



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
5 September 2025

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Eightieth session

Geneva, 18–19(a.m.) November 2025

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda*,**

I. Provisional agenda

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 - (a) Recent developments in the United Nations, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and its subsidiary bodies;
 - (b) Recent developments in other organizations.
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4. Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables.
5. Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce.
6. Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat.
7. Working modalities.
8. Capacity-building and promotional activities.
9. Use and impact of the agricultural quality standards.
10. Sustainable food systems and resource efficiency:
 - (a) Climate change – potential impact on the quality of fruit, vegetables, nuts, meat and seed potatoes;
 - (b) Digitalization;
 - (c) Food loss and waste.

* Documents for the meeting will be made available at <https://unece.org/info/events/event/trade/wp7/wp7-80th-2025>. Delegates attending the meeting are required to register online at <https://indico.un.org/event/1012032/>. In the event of difficulties with electronic registration, please contact the secretariat by e-mail (agristandards@un.org).

** In line with the request by the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) to reduce the length of meetings in 2025 due to the UN liquidity crisis, this year the session was reduced from two and a half days to one and a half days.



11. Programme of work and results framework for 2026-2027.
12. Other business.
13. Election of officers.
14. Adoption of the report.

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Working Party will adopt the agenda of its eightieth session.

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information / decision</i>
Annotated provisional agenda	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/1	Decision

2. Matters arising

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

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

(b) Recent developments in other organizations

Representatives of other organizations active in the area of agricultural quality standards will provide information about their activities.

3. Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes

In 2024-2025, the Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes (GE.6) held its regular annual session, as well as several online meetings of rapporteur groups working on: (i) the review the standard for seed potatoes, (ii) a draft guide for minituber production; and (iii) a revised position paper on vigour of seed potatoes.

The Working Party is invited to endorse the report of the annual session and consider for adoption the revised standard for seed potatoes submitted by the Specialized Section:

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information / decision</i>
Report of the fifty-second session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Seed Potatoes	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.6/2025/2	Decision
Revised standard for seed potatoes	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/3	Decision

4. Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

In 2024-2025, the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (GE.1) held its regular annual session as well as several online meetings of the rapporteur's group on the standard for pears and the working group set up to review selected ECE standards from a food loss and waste perspective.

The Working Party is invited to endorse the report of the annual session and consider for adoption four standards submitted by the Specialized Section:

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information / decision</i>
Report of the seventy-third session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.1/2025/2	Decision
Revised standard for pears	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/4	Decision
Revised standard for citrus fruit	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/5	Decision
Revised standard for peas	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/6	Decision
Revised standard for table grapes	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/7	Decision

5. Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce

In 2024-2025, the Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce (GE.2) held its regular annual session as well as several online meetings of the ad-hoc drafting group working to develop a code of good practice for food loss and waste reduction in dry and dried produce.

The Working Party is invited to endorse the report of the annual session and consider for adoption the five documents submitted by the Specialized Section:

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information / decision</i>
Report of the seventy-second session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2025/2	Decision
Revised standard for inshell walnuts	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/8	Decision
Revised standard for prunes	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/9	Decision
Revisions to the standard layout for standards on dry and dried produce	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/10	Decision
Standard for whole dried rosehip – extension of recommendation	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2024/9	Decision
Explanatory material for raw and roasted peanut kernels	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/ 2025/INF.1	Decision

The Working Party is also invited to take note of the following standards that have been aligned with the revised standard layout for standards on dry and dried produce (2022 version):

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information / decision</i>
Standard for walnut kernels	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2025/5	Information
Standard for inshell hazelnuts	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2025/6	Information

Standard for hazelnut kernels	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2025/7	Information
Standard for inshell pistachio nuts	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2025/8	Information
Standard for pistachio kernels	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2025/9	Information
Standard for pine nut kernels	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2025/10	Information
Standard for inshell macadamia nuts	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2025/11	Information
Standard for macadamia kernels	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2025/12	Information
Standard for inshell Brazil nuts	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2025/13	Information
Standard for Brazil nut kernels	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.2/2025/14	Information

6. Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat

In 2024-2025, the Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat (GE.11) held its regular annual session as well as several online meetings of the rapporteur's groups working to: (i) revise the standard for Ovine Meat – Carcasses and Cuts, and (ii) the standard for Chicken Meat – Carcasses and Parts; (iii) to develop draft guidance for animal welfare at processing facilities; and (iv) develop a proposal for digitizing the standard for Bovine Meat – Carcasses and Cuts.

The Working Party is invited to endorse the report of the annual session and consider for adoption one revised standard submitted by the Specialized Section:

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information / decision</i>
Report of the thirty-third session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Meat	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/GE.11/2025/2	Decision
Revised standard for Ovine Meat – Carcasses and Cuts	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/ 2025/11	Decision

7. Working modalities

At the 2024 session of the Working Party agreed to include in its list of future work a discussion on efficient working modalities. On 10 April 2025, the Extended Bureau of the Working Party met to discuss the topic and decided to invite suggestions from Specialized Sections. The topic was subsequently discussed in Specialized Section meetings held in April-August 2025 (GE.1, GE.2 and GE.11).

In parallel, an ECE wide discussion on rightsizing and right-servicing has been initiated. At its seventy-first session, the Commission “requested that the Executive Secretary continue consultations with member States on ways to enhance the agility and efficiency of ECE”.

