

UNECE COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURAL QUALITY STANDARDS

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UNECE Commercial Agricultural Quality Standards

- Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards
- Who develops standards?
- How are they developed and for which products?
- Who uses them?



Standards for potatoes

- Early and ware potatoes
- Seed potatoes



UNECE standards are cost-free



UNECE Commercial Agricultural Quality Standards



UNECE's mission

- Facilitate economic integration and cooperation
- Promote sustainable development and economic prosperity



Purpose of standards

- Facilitate international trade
- Promote quality agricultural products
- Define minimum quality to keep unsatisfactory produce out of market



UNECE Commercial Agricultural Quality Standards

- Improve profitability
- Protect consumers
- Create market transparency



UNECE Commercial Agricultural Quality Standards

General Assembly

Economic and Social Council

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Trade

Working Party
on Agricultural Quality Standards



Specialized Sections on Standardization of

Fresh Fruit
and Vegetables

Dry and
Dried Produce

Seed
Potatoes

Meat



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Terms of reference

- Equal rights for all UN Member States
- Countries designate institution responsible for quality control
- NGOs participate
- Private sector participates
- Decisions by consensus



UNECE Commercial Agricultural Quality Standards

What the Working Party does

- Draws up new standards
- Updates existing standards
- Develops explanatory material
for harmonized application of standards



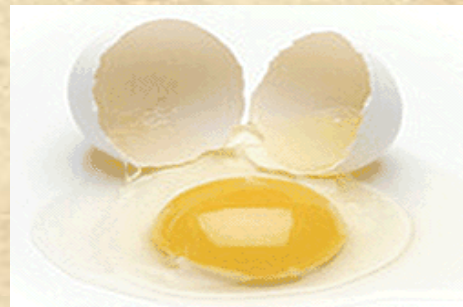
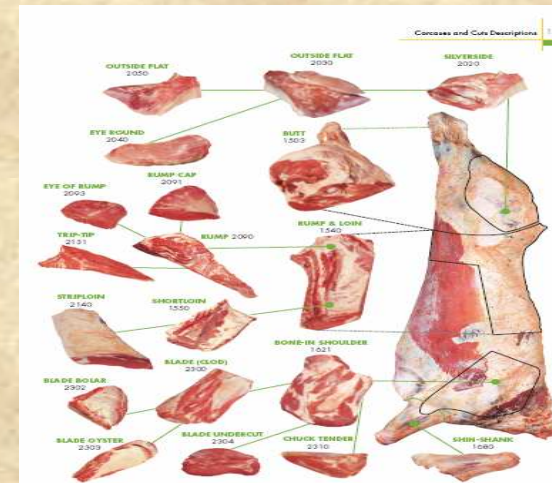
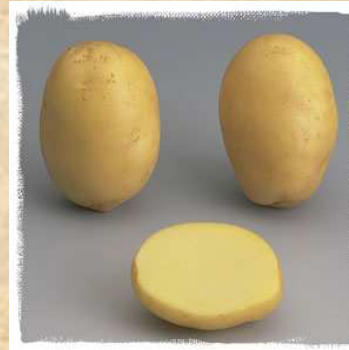
UNECE Commercial Agricultural Quality Standards

- Promotes standards
- Assists countries with practical application
- Cooperates with European Commission, OECD, Codex Alimentarius

