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Economic Commission for Europe

Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Specialized Section on Standardization

of Dry and Dried Produce

Seventy-first session

Geneva, 15–17 May 2024

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Revised annotated provisional agenda*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Matters arising since the last session:
 - (a) Recent developments in the United Nations, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and its subsidiary bodies;
 - (b) Recent developments in other organizations.
3. Impact of agricultural quality standards on trade.
4. Capacity-building and promotional activities.
5. Sustainable Development Goal 12 and sustainable food systems: food loss and waste prevention.
6. Development of new standards.
7. Review of existing standards:
 - (a) Almonds;
 - (b) Dried tomatoes;
 - (c) Dates;
 - (d) Inshell walnuts;
 - (e) Alignment of standards with the revised standard layout.
8. Explanatory materials:

* Documents for the meeting will be made available at <https://unece.org/info/Trade/events/ge2-71st-2024>. Delegates attending the meeting are required to register online at <https://indico.un.org/event/1007105/>. In the event of difficulties with electronic registration, please contact the secretariat by e-mail (roksolana.shelest@un.org).



- (a) Explanatory material for cashew kernels;
 - (b) Explanatory material for almond kernels;
 - (c) Explanatory material for dried melons, dried persimmons, inshell peanuts and peanut kernels.
- 9. Harmonized System codes relevant to the work of the Specialized Section.
 - 10. Working Procedures of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards and its Specialized Sections.
 - 11. Future work.
 - 12. Other business.
 - 13. Election of officers.
 - 14. Adoption of the report.

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Specialized Section will adopt the agenda.

Documentation: Annotated provisional agenda (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/1)
 Revised annotated provisional agenda
 (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/1/Rev.1)

2. Matters arising since the last session

(a) Recent developments in the United Nations, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and its subsidiary bodies

The secretariat will present recent matters arising from the United Nations, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards (SCTCS) and the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7) having an impact on the work of the Specialized Section.

Documentation: Report of the seventy-eighth session of the Working Party on
 Agricultural Quality Standards (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2023/2)

(b) Recent developments in other organizations

Representatives of other organizations and country delegations will inform the Specialized Section about activities taking place in their agencies that are of relevance to the work of the Specialized Section.

3. Impact of agricultural quality standards on trade

In early 2023 the ECE secretariat in consultation with the WP.7 Bureau launched a survey on the application of ECE standards and their link to relevant legislative frameworks in participating countries. At its 2023 session, the Specialized Section discussed the results of the survey and agreed to set up a small group, consisting of the United States, International Nuts and Dried Fruit Council (INC), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the ECE secretariat to discuss how to further document the impact of the standards. The secretariat will provide an update on the progress of the discussions.

4. Capacity-building and promotional activities

The secretariat and delegations will provide information about their promotional and capacity-building activities in the past year and inform about upcoming events and trainings. The Specialized Section is invited to propose other capacity-building activities and discuss related resource mobilization.

5. Sustainable Development Goal 12 and sustainable food systems: food loss and waste prevention

At its 2022 session, the Specialized Section took note of the ECE Code of Good Practice: Reducing food loss and ensuring optimum handling of fresh fruit and vegetables along the value chain (ECE/TRADE/470). It decided to establish an ad-hoc drafting group consisting of the United States of America, Central Asian Working Group to Promote Exports of Agricultural Produce (CAWG), INC, and Perlim Noix to work on developing similar guidelines for reducing food loss in nuts and dried fruit value chains. At its 2023 meeting, the Specialized Section reconfirmed its intention to develop such guidelines and decided that the drafting group would be led by the INC.

The INC will provide an update on the progress of the ad-hoc drafting group.

Documentation: Code of good practice for DDP – first draft (INF.1)

6. Development of new standards

Whole dried rosehip

At its 2023 session, the Specialized Section agreed to develop a draft standard on whole dried rosehip as proposed by CAWG. Over the past year, CAWG has worked on developing a draft standard.

The Specialized Section is invited to review the draft standard for whole dried rosehip developed by the CAWG.

Documentation: Proposed draft standard for whole dried rosehip
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/3)

7. Review of existing standards

(a) Almonds

At its 2023 session, the Specialized Section reviewed draft explanatory material for almond kernels and proposed some changes that would require changes to the standard for almond kernels.

The Specialized Section is invited to review the following proposals for changes to the three standards for almonds (almond kernels, blanched almond kernels and inshell almonds) proposed by the delegation of the United States.

Documentation: Proposed revisions to the standard for almond kernels
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/4)

Proposed revisions to the standard for blanched almond kernels
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/5)

Proposed revisions to the standard for inshell almonds
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/6)

(b) Dried tomatoes

The Specialized Section is invited to review the following proposals for changes to the standard for dried tomatoes submitted by the delegation of the United States.