The following document summarizes the suggestions provided in consultations with the WP.7 Extended Bureau and at Specialized Section sessions. The Working Party is invited to consider the resulting proposals.

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information / decision</i>
Efficient working modalities – proposals and recommendations	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/ 2025/13	Decision

8. Capacity-building and promotional activities

At its 2023 meeting the Working Party decided to establish an ad-hoc working group to develop a capacity-building strategy. At its 2024 session, the delegation of the United States volunteered to lead the working group. The Working Party will receive an update on the progress of this work. The secretariat will also provide an update on recent and forthcoming work on capacity building.

Delegations are invited to report on their work capacity-building and promotional work on standards over the past year.

Delegations are also invited to present their needs for capacity-building on the implementation and use of standards, and on food loss and waste reduction. The Working Party is invited to discuss how it might assist in addressing these needs drawing on its experience, and to suggest avenues for resource mobilization.

9. Use and impact of the agricultural quality standards

As part of its efforts to document the use and impact of the standards, in 2023 the secretariat in cooperation with the WP.7 Bureau conducted a survey on the application of ECE standards and their link to relevant legislative frameworks in participating countries. The questionnaire sought to assess to which degree ECE standards are referenced in national legislation and implemented in a voluntary or mandatory manner.

As ECE agricultural quality standards are also frequently used on a voluntary basis by private sector in trade (e.g. as part of or referenced in commercial contracts), fully assessing their importance would also require understanding the extent they are used or referenced in commercial contracts. As this concerns private sector transactions, such information is not readily available. To document such use, during 2025 a survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with volunteering delegations and industry associations in GE.1 and GE.2, to be sent to major traders of dry and dried produce followed by a survey of traders of fresh fruit and vegetables.

The secretariat will present on progress of this work. Delegations are also invited to provide further information regarding the use of ECE agricultural standards in their country.

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information / decision</i>
Survey design	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/14	Information

10. Sustainable food systems and resource efficiency

At its 2024 session, the Working Party held roundtable discussions on digitalization and food loss and waste. Following these discussions, it agreed to (a) continue discussions on digitalization needs and solutions to ensure efficient agricultural trade, in response to decision B (70) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on “Digital and green transformations in support of the sustainable development in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe” (E/2023/37, E/ECE/1503), and (b) to include a roundtable discussion on the impact of climate change on the quality of agricultural products, in line with the theme of the seventy-first session of the Commission, held on 9–10 April 2025 under the cross-cutting theme “Climate action and resilient infrastructure for a sustainable future”.

(a) Climate change – potential impact on the quality of fruit, vegetables, nuts, meat and seed potatoes

In line with the theme of the seventy-first session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, and as agreed at the seventy-ninth session of the Working Party, this agenda item will consist of a roundtable discussion on the potential impact of climate

change on the quality of agricultural produce (fruit, vegetables, nuts, meat and seed potatoes) and what this would mean for standard setting on agricultural quality.

(b) Digitalization

In follow-up to the seventieth session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe held in 2023 under the theme “Digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the ECE region”, this agenda item will consist of information sharing on the development of digital certificates, with a focus on digital conformity certificates. Delegations are invited to share experiences of recent developments in their countries and organizations, and to discuss potential actions of the Working Party in this regard.

(c) Food loss and waste

Over the past years, the Working Party and its Specialized Sections have continued to focus on prevention and reduction of food loss and waste in support of SDG Target 12.3 which aims to halve food loss by 2030. In follow-up to the sixty-ninth session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, held in 2021 under the theme “Promoting circular economy and sustainable use of natural resources in the ECE region”, this agenda item will consist of an update by the secretariat of ongoing work on food loss and waste in Specialized Sections. Delegations are invited to share experiences of recent developments in their countries and organizations, and to discuss potential actions of the Working Party in this regard.

11. Programme of work and results framework for 2026-2027

The Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards forms part of ECE subprogramme 6 on Trade, serviced by the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division. The secretariat will present the draft programme of work for the Trade subprogramme for 2026, the outline of key components of the programme of work for 2027 as well as the strategic results framework developed for 2025-2027 for the work of the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division.

The Working Party will discuss its future work, in line with the strategic directions of the subprogramme.

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information / decision</i>
Draft programme of work of the Trade subprogramme for 2026	ECE/CTCS/2025/INF.1	Information
Outline of key components of the programme of work of the Trade subprogramme for 2027	ECE/CTCS/2025/3	Information
Programme of work of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards for 2026-2027	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/15	Decision

12. Other business

Delegations will be invited to take up other issues not previously addressed during the session.

13. Election of officers

The Working Party will elect a chair and one or two vice-chair(s) for a one-year term, until the end of the next session.

14. Adoption of the report

The Working Party will adopt the report of the eightieth session of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards.

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information / decision</i>
Report of the eightieth session of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2025/2	Decision

III. Tentative timetable

Monday, 17 November	15:00–18:00	<i>Extended Bureau meeting or informal consultations (tbc) (English only, room H-207)</i>
Tuesday, 18 November	10:00–13:00	Items 1 to 6
	15:00–18:00	Items 7 to 10
Wednesday, 19 November	10:00–13:00	Items 11 to 14
