Introduction

1. The International Meat Consultative Group held its fourth meeting on 5 and 6 February 1976. The following countries or groups of countries were represented:

- Argentina
- Australia (and its member States)
- Austria
- Brazil
- Bulgaria
- Canada
- Colombia
- Egypt
- European Communities
- Finland
- Hungary
- Japan
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Poland
- Romania
- South Africa
- Switzerland
- Thailand
- United States
- Yugoslavia

In addition representatives of the ECE, the FAO, the OECD and UNCTAD attended the meeting as observers.

Agenda

2. The Group adopted as the basis for its discussion the topics outlined in the airgram convening the meeting (GATT/AIR/1252) with the addition of an item for other business.

Consultations

3. In accordance with the procedure adopted at its previous meetings the Group consulted on current market conditions and foreseeable trends in international trade in bovine meat and live cattle. In this regard the Group had before it a secretariat summary relating to the main aggregates of production and trade (IMCG/W/15), together with the replies of participants to the model questionnaire.
4. It was not considered necessary for the Group at this stage in the
development of its consultative process to attempt to draw conclusions.
Consistent with the early-warning function of the Group it was sufficient that
the impressions gained from the consultations should be taken into account by
participants in their further decision-making in capitals and in their
preparations for the next meeting of the Group.

5. To facilitate reflection by participants on the matters raised and the views
expressed in the consultations it was agreed that statements made by participants
would, if they so wished, be reproduced and circulated by the secretariat.

Model questionnaire

6. Replies or revised replies to the model questionnaire had been received by
the secretariat from the following sixteen participants: Argentina, Australia,
Austria, Brazil, Canada, European Communities, Hungary, Japan, Mexico,
New Zealand, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Switzerland, United States and
Uruguay.

7. In the course of the discussion, it was noted, inter alia, that in a number
of cases data on the various stages of production and trade had either not been
furnished or did not correspond in all respects with the breakdown contemplated
in the model questionnaire. Reference was made in this regard to the importance for
the Group's consultations of participants supplying information on prices in
accordance with Part D of the model questionnaire, quarterly data on trade and
on the origin and destination of imports and exports.

8. It was agreed that, for the next meeting, the secretariat prepare a check­
list based on the replies to the model questionnaire indicating what information
had been furnished and what had not, so as to enable the Group to examine and
discuss what it is that governments have been having problems with as far as
providing data is concerned. Such an examination would be taken as a point of
departure for the longer-term exercise of determining what data should be
collected on a permanent basis for the purposes of the Group's consultations.

9. It was agreed that participants should continue to employ their best
efforts to submit replies to the model questionnaire, together with replies
relating to the most recent quarter for which data or estimates are available,
sufficiently in advance of meetings of the Group in order that there can be an
informed and meaningful discussion of the current market situation and foreseeable
trends based on prior analysis of the information. It was also agreed that the
secretariat would again prepare and issue a summary of this information.

10. For the purposes of the next meeting, including the review of the content
and format of the model questionaire, participants are invited to submit replies
to the secretariat before 4 June 1976.
Prices practised in international trade

11. It was agreed that the Chairman, in consultation with the secretariat and with potential contributing participants, would settle the arrangements under which monthly prices are to be collected on a regular basis in respect of the main international trade flows.

Frequency of the Group's regular meetings

12. This subject was not discussed.

Other business

13. None.

Date of next meeting

14. Subject to confirmation, the Consultative Group will hold its next meeting on 24 and 25 June 1976.