Documentation: Proposed revisions to the standard for dried tomatoes
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/7)

(c) Dates

The standard for dates was last revised in 2021. The standard includes a footnote number 4 which refers to a list of varieties contained in an annex that is not part of the 2021 nor 2015 versions of the standard. As no record of a decision to remove the annex could be found, the secretariat consulted the Bureau of the Specialized Section who decided to table the standard for review of the Specialized Section.

The Specialized Section is invited to discuss whether to reinsert the annex or remove the related footnote in the standard for dates.

Documentation: Proposed revisions to the standard for dates
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/8)

(d) Inshell walnuts

The Specialized Section is invited to review the following proposals for changes to the standard for inshell walnuts submitted by the delegation of the United States.

Documentation: Proposed revisions to the standard for inshell walnuts
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/10)

(e) Alignment of standards with the revised standard layout

In November 2022, the Working Party adopted a revised standard layout for ECE standards on dry and dried produce. Following this revision, existing standards need to be aligned with the new standard layout. At its 2023 session, the Specialized Section agreed that the alignment process would require a thorough review, since general alignment had not been done for most of the standards on dry and dried produce after earlier changes to the standard layout (2008, 2009, 2011, 2020). The Specialized Section agreed that the Bureau and the secretariat would work to align the standards with the standard layout for the standards for almonds, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, and dried tomatoes. The secretariat will provide an update on the progress made.

8. Explanatory materials

(a) Explanatory material for cashew kernels

At its 2023 session, the Specialized Section reviewed the draft explanatory material for cashew kernels along with the cashew standard and agreed on several revisions. While the changes to the standard were agreed in session, for the explanatory material the Specialized Section agreed to finalize it through an intersessional process once a new photo for superficial damage had been received. As the intersessional procedure could not be completed in time for submission to the WP.7 annual session, the Bureau of the Specialized Section decided to bring the document back to the Specialized Section for finalization.

The Specialized Section is invited to review the draft explanatory material for cashew kernels.

Documentation: Draft texts of explanatory materials (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/9)
Explanatory material for cashew kernels
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/INF.2)

(b) Explanatory material for almond kernels

At its 2023 session, the Specialized Section reviewed the draft explanatory material for almond kernels and agreed to send it for an intersessional approval procedure.

The Specialized Section is invited to review the revised draft explanatory material for almond kernels proposed by the delegation of the United States.

Documentation: Explanatory material for almond kernels
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/INF.3)

(c) Explanatory material for dried melons, dried persimmons, inshell peanuts and peanut kernels

At its 2023 session, the Specialized Section reviewed the draft explanatory material for dried melons, dried persimmons, inshell peanuts and peanut kernels, which had been developed by the Central Asian Working Group to Promote Exports of Agricultural Produce (CAWG). The Specialized Section proposed several changes to the four posters, including editorial changes and changes to the photos depicting damages to better highlight defects. It agreed that the CAWG would work to improve the explanatory posters, and in the case of peanuts to work in cooperation with the American Peanut Council and the global peanut industry, and to submit them to the 2024 session of the Specialized Section.

The Specialized Section is invited to review the draft explanatory material.

Documentation: Explanatory material for dried melons
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/INF.4)

Explanatory material for dried persimmons
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/INF.5)

Explanatory material for raw and roasted inshell peanuts
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/INF.6)

Explanatory material for raw and roasted peanut kernels
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/INF.7)

9. Harmonized System codes relevant to the work of the Specialized Section

The secretariat will provide an update on discussions on this topic at the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables.

10. Working Procedures of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards and its Specialized Sections

The Working Party at its 2022 session decided to establish an open working group to conduct a review of its Terms of Reference and Working Procedures. At its 2023 session, the Working Party agreed on revisions to its Terms of Reference, which will be submitted to the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards for approval at its meeting in June 2024. The Working Party further decided to continue the review of its Working Procedures and to invite the views of Specialized Sections in the process.

The secretariat will provide an update on the progress of the work of the open working group on revisions to the Working Procedures for the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards. The Specialized Section is invited to consider the proposed revisions to Working Procedures and to provide additional suggestions.

Documentation: Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards: Working Procedures

Revised Working Procedures for the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2023/4)

Revised Working Procedures for the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards – comparison to the 2018 version
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2023/INF.2)

11. Future work

The Specialized Section will discuss its future work.

12. Other business

Any other issues of interest for the work of the Specialized Section can be discussed under this agenda item.

13. Election of officers

The Specialized Section will elect a Chair and one or two Vice-Chair(s) for a one-year term.

14. Adoption of the report

The Specialized Section will adopt the report of the session.

Documentation: Report of the seventy first session of the Specialized Section on
Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce
(ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2024/2)

III. Tentative timetable

Wednesday, 15 May	10:00–13:00	Informal meetings / working session (no interpretation)
	15:00–18:00	Items 1–5
Thursday, 16 May	10:00–13:00	Items 6–7
	15:00–18:00	Items 7(cont.)–8
Friday, 17 May	10:00–13:00	Items 8(cont.)–13
	15:00–18:00	Item 14
