

Upcoming work of UNECE

Recent developments, upcoming work
and links to climate change



75 years of
Economic Integration
and Cooperation

Presentation at the 34th International Meeting Quality Control of
Fruit and Vegetables (IAT-2023), 14-16 March 2023, Bonn, Germany

UNECE at a glance

Membership and focus

75



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- *The only UN Regional Commission with a mandate in developing agricultural quality standards*
- *Open for participation by all UN Member States*



- Set up in 1947 by [ECOSOC](#)
- Aim is to promote pan-European economic integration through
 - Policy dialogue
 - Normative work
 - Technical cooperation
- **56 member States** in Europe, North America, the Caucasus, Central Asia and Western Asia
- 18 landlocked and 2 double landlocked countries
- **More than 100 countries beyond the UNECE region benefit from its work**

UNECE Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7)

Structure, focus and related work



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Organization:

- Working Party + 4 Specialized Sections
- 5 annual intergovernmental meetings
- Open to all UN member States
- Serviced by the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division (ECTD)

Over 100 commercial quality standards:

- Fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts and dried fruit, seed potatoes, meat, eggs
- Open development and adoption process, regular revisions, inputs from parties
- Complemented with guidance materials, illustrative posters and leaflets, code mark registry, etc.



Quality helps:

- Increase benefits from international trade
- Prevent food loss

Related work:

- Food loss and waste
- Capacity building
- Illustrated guides
- Studies

Used by:

- Authorities – check products against a set of transparent rules
- Producers – improve production, reach new markets
- Traders & Retail Chains – order confidently

How are ECE standards developed?



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Demand-driven, inclusive and open development and adoption process

- Standards are developed on request from countries – **any UN Member State**
- **All UN member countries** participate with the same rights
- **Input comes from all parties involved** (public and private; producing and importing countries) at all stages (development and evaluation before standards are adopted).
- **Cooperation with all other international organizations**
- Flexible, inter-active, responsive process (revisions when needed)
- **Standards are adapted** to reflect emerging varieties or changing producing, marketing, trading and regulatory conditions
- Decisions are taken on a **consensus basis**

