsibility of the UNECE.

**UNECE has very rapid development and revision cycles**, i.e. no more than 2 to 3 years for a new standard, and revisions within 1 year or less and between sessions. The standards undergo **regular maintenance** and **new and revised drafts are submitted for testing by industry** before adoption. This results in up-to-date standards reflecting current and future production, market and trade practice. The **direct involvement of the private/trade sector in all aspects of UNECE's work on standardization, including training and promotion efforts, is vital to the standards' success and use**. This close collaboration has a long tradition and is the essential ingredient for the **commercial relevance of UNECE's standards in international trade**.

**UNECE collaborates with producing and importing countries worldwide**. UNECE standardization meetings/sessions are open and consensus-based. This approach to standardization and related work has made the UNECE a widely recognized platform for standards, guidance publications, training and advice.

Today, UNECE has

- 56 standards for fresh fruit and vegetables,
- 28 standards for nuts and dried fruit/vegetables;
- 17 standards for meat; i.e. descriptions (with photos and diagrams) of internationally traded meat cuts
- 1 seed potato quality standard
- 2 standards for eggs and egg-products

which are used in the international trade of fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts and dried fruit, seed potatoes, meat and eggs and are widely recognized by the sectors' largest industry associations.

**UNECE works closely with professionals from the public and private sector who produce, trade, sell and inspect these products to develop guidance material and sustainable best practices. This ensures the relevance and consistent use of our work and the reduction of food loss**. To complement and strengthen standardization activities, UNECE and its Specialized Sections organize **training courses and offer tailored advice and on how to improve technical and legal infrastructures to apply the the international best practice (standards and guides)**. **UNECE partners with public and private sectors, international organizations, civil society and academia for sustainable food production and consumption and the prevention of food loss (see SDG Goal 12)**. UNECE actively collaborates with **individual countries and regions as well as other international and regional organizations** such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); UN Regional Economic Commissions; UNCTAD; International Trade Centre (ITC); the Codex Alimentarius Commission; Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the World Trade Organization (WTO); the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Union (EU), the Asian Development Bank (ADB); and donor agencies.

UNECE publishes and distributes free of charge **practical, explanatory guides and posters outlining the provisions of nuts and dried fruit standards and other materials such as posters, colour charts or size gauges and, soon, also videos for inspectors, producers or traders** (in English, French and Russian). The UNECE Specialized Section for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables is currently working on a **Code of Good Practice on how to reduce food loss and ensure quality along the marketing and supply chain**. In addition, work has started on **Baseline Quality Requirements intended to help develop markets and drive sustainability in developing markets as well as developed markets** by ensuring that consumers receive fresh fruit and vegetables of a reasonable quality (without classifications) at a reasonable price fit for human consumption.

**UNECE organizes international conferences and exhibitions** to present and explain its work to government delegates as well as the public.

Note:

All UNECE meetings take place once a year at the Palais des Nations in Geneva with simultaneous interpretation into 3 languages (others can be added upon request and availability of funds). Joint meetings with other organizations can be hosted in meeting rooms of any required size. The conference costs are covered by UNECE's regular budget.

**UNECE's activities including its workshops, conferences and regular meetings are open to delegates from all UN member countries.**

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**Work on standards 2017 – 2018****Fresh Fruit and Vegetables:**

November 2017:

- **Revised Standards for**
  - rhubarb,
  - cherries,
  - fennel,
  - plums,
  - fresh figs,
  - kiwi fruit,
  - headed cabbage,
  - apples,
  - pears,
  - tomatoes,
- **Revised UNECE Standard Layout for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables**
  - **revision of all UNECE Fresh Fruit and Vegetables standards and brochures**

May 2018:

- Discussed revisions of standards for Citrus Fruit, Cherries, Ware potatoes Tables Grapes (List of Varieties), Peaches and Nectarines, Broccoli, Cauliflowers, Sweet Peppers, Tomatoes, Apples, Pears, Kiwifruit, Fennel, Cherries, Fresh Figs, Plums, Rhubarb, Courgettes
- Drafted input for consideration by Codex electronic working group on ware potatoes
- Citrus fruit - List of Varieties
- **Code of Good Practice to help guide and ensure quality along the marketing and supply chain**
- **Discussions on Baseline Quality Requirements**
- Discussion on food loss/waste related to the use of standards
- Discussions on quality tolerances in marketing standards
- Adoption of work on electronic quality certificates in collaboration with UN/CEFACT

**Dry and Dried Produce**

November 2017:

- Revised standards for
  - Walnut Kernels
  - Inshell Almonds
- Recommendations for a 1-year trial period for:
  - Dried coconut pieces •
  - Dried bananas
- Dried apricot poster
- Walnut kernel Guide
- On-going work on Dried Ripe Papayas
- UNECE Sampling Plan for tree nuts and dried produce and Guideline for Inspections

