



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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COMMUNICATION FROM UNECE¹

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 are also used as national regulations to implement and/or increase national integration of supply chains; and 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 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 traceability; public/private standards; food loss/food waste, eating quality of meat and other relevant quality assurance policies and food/consumer quality issues
- Training and advisory technical expert missions
- Conferences and events promoting and explaining the work and related sustainable development issues

UNECE marketing standards are used worldwide as the basis for national or regional legislation and in commercial contracts. The agricultural marketing standards set minimum requirements to:

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

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 usage.** 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.

¹ Document prepared by and under the responsibility of the UNECE.

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.

To complement and strengthen standardization activities, UNECE and its Specialized Sections organize capacity-building **to improve countries' technical and legal infrastructure, increase the use of their international best practice (standards and guides) and advise national authorities.** 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 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 general public, such as the Farmer's Market (April 2017) to exhibit sustainable quality production and produce traded and covered by UNECE standards. **In November 2017, UNECE will hold an international conference on "Standards and the Sustainable Development Goals".**

In the past year, demand for capacity-building and cross-regional cooperation and advisory missions has significantly increased. Therefore, 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. Recent examples (2016 and 2017) include:

- Codex Alimentarius standards relevant to international meat trade are now referenced on the UNECE internet site and in all UNECE meat standards.
- UNECE material is available on ITC's "Sustainability Xchange" web platform.
- UNECE standards for fresh fruit and vegetables as well as nuts and dried fruit are included in ITC's "Standards Map" internet platform.
- Collaboration with FAO on the International Conference on food loss and waste focusing on the link between food loss and standards (10 November 2016).
- Workshop on sustainable cross-border trade of fresh fruit and vegetables - Balkan region and Greece (22-24 March 2017) organized with national authorities.
- Collaboration with UNDP and several donor agencies on a workshop on sustainable cross-border trade of fresh fruit and vegetables in Uzbekistan, with participants from Central Asian countries (11-13 July 2017).
- Collaboration with ADB on the ADB Policy Forum on Regional Approaches to Food Safety and Market Access in Thailand (31 May to 1 June 2017)
- Advisory missions and projects in individual countries worldwide
- Upcoming events include:
 - International Workshop on sustainable meat markets, cross-border trade and eating quality (10-11 August 2017) in collaboration with the government of Ireland and Teagasc Food Research Centre (back to back with the 63rd International Congress of Meat Science and Technology)
 - Cross-regional Workshop on sustainable cross-border trade of meat and electronic certification (China, 19-22 September 2017) organized together with UNESCAP and Chinese authorities

UNECE's agricultural activities are multifaceted and have been adapted to respond to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The work is linked to trade, trade facilitation, transport and environment issues. This is reflected in its **business process analysis of priority agricultural supply chains; its analysis of procedural and regulatory barriers to trade; its work on traceability of agricultural produce; and food waste issues in international trade also in developing countries.**

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.

For further information, please contact:

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Work on standards 2016 – 2017**Fresh Fruit and Vegetables:**

November 2016:

- Revised standard for Annonas
- Revised standard for Aubergines
- Revised standard for Avocados
- Revised standard for Chicory
- Revised standard for Garlic
- Revised standard for Leeks
- Revised standard for Sweet Chestnuts
- Revised standard for Table Grapes
- Revised standard for Truffles
- Revised standard for Sweet Peppers
- Revised standard for Citrus Fruit
- Revised standard for Apples
- **New UNECE Glossary of terms used in standards**

May 2017:

- Revised standards for Tomatoes, Apples, Pears, Kiwifruit, Fennel, Cherries, Fresh Figs, Plums, Rhubarb, Courgettes
- Citrus fruit - List of Varieties
- Apples- List of Varieties
- Discussion on food loss/waste related to the use of standards
- **Code of Good Practice to help guide and ensure quality along the marketing and supply chain**
- Discussions on quality tolerances in marketing standards
- **Discussions on Baseline Quality Requirements**
- Discussions on traceability
- Revision of the Standard Layout for UNECE Standards on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables to include new definitions and revised requirements for maturity, marking, labelling and uniformity
- Discussions on electronic quality certificates

Dry and Dried Produce

November 2016:

- Revised standard for Inshell Pistachio Nuts
- Revised standard for Dried Apricots
- Revised standard for Dried Figs
- Revised standard for Dried Grapes
- Revised standard for Almond Kernels
- New UNECE Recommendation (revised draft standard) for Walnut Kernels
- Work on Explanatory Brochure for Walnut Kernels

July 2017 (preview):

- Revised UNECE Standard for Prunes
- Revised UNECE Standard for Walnut Kernels
- Explanatory Brochure for Walnut Kernels
- UNECE Sampling Plan for tree nuts and dried produce and Guideline for Inspections
- New UNECE standard for Coconut Pieces
- New UNECE standard for Dried Bananas
- New UNECE standard for Dried Papaya
- Draft explanatory posters for Dried Apricots, Inshell Pistachio Nuts and Inshell Walnuts

Meat

November 2016

- Revised UNECE Standard for Edible Co-Products;
- Revised UNECE Standard for Retail Meat Cuts – Lamb and Veal
- Decision to add references to relevant Codex Alimentarius Standards

- Decision to adopt “Eating quality” as a new area of work of the Specialized Section on Meat
- Discussions on food loss/waste along meat supply chains

November 2017 (preview)

- New UNECE Standard for co-products from slaughter and processing
- Revised UNECE Standard for Duck meat
- Revised UNECE Standard for Goose meat
- Revised UNECE Standard for Rabbit meat
- Revised UNECE Standard for Eggs and Egg products

Meeting dates 2017:

2017	Meeting Topic	Location
22-24 March	Workshop: Sustainable Cross-Border Trade of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables	Thessaloniki, Greece
29-31 March	Annual session: Seed Potatoes	Geneva, Switzerland
2-5 May	Annual session: Fresh Fruit and Vegetables	Geneva, Switzerland
5 - 7 July	Annual session: Dry and Dried Produce (Nuts and Dried Fruit)	Geneva, Switzerland
10 - 13 July	Workshop: Cross-Border Trade of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables	Tashkent, Uzbekistan
10 - 11 August	Workshop: Sustainable Meat Markets, Cross-border Trade and Eating Quality	Dublin, Ireland
18-22 September	Workshop: Cross-Border Trade on Meat and e-Certificates	Nanjing and Tianjin, China
6 November	Annual session: Meat	Geneva, Switzerland
7 November	International Conference: “Standards and Sustainable Development Goals”	Geneva, Switzerland
6 - 8 November	Annual session: Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7)	Geneva, Switzerland

Annex:**UNECE Standards for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables**

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

UNECE Standards for Dry and Dried Produce

- Almonds, inshell
- Almond kernels, blanched
- Almond kernels
- Apples, dried
- Apricots, dried
- Brazil nuts, inshell
- Brazil nut kernels
- Cashew kernels
- Chilli peppers, whole dried
- Dates
- Figs, dried
- Grapes, dried
- Hazelnut kernels
- Hazelnuts, inshell
- Macadamia kernels
- Macadamia nuts, inshell
- Mangoes, dried
- Peaches, dried
- Pears, dried
- Pineapples, dried
- Pine nut kernels
- Pistachio kernels and peeled pistachio kernels
- Pistachio nuts, inshell
- Prunes
- Tomatoes, dried
- Walnut kernels
- Walnuts, Inshell

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

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

Forthcoming:

- Guide on Potato Lot Inspection
- Guide on Operating a Seed Potato Certification Service
- Explanatory Poster on quality defects in Dried apricots
- 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:

