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INFORMATION MEMO

Fuller standardization of fruit and vegetables:
improved consumer protection

The Council of Ministers has adopted a **new** regulation on quality standards for fruit and vegetables marketed in the Community. These standards will now be extended to cover:

- (i) Further stages of marketing down to retail trading. Merchants will be required to show the quality, category, variety and origin of the product, an obvious advantage for the consumer;
- (ii) A wider geographical area. So far the standards have applied to imported products only; the new rules will also cover home-grown produce;
- (iii) Other qualities. The Council will supplement the quality standards already laid down by adding further quality categories for products marketed within the Community.

The standards will apply to cauliflowers, tomatoes, apples and pears, peaches, citrus fruit and table grapes with effect from 1 January 1967, and to lettuce, chicory (blanched), endive, onions, apricots, plums, spinach, peas, beans, carrots, artichokes, cherries and strawberries from 1 January 1968.

The regulation also provides:

- (a) For rules on how the quality, variety and origin of the product, whether packaged or in bulk, are to be indicated;
- (b) For spot checks and penalties to be applied by the Member States;
- (c) For a few exceptions, e.g. for products sent to processing plants or sold on the farm to the consumer for his personal use.