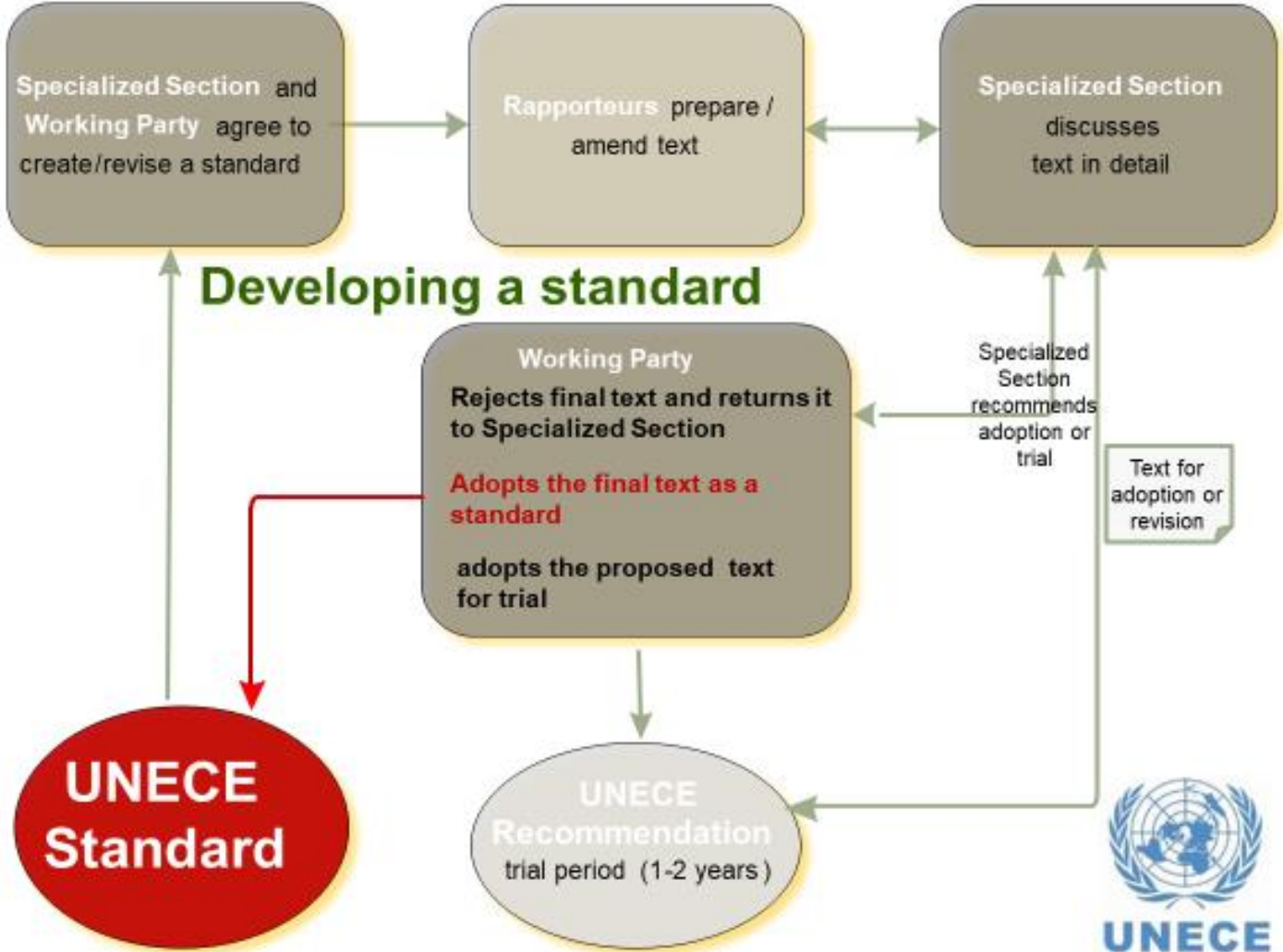
The development of a standard



Specialized sections develop a draft standard => recommend for adoption or trial => upon agreement to WP.7 for approval



ADOPTION by WP.7
(or back to Specialized Section)



Progress over the past 5 years

Adoption of UNECE standards and recommendations (FFV and DDP)



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	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
New standards		Dried melons Dehydrated coconut kernel pieces Dried ripe papayas	Minimum Quality Specifications for FFV	Sweet Apricot Kernels Pomegranates	Dried Persimmons Raw & Roasted Inshell Peanuts Raw & Roasted Peanut Kernels
Revised standards	Sweet peppers Dried bananas Goose meat Ovine meat Porcine meat	Annonas Avocado Berry fruit Broccoli Cauliflower Cherries Onions Root&Tubercle Veg. Table grapes Watermelon Inshell Walnuts	Headed cabbages Persimmons Sweet peppers Table grapes Updated lists of varieties (standards for Apples, Pears, Plums) Standard Layout for DDP	Apricots Carrots Cauliflower Chinese cabbage Cucumbers Fresh figs Strawberries Watermelons Dates (dried) Prunes (dried) Standard layout for FFV	Asparagus Cherries Leafy vegetables Pomegranates
Recommendations	Prunes Dried coconut kernel pieces Dried melons Dried papayas	Prunes (extension)	Sweet Apricot Kernels Inshell Pecans Pecan Kernels	Dried Persimmons Raw & Roasted Inshell Peanuts Raw & Roasted Peanut Kernels Inshell Pecans (extend) Pecan Kernels (extend)	Certain small fruits Inshell Pecans (extend) Pecan Kernels (extend)

Upcoming work

FFV and DDP



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- Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (FFV):

- Development of new standards:
 - Certain Small Fruits (review of recco')
 - Sweet potatoes
- Review of existing standards:
 - Peas
 - Asparagus
 - Broccoli
 - Kiwifruit
 - Onions
 - Informal reference list of citrus fruit varieties
 - Non-exhaustive list of large-fruited and summer pear varieties
- Food loss and waste – working group to review the standard layout and 2-3 standards (ongoing)

- Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce (DDP):

- Development of new standards:
 - Inshell pecans (review of recco)
 - Pecan kernels (review of recco)
- Review of existing standards:
 - Cashew nuts
 - Chestnut
 - Peanut kernels (proposed)
- Development of explanatory materials:
 - Posters for almond kernels, cashew kernels, dried persimmon, peanuts, and dried melon)
- Capacity building on the standards and on carrying of inspections
- Development of a Code of Good Practice for DDP

