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INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW VARIETIES OF PLANTS

GENEVA

COUNCIL

Twenty-seventh Ordinary Session

Geneva, October 29, 1993

REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF WORK OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
AND THE TECHNICAL WORKING PARTIES

Second addendum prepared by the Office of the Union

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

1. The Technical Committee (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee") held its thirtieth session on October 25 and 26, 1993, under the chairmanship of Miss Jutta Rasmussen (Denmark). The detailed report on the session will appear in document TC/30/6 Prov. The main results achieved during the session are set forth below.

Participation of Experts From International Organizations in Sessions of the Technical Committee

2. The Committee discussed whether--in addition to the Commission of the European Communities which is already routinely invited--experts from international organizations could also be invited to sessions of the Technical Committee, emphasizing that experts from some of the professional organizations already attended sessions of the Technical Working Parties under the discretion of their respective chairmen. It finally agreed to propose to the Council that the following organizations be invited to be represented by observers in sessions of the Technical Committee:

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IBPGR	International Board for Plant Genetic Resources
ISTA	International Seed Testing Association
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ASSINSEL	International Association of Plant Breeders for the Protection of Plant Varieties
CIOPORA	International Community of Breeders of Asexually Reproduced Ornamental and Fruit-Tree Varieties
COMASSO	Association of Plant Breeders of the European Economic Community.

3. The Committee furthermore proposed to the Council that it agree that documents prepared for the Technical Committee should not be considered of a restricted nature and, consequently, be made available to any interested expert.

Progress Reports and Questions Submitted to the Committee by the Technical Working Parties, Including the BMT

4. The Committee noted the usual reports on the progress of the work of the Technical Working Parties, including the newly created Working Group on Biochemical and Molecular Techniques and DNA-Profiling in particular (BMT), answered or addressed the various questions that individual Working Parties had submitted to it in documents TC/30/3 and TC/30/3 Add. and approved their programs for the coming year. The Council's attention is drawn to the following items:

(i) Combined Over-Years Analysis for Distinctness (COYD) and for Uniformity (COYU).- The Committee noted the most recent versions of the COYD and COYU analyses as reproduced in document TC/30/4. It approved the new levels fixed for the COYU as well as those for the transitional period foreseen for some countries encountering difficulties in the immediate application of the new levels. It furthermore noted the slow introduction of the analyses and asked the Technical Working Parties to encourage their members to apply the new criteria. It reconfirmed its recommendation to invite experts from the Technical Working Party on Automation and Computer Programs of the country hosting a Technical Working Party session to that session, in order to explain the methods in more detail at the session and subsequently to present any problems that arose to the Technical Working Party on Automation and Computer Programs.

(ii) Balance of Risks in the Testing of Uniformity.- The Committee rediscussed, and will further discuss, the balance of the risks of wrongly rejecting a homogeneous variety as heterogeneous and of wrongly accepting a heterogeneous variety as homogeneous, as well as the influence of the sample size on these risks. It noted and approved the new document on the replacement of paragraph 28 of the General Introduction to the Test Guidelines (TWC/11/16) requiring an indication, in all draft Test Guidelines discussed, of the population standard, the acceptance probability and the number of off-types tolerated with the indicated sample size.

New Methods, Techniques and Equipment in the Examination of Varieties

5. Discussions on DNA-profiling.- The Committee noted with interest the information contained in documents BMT/1/3 and BMT/1/4. It approved the program of the BMT and will closely follow the discussions in that working group. It agreed that invitations to BMT sessions should be sent to the Committee members, thus automatically including the chairmen of the Technical Working Parties. Each member State will then decide which experts shall participate in the BMT session. It should however be ensured that both crop experts and experts in the new methods be participating.

6. Discussions on other methods.- The Committee noted with interest the information contained in document TC/28/5 on identification and distinctness. It also noted the study in the TWO on color measurement and that Working Party's request to consider the possibility of studying image analysis and High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC).

Test Guidelines

7. During the session, the Committee adopted for publication the Test Guidelines for the following species:

TG/13/6(proj.) Lettuce (Revision)
TG/61/5(proj.) Cucumber, Gherkin (Revision)
TG/142/2(proj.) Watermelon
TG/143/2(proj.) Chick Pea
TG/144/2(proj.) Oenothera.

UPOV Central Computerized Data Base

8. The Committee noted the history of the discussions on the establishment of a UPOV Central Computerized Data Base and especially documents TWC/11/15 and CAJ/32/2-TC/29/2, as well as Circular U 2047. Some selected experts of the TWC had applied the format to a reduced number of data at the national level, exchanged those data and improved the format on the basis of the experience gained. All Technical Working Parties recommended the establishment of such a data base to the Council. It was especially needed in ornamental species. Having noted the above information, the Committee recommended to the Council that it decide to prepare a prototype for such a data base and seek the necessary funds therefor.

Cooperation With Breeders in the Testing of Varieties

9. The Committee reconfirmed its support of the draft declaration on the conditions for the examination of a variety based upon trials carried out by or on behalf of the breeder, as laid down in Annex II to document CAJ/32/10-TC/29/9.

Definition and Examination of Hybrid Varieties

10. The Committee will await the outcome of the discussions in the TWA and its Subgroup on Maize before taking a final decision on the definition and examination of hybrid varieties.

Essentially Derived Varieties

11. The Committee will await the outcome of the discussions in the BMT before taking up the question of essentially derived varieties again.

Proposal for New Chairmen for the Technical Working Parties and the BMT

12. The Committee proposed to the Council that it elect the following chairmen for the different Technical Working Parties:

TWA: Mr. Huib GHIJSEN (The Netherlands)
TWC: Mr. Sylvain GREGOIRE (France)
TWF: Mrs. Elise BUITENDAG (South Africa)
TWO: Mrs. Ulrike LOESCHER (Germany)
TWV: Mrs. Elisabeth KRISTOF (Hungary)
BMT: Mr. Joël GUIARD (France)

Program for the Next Session of the Committee

13. The thirty-first session of the Committee is to take place in Geneva, from November 2 to 4, 1994. It is planned that the following items be discussed during the session: progress reports and questions presented by the Technical Working Parties, including the BMT; new methods, techniques and equipment in the examination of varieties; UPOV central computerized data base; cooperation with breeders in the testing of varieties. In addition, the Committee will have to take decisions on the Test Guidelines which will be submitted by the Technical Working Parties for final adoption.

14. The Council is invited to

(i) note and approve the above information and the program of the Committee;

(ii) note and approve the program of the Technical Working Parties as reproduced in documents C/27/10 and C/27/10 Add.;

(iii) note and approve the proposals to invite to sessions of the Committee--in addition to the Commission of the European Communities which is already routinely invited--the organizations mentioned in paragraph 2 above;

(iv) note and approve that documents of the Committee become available to any interested person;

(v) note and approve the proposals for the new Chairmen as specified in paragraph 12;

(vi) decide to prepare a prototype for a central computerized data base as specified in paragraph 8.