



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION
37th Session, CICG
Geneva, Switzerland, 14-18 July 2014**

**COMMUNICATION FROM UNECE¹
(report of activities relevant to Codex work)**

**INFORMATION NOTE
UNECE Dry and dried Produce Standards
Submitted by the secretariat of the Economic Cooperation, Trade, and Land Management Division of
the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**

The UNECE extends its gratitude to the Codex Secretariat for the opportunity to submit this information note to the 37th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.²

BACKGROUND: DEVELOPING AGRICULTURAL QUALITY STANDARDS

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), based in Geneva, was set up in 1947 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council. It is one of five regional commissions of the United Nations³. UNECE's agricultural quality standards are developed under the trade programme. In view of the global character of commercial agricultural quality standards, any member of the United Nations or of one of its specialized agencies can participate, on an equal footing, in the activities of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards and its currently four Specialized Sections⁴.

DRY AND DRIED PRODUCE

Since the late 1960s, the UNECE Specialized Section on Dry and Dried Produce has developed 27 Standards (see <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/dry/ddp-standards.html>), colour scales and materials explaining the provision of its standards (the latter also in collaboration with the OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables). These Standards follow a simple structure and develop produce –specific tolerances, this standard layout which was last revised in 2011. UNECE standards development and revision is fully demand-driven (upon the request of countries) and is led by one or a team of rapporteurs. The views of producer and consumer countries as well as those of the trade are fully taken into consideration. For example: the revision of the UNECE standard for Cashew Kernels was led by India in close collaboration with African and European countries in addition to the International Nut Council (an international trade group). The standard for Whole Dried Chilli Peppers was developed under the leadership of Mexico with the input of many other countries.

¹ This document has been prepared by and under the responsibility of UNECE.

² A similar note had already been presented to the 25th session and the 26th Session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables following a request by the UNECE Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce² in June 2010.

³ The other four are: the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA, Beirut), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP, Bangkok), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA, Addis Ababa) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, Santiago).

⁴ Its Terms of Reference and Working procedures are available on: <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm>

UNECE standards undergo industry/trade and regulatory trials before they are finally adopted to ensure they reflect current trading practices. Standards are rooted in practical trade practices, rather than normative ideals and reflect the new technology in harvesting and processing; changes in consumer taste and perceptions; and changes in crop varieties and production practices. Over the years, the Specialized Section has accumulated a large pool of expertise and has established excellent relationships with the private sector including the International Nut Council (INC). The latter promotes the use of UNECE standards among its global membership. UNECE Standards are today very widely used in the international trade of dry and dried produce and have been adopted by countries worldwide, as witnessed also by notifications to the WTO.

The Specialized Section meets on an annual basis and is aware of the work of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables in the area of dry and dried produce. In addition to working on stand-development, the Specialized Section is also involved in capacity-building projects and the development of sampling plans for tree nuts and for dried produce which will be included in the revised OECD Operating Rules for Conformity Checks. UNECE has up-to-date versions of several of these standards and we therefore would like to invite delegates to consult them at <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/dry/DDP-Standards.htm>, i.e. especially those for which there are corresponding Codex standards:

- **Standard for Raisins** (corresponds to UNECE DDP-11, 1992) – ***expected to become a new revised standard in June 2014***
 - **Standard for Dried Apricots** (corresponds to UNECE DDP-15, 1996) – ***expected to become a new revised standard in June 2014***
 - **Standard for Unshelled Pistachio Nuts** (corresponds to UNECE DDP-09) ***adopted and in use since 2004***
 - **Standard for Dates** (corresponds to UNECE- DDP- 08) ***adopted in 2010 and updated in June 2014.***
-

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

DRY AND DRIED PRODUCE - Standards (July 2010)