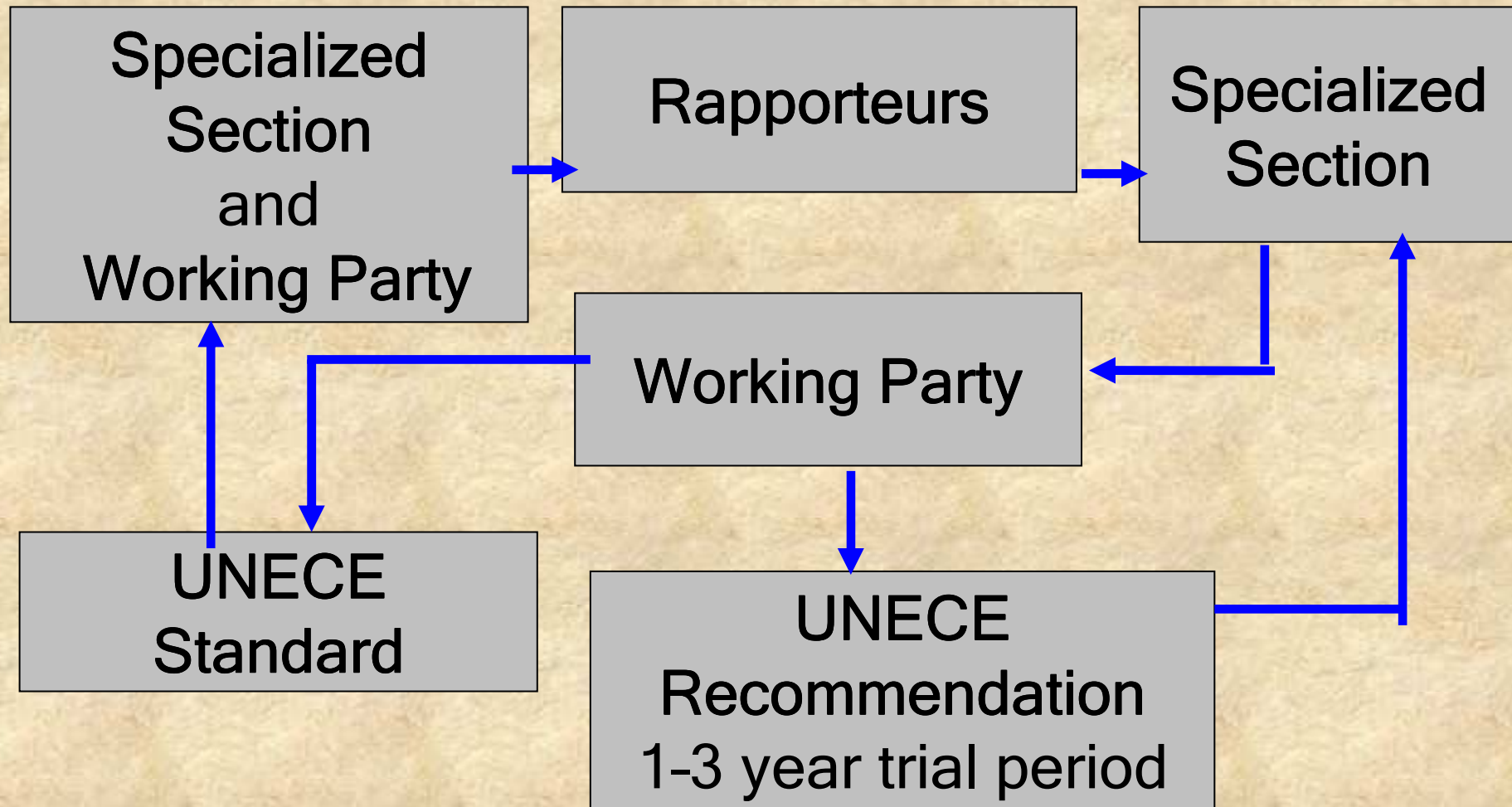


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- Fruit, vegetables
- Dry produce
- Potatoes
- Meat
- Eggs
- Flowers



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- **1946. Establishment of Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Foodstuffs**

Tasks

- Determine common standards
- Suggest international mechanism for adoption and practical application control



Priority list in 1949

(Teams of experts/rapporteurs)

- Tomatoes, citrus fruit (Italy)
- Seed and consumption potatoes, eggs (Netherlands)
- Lettuce, peaches, apricots, plums, grapes, cheese (France)



UNECE Commercial Agricultural Quality Standards

February 1952 (2nd session)

- Reconciling national positions - time consuming

First standards

- Apples and pears
- Seed and ware potatoes

Still on agenda in 2009!



Standard for Seed Potatoes



- Standard
- List of Diseases and Pests

www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/potatoes/pot_e.htm



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List of Diseases and Pests

Disease	Agent	Status in UNECE Standard	Recommended diagnostic method	General disease description	Tuber symptoms	Plant symptoms
Potato wart disease	<i>Synchytrium endobioticum</i>	Zero tolerance	Visual observation of tubers and stem base	Tuber: tumours Plant: tumours and galls on stolons and stem base		

- 35 Diseases
- 85 Pictures

www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/potatoes/PestPicturesE.htm



Forum for discussion

Potato Virus Y



... common position on PVY ...

- New strains and variants appearing worldwide
- Seem to be more readily transmissible than earlier ones
- Strains and variants differ in their ability to cause leaf and/or tuber symptoms



... common position on PVY ...

- Control still only possible through strict PVY tolerances within a seed potato certification scheme, through breeding and through adoption of best crop management practices



... common position on PVY ...

- An option to control Potato Tuber Necrotic Ringspot Disease on susceptible varieties may be a specific certification tolerance for superficial necrosis, until an appropriate detection method becomes available
- Applying a zero tolerance for widely distributed viruses, such as PVY, is not effective, practical or feasible



UNECE and European Union

- EC Council Directive 2000/29
(phytosanitary)
- EC Council Directive 2002/56
(marketing)



Standard for Early and Ware Potatoes

- Definition of produce
- Quality
 - Minimum requirements
- Sizing
- Tolerances
 - Quality
 - Size
 - Other varieties



Standard for Early and Ware Potatoes

- **Presentation**
 - Uniformity
 - Packaging
 - Presentation
- **Marking**
 - Identification
 - Nature of produce
 - Origin of produce
 - Commercial specifications
 - Official control mark



UNECE and OECD Schemes

- Seed Schemes
 - Production and trade in high-quality seed
 - Potatoes not covered
- Scheme for Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables
 - Interprets UNECE standards since 1962



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Minimum requirement: “practically clean”. Limit allowed



UNECE Commercial Agricultural Quality Standards

Minimum requirement: “practically clean”. Not allowed



UNECE Commercial Agricultural Quality Standards

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<http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm>