Related work

Guidance materials, capacity building and analysis



Related activities

- Development of practical guidance materials
- Capacity building
 - Online course on agricultural quality standards and food loss (<https://unece.org/trade/wp7/e-learning>)
 - Capacity building on DDP in Central Asia (June, tbc)
- Analysis
 - OECD/UNECE [study](#) on the impact of agricultural quality standards on the trade of fruit and vegetables
 - Survey on implementation of standards
- [eQuality](#)
 - development of a functional specification for electronic conformity certificate management system
- Food loss and waste



Common reasons for food loss

In fresh produce value chains



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Common reasons for food loss of fresh produce

- Unfavourable weather conditions
- Inappropriate packaging, handling and storage
- Logistic issues - freight, local transportation, temperature
- Last-minute cancellation of orders
- Improper planning, production and distribution without knowing the market demand and/or lack of data on production, price, requirement, policy, storage facility etc.
- “Natural overproduction” due to favourable growing conditions
- Stringent buyer requirements
- Price fluctuations that impact the supply



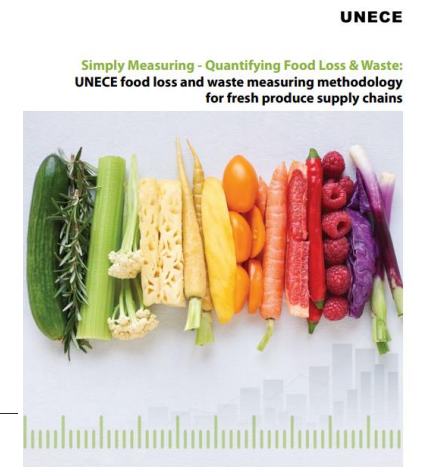
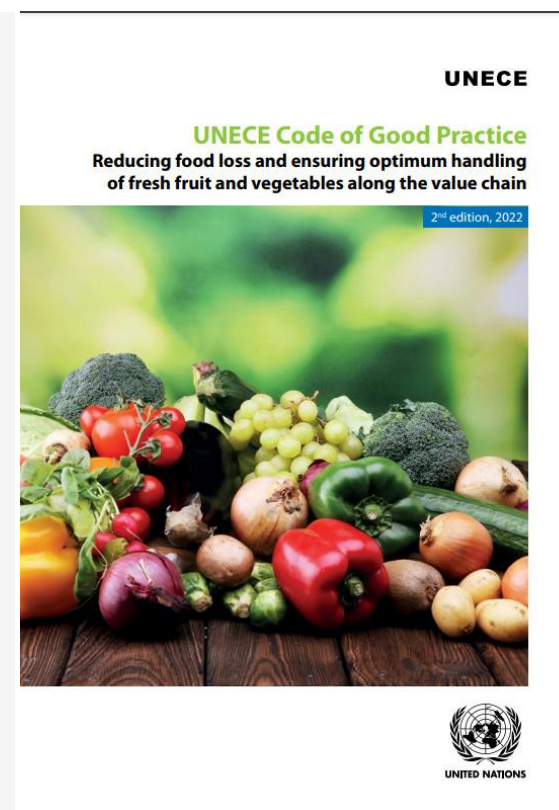
Reducing food loss and waste

UNECE activities and resources



UNECE tools to reduce food loss and waste in fresh produce value chains

- [UNECE Code of Good Practice](#): Reducing food loss and ensuring optimum handling of fresh fruit and vegetables along the value chain (2nd expanded edition, 2022)
- [Simply Measuring](#) - Quantifying Food Loss and Waste: UNECE food loss and waste measuring methodology for fresh produce supply chains
- Online course on agricultural quality standards and food loss (<https://unece.org/trade/wp7/e-learning>)
- Minimum Quality Specifications ([MQS](#)) for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables
- Illustrated leaflets on good practices in harvest and post-harvest handling of four groups of vegetables (forthcoming)



Upcoming meetings

2023-2024



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Specialized Section on Standardization of..	2023	2024 (provisional)
Seed potatoes	16-17 March 2023	26-28 March 2024
Fresh Fruit and Vegetables	9-11 May 2023	6-8 May 2024
Dry and Dried Produce	14-16 June 2023	12-14 June 2024
Meat	28-29 August 2023	28-30 August 2024
Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards	13-15 November 2023	11-13 November 2024

Thank you!



Cyril Julius

Chair, Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables, Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

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Contact the WP.7 secretariat at: agrstandards@un.org

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