<http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/standard/dry/ddp-standards.html>

| Product | DDP No. | Published/Last revised |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Standard Layout (2011) | | 2011 |
| Almonds, inshell | 18 | 2007 |
| Almond kernels, blanched | 21 | 2009 |
| Almond kernels | 06 | 1986/2003 |
| Apples, dried | 16 | 1998 (<i>under revision</i>) |
| Apricots, dried | 15 | 1996 (<i>under revision</i>) |
| Cashew kernels | 17 | 1999 (<i>under revision</i>) |
| Dates | 08 | 1987/2010 |
| Figs, dried | 14 | 1996/2004 (<i>under revision</i>) |
| Grapes, dried | 11 | 1992 (<i>under revision</i>) |
| Hazelnut kernels | 04 | 2010 |
| Hazelnuts, inshell | 03 | 1970/2007 |
| Macadamia kernels | 23 | 2011 |
| Macadamia nuts, inshell | 22 | 2010 |
| Peaches, dried | 20 | 2008 |
| Pears, dried | 13 | 1996 (<i>under revision</i>) |
| Pine nuts, decorticated, peeled | 12 | 1993 (<i>under revision</i>) |
| Pistachio kernels and peeled pistachio kernels | 10 | 2010 |
| Pistachio nuts, inshell | 09 | 1990 / 2004 |
| Prunes | 07 | 1988 / 2003 |
| Tomatoes, dried | 19 | 2007 |
| Walnut kernels | 02 | 1983 / 2001 |
| Walnuts, inshell | 01 | 1970 / 2002 (<i>under revision</i>) |

November 2012 Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards:

- **New Standard** to be adopted by the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards:
 - Whole dried chilli peppers
 - Dried apples,
 - Dried pears
- **Recommendations for trial** to be adopted: Cashew kernels, Pine nut kernels. Inshell Brazil nuts, Brazil nut kernels, Inshell walnuts, Dried mangoes, Dried grapes, Dried apricots, Dried figs, Whole dried chilli peppers.
 - **Explanatory brochure** for consultation and adoption: **Whole dried chilli peppers**

**REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNECE
RELEVANT TO THE WORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION, 2014**

Work on standards

1. At its 69th session, held from 4 to 5 November 2013, the UNECE Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards:
 - adopted the revised texts of the standards for apples (FFV-50), pears (FFV-51), Chinese cabbage (FFV-44), fennel (FFV-16), shallots (FFV-56), plums (FFV-29), apricots (FFV-02) and chilli peppers (FFV-61);
 - adopted the texts of the new standards for quince and persimmons as recommendations for a one-year trial period;
 - extended for a further year the trial period for the standard for lambs lettuce.
2. At its 62nd session, held from 28 April to 1 May 2014, the UNECE Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables recommended that the Working Party, at its November 2014 session:
 - adopt the revised texts of the standards for quince (FFV-62), apples (FFV-50), plums (FFV-29), chicory (FFV-38), fresh figs (FFV-17), chanterelles (FFV-55), truffles (FFV-53), apricots (FFV-02) and Chinese cabbage (FFV-44);
 - adopt the texts of the revised standards for sweet chestnuts (FFV-39) and lambs lettuce (FFV-60) as recommendations for a one-year trial period.
3. The texts of the standards, as well as documents with the revisions introduced by the delegations are available at: www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm

Explanatory brochures

4. The Working Party made good progress on developing the UNECE explanatory brochure for the standard on persimmons. To finalize work on the brochure, two workshops were planned: in Italy in the second half of October and in Tajikistan in mid-November 2014. The draft brochure will be considered at the 2015 session of the Specialized Section in view of recommending it for adoption.
5. Copies of the following UNECE explanatory brochures are available in English, French and Russian at the UNECE secretariat free of charge: on the standards for sweet peppers, pineapples, fresh and dried chilli peppers.

Promotion of standards and capacity-building

6. UNECE promoted its standards at the:
 - Fourth International Workshop on Agricultural Quality Standards for East African countries (Nairobi, Kenya, September 2013);
 - Twenty-ninth International Meeting on Quality Control of Fruit and Vegetables (Bonn, Germany, February 2013);
 - International Symposium on Managing Quality in Chains, organized by the International Society for Horticultural Sciences (United Kingdom, September 2013).

Other activities and decisions

7. The Working Party continued to work on the Draft Geneva Understanding to replace the 1985 Geneva Protocol. A decision on the Geneva Understanding is expected to be taken at the 2014 session of the Working Party.
8. At its 62nd session, the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables formed two Working Groups, one to advance work on the Glossary of terms used in UNECE standards for fresh fruit and vegetables, and the other – to try to identify the reasons why the standards may cause waste.