The European Community reiterates its permanent wish that the decision to extend the mandate of the Codex Committee on Tropical Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (CCTFFV) to all fresh fruit and vegetables does not result in an overlapping or duplication of work with other international organisations acting in this field, in particular the UN/ECE Working Party on standardisation of perishable goods. It recalls that, when extending the CCTFFV mandate to all fruit and vegetables, it was decided to include in the CCFFV mandate numerous measures to facilitate the co-operation and avoid duplications.

However, the European Community notes that the use made by CCFFV of these measures included in the CCFFV mandate does not seem to have allowed the reduction to a minimum of the feared duplications with the UN/ECE Working Party concerned. One striking example is the fact that, during the ninth session of CCFFV in October 2000, the proposed draft Codex standards for apples, table grapes and tomatoes have been returned to step 2, among others for better consideration of the corresponding UN/ECE standards in those proposed drafts.

The European Community thanks the Codex Secretariat for having exposed to the Commission preliminary information on the first lines of thought which came out of the informal meeting on 20 April 2001 between the three international organisations concerned, held on the initiative of the OECD Scheme for the application of international standards to fresh fruit and vegetables initiative. It invites the three organisations to continue their consultation to identify an agreed course of action to minimise the duplication of work.

The European Community wishes that the CCFFV at its next session widely debates these issues, with a view to progressing towards a satisfactory and consensual solution of the problems of duplication encountered since 1995, without losing the important experience acquired during the 50 last years in the field of standardisation.