**Meeting dates 2018 including joint events organized with other entities:**

<b>2018</b>	<b>Meeting - Topic</b>	<b>Location</b>
19-21 March	Annual session: <b>Seed Potatoes</b>	Geneva, Switzerland
	ADB Workshop on cross-border trade and quality of fresh fruit and vegetables	Pingxiang, China
	USDA workshop Quality and Access to UNECE markets	Dominican Republic
30 April-2 May	Annual session: <b>Fresh Fruit and Vegetables</b>	Geneva, Switzerland
4 May	Sampling Workshop – Nuts and Dried Fruit	Naples, Italy
26 June	Nuts and Dried Fruit Symposium (UNECE and FAO)	Geneva, Switzerland
25 -27 June	Annual session: <b>Dry and Dried Produce (Nuts and Dried Fruit)</b>	Geneva, Switzerland
2 to 4 July	Annual session: <b>Meat</b>	Geneva, Switzerland
2 July	Eating quality workshop	Geneva, Switzerland
2 July	International symposium on sustainable e-trade of meat	Geneva, Switzerland
10 to 15 September 2018	Training workshop: <b>UNECE standards and best practice to improve quality production and prevent food loss</b>	Tashkent, Uzbekistan
October 2018	<b>UNECE standards and best practice to improve quality production and prevent food loss Food loss workshop</b>	To be determined
12-14 November	<b>International Conference: “Sustainable Development Goal 12 – the ABC of food loss prevention”</b>	Geneva, Switzerland
13 November	Annual session: <b>Working Party</b> on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7)	Geneva, Switzerland

Annex:

### UNECE Standards for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

- |                     |                          |                                    |
|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Annonas           | • Citrus fruit           | • Pineapples                       |
| • Apples            | • Courgettes             | • Plums                            |
| • Apricots          | • Cucumbers              | • Potatoes, early and ware         |
| • Artichokes        | • Cultivated mushrooms   | • Quince                           |
| • Asparagus         | • Fennel                 | • Ribbed celery                    |
| • Aubergines        | • Fresh figs             | • Rhubarb                          |
| • Avocados          | • Garlic                 | • Root and tubercle vegetables     |
| • Beans             | • Kiwifruit              | • Shallots                         |
| • Berry fruits      | • Lambs Lettuce          | • Strawberries                     |
| • Broccoli          | • Leafy vegetables       | • Sweet chestnuts                  |
| • Brussels sprouts  | • Leeks                  | • Sweet peppers                    |
| • Headed cabbages   | • Lettuce and endives    | • Table grapes                     |
| • Carrots           | • Mangoes                | • Table grapes (List of varieties) |
| • Cauliflowers      | • Melons                 | • Tomatoes                         |
| • Ceps              | • Onions                 | • Truffles                         |
| • Chanterelles      | • Peaches and nectarines | • Watermelons                      |
| • Cherries          | • Pears                  |                                    |
| • Chicory (Witloof) | • Peas                   |                                    |
| • Chilli peppers    | • Persimmon (Kaki)       |                                    |
| • Chinese cabbages  |                          |                                    |

### UNECE Standards for Dry and Dried Produce

- |                            |                               |                           |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Almonds, inshell         | • Cashew kernels              | • Macadamia kernels       |
| • Almond kernels, blanched | • Chilli peppers, whole dried | • Macadamia nuts, inshell |
| • Almond kernels           | • Dates                       | • Mangoes, dried          |
| • Apples, dried            | • Figs, dried                 | • Peaches, dried          |
| • Apricots, dried          | • Grapes, dried               | • Pears, dried            |
| • Brazil nuts, inshell     | • Hazelnut kernels            | • Pineapples, dried       |
| • Brazil nut kernels       | • Hazelnuts, inshell          | • Pine nut kernels        |

### UNECE Standards for Meat (illustrated meat cut guides with coding references)

- |   |                           |                          |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Bovine meat                               | • Edible meat co-products | • Processed Poultry Meat |
| • Caprine meat                              | • Goose meat              | • Rabbit meat            |
| • Co-products from slaughter and processing | • Horse meat              | • Retail meat cuts       |
| • Chicken meat                              | • Llama/alpaca meat       | • Turkey meat            |
| • Deer meat                                 | • Ovine meat              | • Veal meat              |
| • Duck meat                                 | • Porcine meat            |                          |

**Explanatory, illustrated Guides:**

- Pineapples
- Persimmon (kaki fruit)
- Sweet peppers
- Chilli pepper
- Whole dried chilli peppers
- Walnuts
- Colour gauges and colour guides for walnuts
- Potato diseases and pests
- Potato field inspection guide
- Guide on Potato Lot Inspection
- Guide on Operating a Seed Potato Certification Service
- Explanatory Poster on quality defects in Dried apricots

**Forthcoming:**

- Explanatory Poster on quality defects in Inshell Pistachio Nuts
- Explanatory Poster on quality defects in Walnut Kernels
- Baseline quality requirements for fresh fruit and vegetables
- Code of Good Practice to reduce food loss and ensure quality along the marketing and supply chain

**Adopting UNECE standards:**

UNECE standards go through the following adoption process:

