



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

2 0 2 2
C O D E X

PROTECTING HEALTH, FACILITATING TRADE

A year in transition



**ZILPATEROL:
ARE WE
GETTING IT
RIGHT?**

**OBSERVERS
COMMITTED
TO CODEX**

**TRUST FUND
REACHES
MILESTONES**

**ARE WE
READY FOR
THE NEXT
60 YEARS?**

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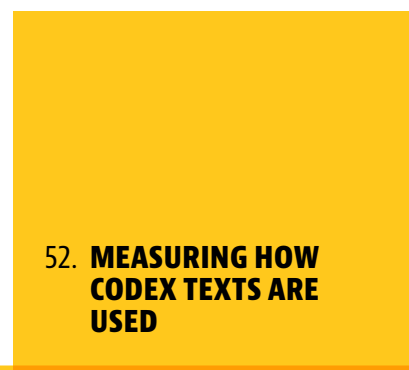
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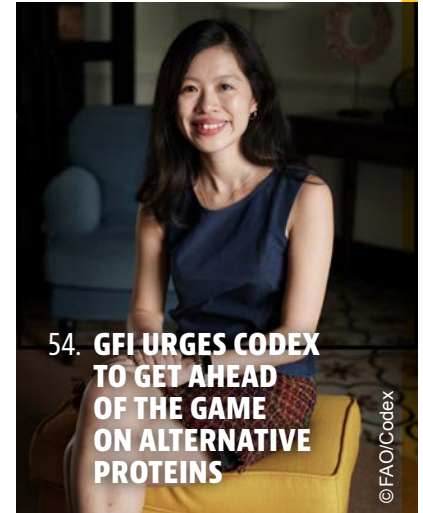
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WHAT IS THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS?

The Codex Alimentarius, or “Food Code”, is a collection of standards, guidelines and codes of practice developed by consensus and based on the most robust up-to-date science available. The texts contained in the Codex are considered the gold standard for international commerce in food – and as such are recognized by the World Trade Organization. They facilitate cross-border exchange while preventing and helping resolve trade disputes. Codex texts are not mandatory but governments frequently use them as the basis for national legislation.

Since 1963, Codex has developed hundreds of internationally recognized standards, guidelines and codes. It has defined thousands of permitted levels of additives, contaminants and chemical residues in food. The end goal: ensure food is safe for everyone, everywhere.

The texts are adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which currently comprises 188 Member Countries and one Member Organization (the European Union) and 243 Observers of which 60 are intergovernmental organizations, 167 non-governmental organizations and 16 United Nations agencies. The Commission, also known as CAC, first met in 1963. It was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to protect consumer health and promote fair practices in the food trade. ■

DID YOU KNOW?



A new course “Effective participation in Codex work” was published in March 2022 on the FAO eLearning Academy. Currently available in English, French and Spanish.

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS MANDATE



PROTECT
the health
of consumers



ENSURE
fair practices
in food trade



PROMOTE
coordination of all
food standards work

A YEAR IN TRANSITION

Welcome to our annual review highlighting what has happened in Codex since the last Commission which ended in December 2021.



The British author C. S. Lewis said “progress means getting nearer to the place you want to be”. In this sixth edition of the annual magazine we describe a year of transition from a kind of enforced hibernation and reliance on technology to communicate and develop standards, to CAC45 where we expect to meet and greet old friends and new whilst trying not to exclude those who will be connected online.

The new team of elected officials led by Steve Wearne review their first year in office and we report on all the meetings that have taken place since CAC44 with comments and opinions from chairpersons and experts. Our parents, FAO and WHO, provide their unique perspective on the work of Codex and we welcome two writers selected from more than 240 observers with their thoughts on new food sources and the particular contribution observers make to the standard-setting process.

Discussions at the Executive Committee (CCEXEC82).

Sarah Cahill (left) and Hilde Kruse from the Codex Secretariat.





A detailed review of how Codex has dealt with growth promoters features in this edition and will remind delegates of how much time we have spent debating this issue. The Secretariat has printed ballot papers: will they be needed?

We report on communications and two major projects: one is the new Codex website and another addressing the core of the Codex Alimentarius with a new design for our standards, guidelines and codes of practice.

Codex is busy discussing how it imagines its future, if we ask the right questions, listen in debates and find consensus, then perhaps we will be nearer to where we want to be. ■

CODEX@60

Codex turns 60 next year and we want to hear from you!

- Send us your memories, photos, stories from the last 60 years
- Let us know how you plan to celebrate
- We want your ideas on how to mark the anniversary!

CONTACT: CODEX@FAO.ORG



↗ The Codex and Host Secretariats at CCLAC.

⬆ Uganda hosts United Republic of Tanzania for Codex training, Kampala, September 2022.

⬅ Thailand delegation to CCASIA.

THE OTHER 51 WEEKS OF THE YEAR

It has been a busy year, including informal consultations with almost 100 Member Countries and three active subcommittees of the Executive Committee. I've also taken time to reflect on what my priorities should be in my role as Chairperson. Our Procedural Manual says that I "shall preside at meetings of the Commission". So far, so good, but what about the other 51 weeks of the year? The manual says I should also "exercise such other functions as may be required to facilitate the work of the Commission". That requires a bit more interpretation. For me, three things have been important in the past year - making connections; advocating for Codex; and building coalitions.

In our first letter to Members and Observers, the Vice-Chairpersons and I stressed the importance we place on being close to Members, committees and committee chairs, so we can help guide the Codex family through various issues and debates. I have participated in and listened carefully to discussion in most of our committees that met in the past year, joining the chairpersons of the contaminants and food hygiene committees in person when they hosted virtual committee sessions. I have also had the opportunity to speak to many others in the wider community of bodies engaged in food safety and quality. Making these connections is ▶



STEVE WEARNE
Chairperson,
Codex Alimentarius Commission



↑
QU Dongyu
Director-General
of FAO (right)
with Steve
Wearne.



“We are all part of an interconnected multilateral system and need to work together to address the challenges we face.”

important – we are all part of an interconnected multilateral system and need to work together to address the challenges we face.

Over the past year I have been, and continue to be, a passionate advocate for Codex, including in meeting the FAO Director-General. In discussions with Observer Organizations, I have been clear about my asks of them – to share their diagnosis of where Codex standards would help deliver food safety and quality; to contribute their technical expertise to the process of setting standards; and to join us in making the case for the implementation of standards.

As I said at the recent Vienna Food Safety Forum, the work of Codex is not done when the ink is dry on a new international standard. In many ways, this is when the hard work starts. The Forum further cemented the coalition that we have built with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), key partners in the initiation and funding of projects that implement Codex standards, particularly in developing countries. This work is critical to us, if we are to realise our vision of standards that protect everyone, everywhere. ■



THE WORK OF THE VICE-CHAIRPERSONS



ALLAN AZEGELE
Vice-Chairperson

I have had the unique opportunity to lead the subcommittee on the future of Codex, tasked to bring into perspective the invaluable views of Members on their desired future. I have witnessed great enthusiasm during our consultative forums with creative proposals on how to adopt and improve Codex working mechanisms to serve the membership better. The key themes that have emerged are meeting formats (virtual, physical or hybrid); meeting schedules; working groups and other pre-meeting working mechanisms.

Members have shared experiences on how they have navigated the different meeting formats and we now have an opportunity to combine the benefits of physical, virtual and hybrid meetings in determining the approach for the future. Issues relating to cost, management of both virtual and physical delegates, time zones, technology and ensuring equity of participation, all have to be addressed. The shift of the Commission meeting to November-December has had a cascading effect on meeting schedules of technical committees and we need predictability to facilitate more efficient progress.

Over the last three years, electronic working groups (EWGs) and other pre-meetings have gained traction as significant drivers in development of Codex texts. The number of EWGs and ease of joining these platforms has however had an effect on the level of participation by Members, which could adversely affect consensus building during standard development. A combination of electronic, virtual and physical working mechanisms could add impetus in enhancing participation and facilitating consensus building.

As we look into the future and decide on how to operate, Codex Members should be guided by the nature of work that responds to global priorities. ■



DIEGO VARELA
Vice-Chairperson

Food systems are being affected by a diverse set of challenges, which is making it incrementally more difficult to produce enough food for the population. At the same time, there is a recognition of the environmental, social and economic damage caused by the way in which we produce, trade and consume food. Based on this, the international community has agreed that we need to transit towards sustainable food systems.

We are already seeing a range of innovations that are changing the landscape of choices of the things we can eat. New food products and new technologies are being developed at a fast pace. In parallel, traditional food products that were once characteristic of small regions of the world are now becoming worldwide trends.

In this scenario, we need to make sure information to consumers on these new food products and technologies is easy to understand and does not lead to confusion, and above all we must ensure that these food products offered to consumers are safe to eat.

As Members look for a reference to make sure their national food control systems are well equipped to draft science-based regulations, Codex needs to work to offer standards that address current, emerging and critical issues in a timely manner. We have already run a first diagnostic on the needs and developments from Members and Observers on this topic. This work is setting the stage to find the best way to make sure Codex standards are taking into consideration this new scenario. ■



RAJ RAJASEKAR
Vice-Chairperson

The work on developing some practical guidance for the application of the Statements of Principle concerning the role of Science (SoP) started immediately after the 2021 Codex elections and I have been privileged to lead this work in the Executive Committee. The work, which has sometimes been referred to as “deep Codex” is all about facilitating standards advancement in situations where there is clear agreement on science but differing views among Members on other factors or other considerations.

While the SoP have been around for close to 30 years, there has never been a better opportunity than the present time to promote their application in dealing with situations where science is not the issue, but other considerations are.

The SoP work has particular relevance for the Commission’s consideration of the proposed maximum residue limits for a veterinary compound that has been under consideration for some time. Over the years, Codex has been very successful in establishing large number of international standards and many Members look to Codex standards for domestic food regulation and trade.

I believe that the practical guidance on SoP provides a genuine pathway to progress standards by upholding Codex core principles while at the same time recognizing that it is for Members to decide if they will accept and apply them at the national level. This year’s Commission provides an unprecedented opportunity to make the SoP work the way they were always intended. ■



CHANGE, CHALLENGES, CREATIVITY AND CODEX@60

TOM HEILANDT
Codex Secretary

Now that pandemic restrictions are lifting, I have begun travelling again. I have represented the Codex Secretariat in the Republic of Korea, India and across Europe. Travelling is nice, meeting old and new friends, eating new foods and making new experiences, but it is also nice to return home.

Change is more like moving. We leave the comfort zone of home and arrive at a new place with no way back home. We need to make the new place our new home using the opportunities that it offers us. It is a process requiring energy and creativity.

As we gather in Rome, Italy, for our first in-person Commission we have traveled back home geographically but it is different from before. Last year I promised that there is no turning back from making virtual participation at physical meetings possible for those who cannot travel. Everybody should have a place at the Codex table, and while we all know that a virtual place comes with constraints, I remain convinced that few would prefer not to have a place at all. It will be possible to follow this year's Commission virtually, although without all the privileges of physical participation ... as yet we do not have a way to vote virtually. ►

**“For me,
hybrid
and virtual
are an
opportunity
and a
bargain!”**

Offering “virtual” places comes with a “real” additional cost. I know that from our own meetings and hear it from those Members who kindly host (and pay for!) our technical committees. As in time we organize ourselves better, and technology advances and costs stabilize, we will know better how much more but even now it is safe to say that it will be significantly less than providing travel funds to every Member, which was previously the only way to offer everybody a place. For me, hybrid and virtual are an opportunity and a bargain!

We need to think beyond the practices of the past and the constraints of the emergency situation that led to the discovery of virtual. We need to plan and budget differently and be prepared to experiment with new solutions and technologies. It will take time to get to our new comfort zone, but I hope in the next cycle of technical meetings host countries will explore this route. The Codex Secretariat will be at their side to assist them but may have to ask for additional means to do so.

Codex is a tool for international cooperation, and mostly a good one otherwise it wouldn't be about to turn 60. To stay relevant it constantly needs to learn, to adapt and to invent, always questioning its own assumptions not only regarding meeting modalities but also on how we tackle the food safety and quality issues that Members bring to us.

We operate in a changing world. We are experiencing the impact of climate change alongside the pandemic and the turmoil of international conflicts. We see innovations in food science, consumer concerns and, from my seat inside the UN system, the need to align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the outcomes of the food systems summit.

The 1987 “Brundtland Commission” report, *Our Common Future*¹, famously defines sustainable development as: development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. One example of how Codex has the potential to contribute to this is by providing principles for sustainability labelling. We see it happening and will need to ensure it is fair, equitable, has meaning for consumers, and delivers the intended outcome. I hope it will be an exciting joint exploration of a new area with a useful consensual result and not result in protracted controversial discussions that some associate with Codex – which is also unfair as we have delivered over 99,99 percent of our standards by consensus.

I am proud that all our discussions, disagreements and conclusions are freely available on the Codex website. I am also proud that everyone has a voice in Codex whether they like it or are critical of us.

I am extremely proud that World Food Safety Day is gaining momentum every year, driving awareness of food safety.

Codex@60 in 2023 will not only celebrate our past achievements but also make the point that Codex needs to exist in the future. In today's digital age where information is abundant but also more complex and confusing than in any previous era, especially for consumers, a reliable science-based food standards setter like Codex is a beacon of light moving us into the future. We have just launched a new spaceship to the moon – Artemis 1 – showing us amazing images of our planet. This could only happen because we have standards and science and agriculture and safe food; because we change, rise to challenges and find creative solutions. ■

“We have delivered over 99,99 percent of our standards by consensus.”

¹ <http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm>

A YEAR OF CHANGE



MARKUS LIPP
FAO

The demand for scientific advice is always increasing and science progresses. That means that food safety risk assessments are becoming more complex as we understand and learn more about the myriad of possible interactions that all need to be investigated with regard to concerns for public health.

But it is not only science that is always progressing; our world is also constantly changing and 2022 has brought many additional challenges and transitions.

We have seen the return of travel and the long-awaited opportunity to hold in-person meetings again. A change that has been eagerly expected by our experts and staff alike. The return to the vibrant discussions during face-to-face gatherings, the deep scientific exchanges, and the networking opportunities with colleagues from all over the world have been dearly missed and long awaited.

The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA) of *Listeria monocytogenes* in foods met this October in Rome; the fourth ad-hoc meeting of the FAO/WHO expert meeting on allergens met in November in Rome, and also in November, the first global consultation looked at the safety of cell-based foods – the meeting was held in Singapore by FAO in collaboration with WHO and the Singapore Food Safety Agency.

Earlier in 2022, however, FAO and WHO continued to hold quite a number of expert meetings for the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), JEMRA and others on a virtual basis to make sure that Members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission continue to receive the scientific advice they had requested and needed in order to set the needed international food safety standards.

And it does not stop there. In order to provide Members with information about current as well as emerging food safety risks from existing, and from new food sources and production methods, FAO, in many cases together with WHO, published relevant information about food safety considerations for new food sources and production methods and how they might apply to Codex, for seaweed, microplastics, e-notification systems, edible insects and more.

2022 was a year of change, and yet, we believe that FAO is poised to continue to answer the needs of Codex Members for scientific advice and more generally for country-specific support to strengthen food safety for everyone. ■



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WHAT IS THE LINK BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC ADVICE AND CODEX?

FAO is supporting governments by convening scientific expert committees, some of which have been meeting on a regular basis since 1956. Jointly with WHO, FAO convenes leading experts from around the world to provide science-based risk assessments for food additives, chemical and microbiological contaminants in food, residues from pesticides and/or veterinary drugs in food, and for many other food safety related topics such as allergens and much more. The outcomes of these risk assessments are publicly available for everyone to use.

Much of this work is requested by the Members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission to support the development of international food safety standards with the goal to protect consumer health everywhere and facilitate fair practices in trade.

↑ Joint FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Programme leads, Moez Sanaa (left) and Markus Lipp (right), at a meeting in April 2022.

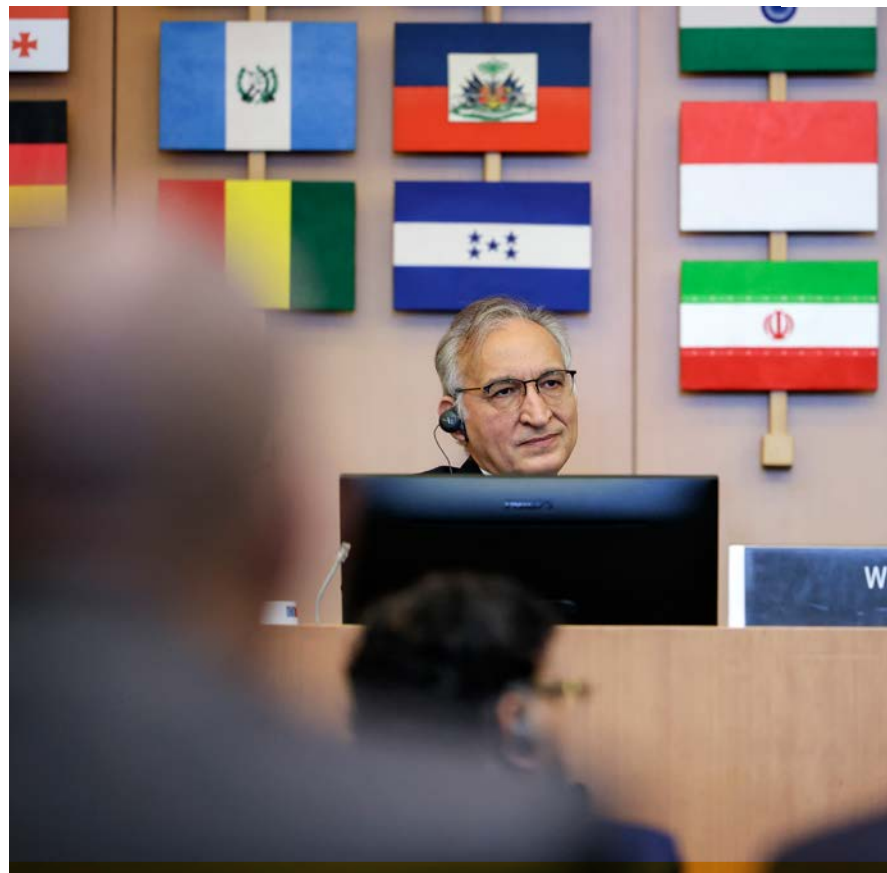
INNOVATIVE THINKING WILL HELP CODEX STAY RELEVANT



MOEZ SANAA
WHO

The sustainability we need for our planet and the environment, for healthy diets and in our food systems requires us to evolve and innovate the way we work. As Head of Food Standards and Scientific Advice at WHO, I see how food standards setting work is being pressured by the “new” foods that are emerging in our discussions, by the technologies that come with that and by the need to keep pace with the related science.

Codex is preparing the ground for work on so-called “new” foods. But there is a need to get a step ahead of the game: we need to discuss how we will deal with these new foods. Which scientific committee would evaluate them? Do we have relevant committees? This isn’t about a single pesticide, veterinary drug or contaminant. It’s about food itself, and all its various aspects. So, novel foods need to be addressed more holistically. And Codex needs to consider this when it comes to new standards. ▶



We also need more expert scientists who are themselves in tune with emerging issues. This means another kind of sustainability in terms of how we do risk assessments. Looking at the range of experts we have available, I see an upside-down pyramid, with the many key experts who are at retirement age at the top and the few in the new generation of experts at the bottom. The new generation has less free time; there is a lot of pressure on them to pursue research activities. So, they have less freedom and less capacity to come to WHO and FAO meetings, even though they are in the international network. We need to find some way to encourage them, and to encourage universities and governments to recognize

their contribution to WHO and FAO technical reports. In short, we need, collectively, to find a new way of working with international experts so that Codex can, indeed, keep pace with the fast-evolving food safety landscape.

WHO is promoting sustainable healthy diets, which are about food systems in general, and which require a holistic approach. How can Codex address those factors that would allow that holistic approach? Could we do more with our partner organizations to ensure our decisions are aligned to sustainability goals, so governments can protect our ecosystem and the planet in general, in addition to protecting the consumer and trade?

Our decision-making itself also needs some innovative thinking. Hybrid meetings encourage more participation, which bolsters the inclusivity of Codex. But sometimes we discuss very complex issues. When you want to transform things, to be more innovative, you need to have the space to discuss things in a less formal way and in-person meetings offer the possibility to connect. Ultimately, achieving consensus is about people connecting. And people connecting through screens is a very difficult thing. ■



DID YOU KNOW?

CHIZURU NISHIDA, Coordinator, Nutrition Policy and Scientific Advice Unit, WHO, attended her first Codex meeting in 2003 and CAC45 will be her final salute as she heads for retirement.

©FAO/Alessia Pierdomenico

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WHY START SOMETHING YOU CAN'T FINISH?

Discussions on growth promoters have never been easy in Codex – to say the least. A topic that has taken up hundreds of hours of valuable committee and Commission time is likely to occupy delegates, once again, at CAC45.

When zilpaterol was first brought to Codex in 2012, at CAC35, discussions were controversial from the start. Zilpaterol was included in the JECFA priority list following a legal opinion and a ruling by the Chairperson with more than 30 reservations, however the conclusion was not challenged so work went ahead.

It was the 11th compound (see box on page 19) to be discussed at CAC that is used as a growth promoter in animals reared for food production.

Of the 11 drugs, no fewer than four were debated at CAC35. Of the remaining seven, five had been put to the vote (four twice), one had been declared to have no safe levels due to its carcinogenicity and just one was adopted with no hindrance.

At CAC35, in addition to whether zilpaterol should be included in the JECFA priority list and thus work started on relevant maximum residue limits (MRLs), rBSTs (recombinant Bovine Somatotropins), ractopamine and narasin were all up for debate. ►



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KEVIN GREENLEES,
FORMER CHAIR, CCRVDF



“It is important for people to recognize that these are very strongly held positions on both sides, that there is a solid basis for the positions that each group brings.”

The MRLs for rBST continued to be held at Step 8 where they had been since the last century and where they remain even now.

The MRLs for ractopamine had already been put to a vote at CAC34 (on whether to vote on them or not - with the result not to vote on them by 59-68 with nine abstentions). At CAC35 the same question was put to the vote again, and this time the Commission decided by 68-64 and nine abstentions to vote. That decisive vote came out in favour of the MRLs with only the narrowest of margins: 69-67 votes with seven abstentions.

The MRLs for narasin were adopted with 30 reservations.

Few would argue with the suggestion, then, that growth promoters are a hot topic for Codex, with strongly held - some would say entrenched - views on both sides. Those views were established before the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF) started meeting more than 36 years ago, and they have not changed. At the time of the very first CCRVDF meeting in 1986, the European Economic Community (EEC, later European Community) had already banned growth hormones; the veterinary drugs industry declared this "an example of a non-tariff trade barrier which had no scientific basis whatsoever". At that meeting, growth hormones and, in particular, anabolic agents, were identified as matters of immediate concern.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ►

COMPOUNDS USED AS GROWTH PROMOTERS DISCUSSED IN CODEX

Bovine somatotropins (rBSTs), carbadox, estradiol-17beta, melengestrol acetate, narasin, progesterone, ractopamine, testosterone, trenbolone acetate, zeranol, zilpaterol

► CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Today, zilpaterol, an anabolic agent, is back on the table. As with every debate around growth hormones, the one side still argues “in principle” against support for MRLs for any drug used for growth promotion, and the other continues to argue that the work of Codex is based on sound scientific principles and that if the JECFA evaluation confirms that health issues in relation to residues of these substances in food are not a cause for concern, then that is sufficient reason for these MRLs to be adopted.

In 1991, CAC discussions around MRLs for four different growth promoters were at an impasse. The two sides could not agree, the MRLs went to a vote and were not adopted. To address the situation, the delegation of the United States of America asked the Executive Committee to consider a revision to the Commission procedures “to confirm the pre-eminent role of science in Codex decisions on health and safety matters.” At the 10th session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP10), other delegations supported such a review of procedures, expressing support “for the principle that Codex recommendations should be based on the best scientific opinion available, but that there were other non-scientific criteria, such as economic factors or consumers’ concerns, which needed to be taken into account in arriving at Codex recommendations.” They also expressed support for any proposal which would lead to greater transparency of the Codex process.

Subsequent work in CCGP and in the Executive Committee resulted, in 1995, in the adoption at CAC of four Statements of Principle, which uphold “the principle of sound scientific analysis and evidence” in the elaboration of Codex standards. The second principle, however, also demands consideration, where appropriate, of “other legitimate factors relevant for the health protection of consumers and for the promotion of fair practices in food trade.” Views have not changed; the importance of science has not changed. But the world is changing, and these other legitimate factors – or OLFs – have played an increasingly prominent role in debates around growth promoters.

The debate on rBSTs represents the first time that OLFs appear to have taken precedence over the pre-eminence of science in decision-making on the subject. Risk assessments demonstrate conclusively that rBSTs, when used responsibly, do not harm human health. But there is a contention that use of rBSTs can result in an increased incidence of mastitis in cows and subsequent antimicrobial use risks the transfer of resistant strains. Adopting MRLs for rBSTs would bring the WHO Global Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and resolutions on AMR adopted by both FAO and WHO into direct conflict with CAC decisions. Now, with an ever-increasing emphasis on One Health, on ensuring that food safety considers the health of animals, plants and the planet as well as that of humans, the question is: would adoption of MRLs for zilpaterol bring Codex into conflict with not only the One Health strategies of both FAO and WHO, but also with its own One Health considerations?

Ongoing work in the Executive Committee will help the Commission clarify how the Statements of Principle should be applied. This may or may not help to resolve the deadlock on zilpaterol. But those entrenched views won’t budge. The disagreement remains. For an Organization that prides itself on consensus-based decision-making, are we going in the right direction? ■



TECHNICAL AND COMMODITY COMMITTEES



CHILDREN ARE THE "WELL-DESERVED WINNERS" OF CCNFSDU42 WORK



©UNICEF



FROM/TO (DATE)

19 November–1 December 2021



PARTICIPATION

99	1	35
MEMBER COUNTRIES	MEMBER ORGANIZATION	OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS



HOST COUNTRY

Germany

The Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) met virtually in November 2021 to address a reduced but demanding agenda. Under discussion were the ongoing review of the *Standard for Follow-up Formula (CXS 156-1987)*, the final stages of work on a Guidelines for Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) and the elaboration of the proposed General Principles for the Establishment of Nutrient Reference Values-Requirements (NRVs-R) for Persons Aged 6-36 Months.

The review of the *Standard for Follow-up Formula (CXS 156 - 1987)* is being addressed in stages and has been divided in four parts, each of which is progressing at a

different pace. Detailed discussions led to agreements for all parts of the review, with part 1 being held at Step 4 and the remaining parts at Step 7. Final outstanding issues will be discussed at CCNFSDU43.

Work on the Draft Guideline for Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods started in 2014 and was finalized in this session thanks to nearly 10 years of collaboration, compromise and a will for consensus from all contributors. When a clear agreement was found on this text, Nolene Naicker, Chair of the EWG responsible for the work said: "Compromise was a key aspect whilst continuously keeping the needs of our children at the forefront of our discussions. So, we are happy today to proclaim our children the well-deserved winners of this work." This text will

help guide organizations, such as UNICEF, on nutritional treatment of children suffering from severe or acute malnutrition.

The General Principles for the Establishment of NRVs-R for Persons Aged 6-36 Months remains at the early stages and is being guided by a re-established EWG chaired by Ireland and co-chaired by Costa Rica and the United States of America. ■

STANDARDS

- Guidelines for Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF)

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

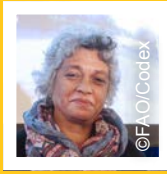


ANJA BRÖNSTRUP, Germany

Two years after the last meeting, the CCNFSDU community was eager to meet again in November 2021 and to put up with the new challenges of the necessary virtual conference

mode - not least in connection with time differences and manpower. Even with the usual physical form of meetings, finding consensus on the many sensitive issues discussed in this Committee is not an easy task. However, delegates adapted very well and the plenary managed to complete the (abridged) agenda. The common spirit and sense of willingness were felt during every minute of the five three-hourly sessions, and the plenary even finalized discussions on one important task: the draft Guidelines for Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF). They were sent for adoption by CAC45. Well done, CCNFSDU delegates!

FROM CODEX



VERNA CAROLISSEN, Codex Secretariat

The principles under which Codex operates in developing a guideline of this nature are to “set the scene, and that our main focus is to

provide an identity for the product, what it should comprise from a nutritional perspective, how it should be labelled and what safety information should be taken into account. And we have done that here.”



FROM THE EXPERTS

ALISON FLEET, UNICEF

UNICEF is thrilled to now have an official document that can serve as a reference for national governments to use in their policies for nutritional treatment of childhood wasting. We anticipate this guideline will be used as a tool for regulation of these products that are given to vulnerable populations.



CCFH OUTBREAKS WORK MAKES IT THROUGH TO CAC



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FROM/TO (DATE)

28 February–4 March 2022



PARTICIPATION

106	1	22
MEMBER COUNTRIES	MEMBER ORGANIZATION	OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS AND PALESTINE



HOST COUNTRY

United States of America

The Codex Committee on Food Hygiene hadn't met for more than two years when it convened virtually in March to discuss four key agenda items. The first item, the 'outbreaks' document was finalized, providing guidelines to countries on best steps to a fast and effective response to biological foodborne outbreaks. Consensus was also found on a proposed decision tree for inclusion as an annex to the core CCFH document, the *General Principles of Food Hygiene (CXC 1-1969)*. The decision tree was seen as a vital tool for "both competent authorities and food business operators, in particular small and less developed businesses".

Remaining agenda items were discussed and while not advanced in the step process, CCFH52 took some important decisions which will enable their further development and hopefully advancement at CCFH53. One large piece of work is the proposed draft Guidelines for the Control of Shiga Toxin-Producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) in Raw Beef, Fresh Leafy Vegetables, Raw Milk and Raw-Milk Cheeses, and Sprouts. This will be redrafted under the aegis of a Chile-chaired EWG.

The other main item is the proposed draft Guidelines for the Safe Use and Re-Use of Water in Food Production, work led by Honduras. It is an extremely pertinent topic given the increasing water resource challenges.

Key to progressing both these items are the scientific advice and risk assessments of the JEMRA. ■

LIST OF STANDARDS

- Guidelines for the Management of Biological Foodborne Outbreaks
- Revision to the *General Principles of Food Hygiene (CXC 1-1969)*.

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



EMILIO ESTEBAN, United States of America

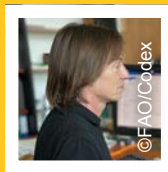
After a short hiatus because of the COVID-19 pandemic, CCFH met virtually in February 2022. The meeting can only be described as “interesting”. Many things have changed since I first was able to chair CCFH in 2008, many remain the same. Notably, the virtual 52nd meeting of CCFH was the most comprehensive regarding world participants, it was a fully virtual, and managed from a commercial broadcast studio. The agenda was adjusted so that we could complete work that was almost ready for final adoption and plant seeds for future work. As Chair, managing a multilingual meeting without the ability to read body language and having eye contact with the delegates was very challenging. Also, technology worked great, but it also added complexity given we needed to monitor chat rooms, while at the same time discussing items live. While one cannot predict the future, major social disruptions like COVID-19 present both challenges and opportunities. Technology will evolve, as will we, and new generations are much more comfortable with electronic exchanges. One thing didn’t change at CCFH, the Members of the Committee, including our Secretariat, are outstanding and work was completed as expected. We should embrace the future, but never forget the value of human contact.

FROM CODEX



SARAH CAHILL, Codex Secretariat

The completion of the work on the HACCP decision tree at CCFH52 brings to conclusion a major revision of the General Principles of Food Hygiene so they are reflective of the latest knowledge, experiences and approaches to maintain food hygiene. However, as a foundational text in Codex it means that it is also the beginning of a new phase of work to ensure that other commodity or pathogen-specific food hygiene texts are now aligned with this revised seminal hygiene text. While the virtual meeting format reduced the time available for discussion, and the committee’s forward work plan was not specifically addressed, CCFH52 nevertheless retained its anticipatory approach and tasked JEMRA with further scientific advice requests. This means that as work on STEC and safe water use advance, activity on the next set of texts to be revised or developed is planned and ready to go.



TOM HEILANDT, Codex Secretariat

The edifice of food hygiene in Codex is amazingly well constructed both with general guidance and specific texts and you continue to develop new standards looking into the future.

FROM THE EXPERTS

GUDRUN SANDØ, Denmark

Preparedness and communication between the different authorities and organizations in countries and between countries is of paramount importance in outbreak investigation. Foodborne outbreaks are often managed in an environment of time constraint and pressure from politicians and media, and having the structure in place makes a big difference.

LIGIA LINDNER SCHREINER, Brazil

The *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CXC 1-1969) with its diagrams and annexes are essential to ensure food safety. In this context, the decision tree plays an important role, because it is a useful tool for food business operators to identify critical control points that are fundamental for implementation of hazard analysis.

FIRST VIRTUAL CCFFV AGREES ON THREE KEY STANDARDS



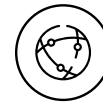
FROM/TO (DATE)

28 February–4 March 2022



PARTICIPATION

83	1	4
MEMBER COUNTRIES	MEMBER ORGANIZATION	OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS AND PALESTINE



HOST COUNTRY

Mexico

Three key standards were up for discussion at the 22nd session of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

This was the first time the Committee had met virtually and to aid the process, three informal virtual working groups (WWGs) meetings were arranged in advance of CCFFV22 to address Members’ comments on the three standards. Led by the EWG Chairs, these sessions helped to reduce the workload for the full committee in April. In addition, an In-session Working Group co-chaired by the United States of America and Ghana was established to consider agenda items on the Definition (formerly, Glossary) of Terms Used in the Layout for Codex Standards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables,

and Amendments to the Layout for Codex standards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables due to the adoption of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Non-retail Containers of Foods (CXS 346-2021)*.

All three key standards under discussion were approved by the Committee and will be forwarded to CAC for adoption at Step 5/8. In addition, CCFFV22 agreed on a proposed editorial amendment to the *Standard for Bananas (CXS 205-1997)*.

In addition, the Committee agreed to publish the Proposed Layout For Standards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables and Definition of Terms for Application in the Layout for Codex Standards for Fresh

Fruits and Vegetables as two information documents which will facilitate the future development of FFV standards.

The Committee will also recommend to CAC that new work should start on Castilla lulo, to be led by Colombia, and fresh curry leaves, to be led by India. The meeting also agreed to establish an EWG chaired by Germany to review current standards, in order to ensure they are aligned with the agreed layout for CCFFV standards. ■

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

ALFONSO GUATI-ROJO SÁNCHEZ, Mexico

This forum has the important mandate to achieve consensus on our standards and to ensure that the foods we discuss are safe and of good quality. Our work is also to facilitate the harmonization of international trade by making it more inclusive, less expensive and thereby contribute to food security. With technical experts we have lived a unique and enlightening experience and I thank all those whose enthusiasm and hard work has made this possible. Mexico feels the responsibility as host country and the contribution of all has made this experience unforgettable.

FROM CODEX



LINGPING ZHANG, Codex Secretariat

It was not easy to reach consensus for some critical issues in the three draft standards. We are happy to see that after extensive discussion between delegates holding different points of views and with the great efforts from all those present, the Committee could finally reach agreement.

STEVE WEARNE, Chairperson Codex Alimentarius Commission

By setting a clear regulatory landscape to enable the safe and fair production, trade and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, which are a key component of healthy diets, Codex is making a direct contribution to both food security and to the sustainability of our food systems



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LIST OF STANDARDS

- Standard for Onions and Shallots
- Standard for Berry Fruits
- Standard for Fresh Dates
- Editorial amendment to the *Standard for Bananas (CXS 205-1997)*



Chairperson Alfonso Guati-Rojo Sánchez

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CCCF15 AGREES ON MLS FOR HEAVY METALS AND MYCOTOXINS



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FROM/TO (DATE)
9–24 May 2022



PARTICIPATION

85 MEMBER COUNTRIES

1 MEMBER ORGANIZATION

17 OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS
AND PALESTINE



HOST COUNTRY
Netherlands

The meeting addressed a complex array of issues related to contamination of foods by lead and methylmercury, heavy metals such as cadmium, and also for mycotoxins.

An editorial amendment to the recently adopted maximum levels (MLs) for cadmium in chocolate was agreed and the meeting also agreed to forward for adoption MLs for cadmium in cocoa powder and the Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Cadmium Contamination in Cocoa Beans.

The meeting debated lead contamination in a variety of commodities agreeing on MLs for a number of them but deciding to discontinue work relating to lead in fresh eggs, dried garlic and molasses.

Other work on spices and culinary herbs is being delayed due to insufficient data, underlining the importance of submitting relevant data when requested. Insufficient data was also the

reason for abandoning work on methylmercury in Patagonian toothfish, although MLs for methylmercury in other fish species i.e., orange roughy and pink cusk eel, were agreed and work continues on sampling plans for fish to facilitate compliance with the MLs.

MLs for aflatoxins in maize grain, rice, sorghum and derivatives for cereal-based food for infants and young children were agreed by the Committee. Work on aflatoxins in peanuts will be considered further, as well as MLs and sampling plans for aflatoxins and ochratoxin A in a number of spices. In all cases, Members were reminded of the need to submit data so that the Committee can finalize work with the agreed timelines.

The Committee also agreed to debate the feasibility of work on ciaguatera poisoning and pyrrolizine alkaloids by considering available practicable risk management practices at its next meeting.

Work also continues on the code of practice to reduce mycotoxin contamination in cassava and cassava-based products with a view to their finalization at the next session of the Committee. ■

WHAT IS AN ML?

The Codex maximum level (ML) for a contaminant in a food or feed commodity is the maximum concentration of that substance recommended by the Codex Alimentarius Commission to be legally permitted in that commodity. As many contaminants occur naturally it would be impossible to impose a zero limit on these substances. To protect human health Codex works to keep these levels as low as possible based on sound scientific evidence.

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



SALLY HOFFER, Netherlands

Chairing for Codex was again a great experience and I am very happy with the outcome. Not only did we discuss all agenda items and advance several MLs and a code of practice to the

CAC, we as a group managed to keep the meeting within the agreed time schedule. A meeting with our Codex Secretariat EWG chairs in September also underlined our commitment to improving processes and procedures in CCCF. Credit to all participants, the electronic working groups and the Codex, JECFA and Dutch Secretariat for all their support and direction. The overall commitment to work on food safety and pushing ourselves to the next level during this meeting was really inspiring.

FROM CODEX



GRACIA BRISCO, Codex Secretariat

The MLs for adoption will complement existing MLs for heavy metals and mycotoxins and so will increase availability of MLs for

contaminants for public health protection and trade facilitation. The code of practice for cadmium will also contribute to reduce contamination to safe levels and to implement the relevant MLs by Member Countries.

STANDARDS

- Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Cadmium Contamination in Cocoa Beans
- *MLs for Cadmium in Cocoa Powder (100 percent cocoa solids on a dry matter basis) (CXS 193-1995)*
- *MLs for Lead in Cereal-based Foods for Infants and Young Children, White Sugar and Refined Sugar, Honey, Corn and Maple Syrups and Sugar-based Candies (CXS 193-1995)*
- Proposed consequential amendment to the MLs for DON (deoxynivalenol) in cereal-based foods for infants and young children (CXS 193-1995) to align with the ML description for lead for the same product category (see above).
- *MLs for Methylmercury in Orange Roughy and Pink Cusk Eel (CXS 193-1995)*
- *MLs for total aflatoxins in maize grain, destined for further processing; flour meal, semolina and flakes derived from maize; husked rice; polished rice; sorghum grain, destined for further processing; cereal-based food for infants and young children (excluding foods for food aid programmes), and cereal-based food for infants and young children for food aid programmes (CXS 193-1995).*

FROM THE EXPERTS

JAVIER AGUILAR, Perú

The code of practice provides guidance to countries and the cocoa production industry on recommended practices to prevent and reduce cadmium contamination in cocoa beans prior to planting or for new plantings and during production up to harvest and post-harvest, including transportation. This text has been based primarily on recommended measures that have proven effective in practice.

JEANE NICOLAS, New Zealand

Establishing Codex MLs for the additional fish species balances the food safety risk due to excess of dietary exposure to methylmercury and the nutritional benefits of fish consumption, while supporting a harmonized international approach to trade.

SAÚL FLORES GARCÍA, Ecuador

With the agreement to advance an ML of 2.0 mg/kg for cocoa powder (100 percent total cocoa solids on a dry matter basis) to CAC for adoption at Step 5/8, CCCF ends 10 years of continuous work. There are now five categories with established MLs and the work has always respected the basis of the scientific principles for analysis.

CCPR53 DISCUSSES MRLS AND GUIDELINES



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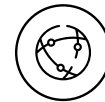


FROM/TO (DATE)
4–13 July 2022



PARTICIPATION

75	1	19
MEMBER COUNTRIES	MEMBER ORGANIZATION	OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS



HOST COUNTRY
China

The 53rd Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues met in July 2022 to recommend Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for pesticides in food and feed and to discuss and finalize technical guidelines concerning their recognition, authorization and exemption. This session was chaired for the first time by Guibiao YE, who has taken over as Chairperson from Xiongwu Qiao.

Around 500 pesticide MRLs were discussed before the meeting went on to debate the revision of the *Classification of Food and Feed (CXA 4-1989)* for the review of food of animal origin, including a request for advice to the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) regarding the establishment of MRLs for pesticides used on okra, a minor crop of growing relevance in international trade.

Work on definitions for edible tissues of animal origin such as edible offal and related commodities, which has been carried out in coordination with the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF), was discussed and agreed upon. Definitions for these tissues are now harmonized between the two committees and it is an important step in the establishment of single MRLs for compounds with dual use as pesticides and veterinary drugs.

The session also reviewed and agreed to revoke the *Guidelines on the Use of Mass Spectrometry for the identification, Confirmation and Quantitative Determination of Residues (CXG 56-2005)* in view of the more recent *Guidelines on Performance Criteria of Pesticide Residues in Food and Feed*

(CXG 99-2017) which adequately covers provisions for the use of mass spectrometry. ■

STANDARDS

- Guidelines for the recognition of active substances or authorized uses of active substances of low public health concern that are considered exempted from the establishment of maximum residue limits or do not give rise to residues.
- Around 500 MRLs
- Definitions for edible offal, meat, muscle and fat, including definitions for the portion of the commodity to which MRLs apply and which is analyzed for fat and muscle.

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

GUIBIAO YE, China

From the perspective of many countries, the pesticide residue standards have a great impact on the international trade of food and agricultural products. A critical part of Codex work is to discuss and endorse the scientifically based and harmonized pesticide residue standards. They not only protect the health of global consumers, but also promote fair trade among all countries, which is very important to ensure global food security and increase the income of farmers in the world.

FROM CODEX

GRACIA BRISCO, Codex Secretariat

The Committee successfully addressed emerging issues impacting food safety and the environment by agreeing to consider environmental inhibitors used in agriculture on a needs basis. This is an example of how Codex and CCPR could contribute to sustainable food systems within their mandate and available standard-setting mechanisms.

The Committee also completed work on guidance for JMPR to carry out parallel reviews of new compounds with regulatory authorities participating in global reviews. This will assist with early harmonization of MRLs and increase their availability for public health and international trade.



EXPERIMENTAL GROUP STANDARDS MAKE GOOD PROGRESS AT CCSCH6



©FAO



FROM/TO (DATE)

26 September–3 October 2022**PARTICIPATION**

60	1	4
MEMBER COUNTRIES	MEMBER ORGANIZATION	OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS



HOST COUNTRY

India

The sixth session of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs was hosted online by India, and text for six different standards was discussed.

In a series of well-attended pre-meeting webinars “to overcome the challenges of time management” that hampered the work of CCSCH5 according to Chairperson M. R. Sudharshan, the text for most agenda items had been amply debated before the plenary session. During the CCSCH6 meeting itself, final agreements on outstanding issues regarding saffron, nutmeg and chilli peppers and paprika will see all three of these proposed standards put forward for adoption by CAC.

In discussions on other texts, the proposed Standard for Cardamom was slightly renamed to

the Standard for Dried Cardamom and related outstanding issues will be addressed by an India-chaired EWG. CCSCH is piloting the elaboration of group standards for spices and culinary herbs, the first of which is the proposed draft Standard for Spices Derived from Dried Fruits and Berries – Allspice, Juniper Berry, Star Anise and Vanilla. Delegates were invited to comment on this “learning process” as well as the text of the standard itself. While some technical issues remain outstanding on allspice, juniper berry and star anise, there was some discussion regarding the suitability of including vanilla within this group standard. These outstanding issues will be addressed by an EWG chaired by the United States of America, and co-chaired by Madagascar, Mexico and India.

The meeting also discussed the preliminary work of the Islamic Republic of Iran-chaired EWG on a Standard for Dried Roots, Rhizomes and Bulbs – Turmeric. The EWG was re-established in order to progress this work. Updates to the Template for Spices and Culinary Herbs Standards, overseen by an EWG chaired by the United States of America, will continue and are to be discussed further at CCSCH7. ■

STANDARDS

- Standard for Dried Floral Parts – Saffron
- Standard for Dried Seeds – Nutmeg
- Standard for Dried or Dehydrated Chilli Peppers and Paprika

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



DR. M.R. SUDHARSHAN, India

Working virtually is very challenging and requires more preparation, but it also allows for wider participation and engagement. The session also proved that virtual was productive, in terms

of the quality of discussion and the ability to move forward and advance texts even though the in-person interactions and real-life coffee breaks and sharing spicy food are still missing.

It was challenging as Chair to present the document summarizing not only the topic, but also the context surrounding it so that delegates understand how we got here and what we were trying to achieve, especially in case of chilli peppers and paprika and also the group standard on spices derived from dried fruits and berries. Everyone really stepped in, and the goodwill of delegates and willingness to find the agreement points as we navigated through the agenda was key to our achievements.

FROM CODEX



PATRICK SEKITOLEKO, Codex Secretariat

The sixth session of CCSCCH was held successfully with a physical top table composed of the Chairperson, Codex and CCSCCH Secretariats set

up in Kochi, India. CCSCCH managed to finalize three standards (saffron, nutmeg, chilli pepper and paprika). CCSCCH also progressed the pilot project for the group standard for spices derived from berries to Step 5 and revised the template for the spices and culinary herbs standards. Moving forward, CCSCCH agreed to continue the drafting activities on the standard for small cardamom; turmeric; vanilla; and further agreed to request proposals for new work.



FROM THE EXPERTS

YUSRA EGAYANTI, Indonesia

As one of the largest producers and exporters, Indonesia welcomes the adoption of the Codex standard for nutmeg. Indonesia will refer to this standard not only to empower farmers and traders of nutmeg, but also to regulate its production, handling, processing, and trade, to ensure consumer protection and fair-trade practices.

RAMESH NATARAJAN, India

India is one among the largest producers, exporters and consumer of chilli-peppers in the world and has a special interest in the adoption of a Codex standard for dry chilli-peppers and paprika. This is also true for many other countries across the world, as evidenced by the intense debate and multiple revisions that marked the progress of this standard in the committee. The decision to forward this standard to the Commission for adoption at Step 5/8 is very gratifying, and there is high hope now for harmonized national standards across the globe for this very valuable and ubiquitous spice.

DIMITRA PAPANIMITRIOU, Greece

The advancement of the Codex draft standard for saffron for adoption to CAC45 is an outstanding achievement that will benefit both producers and consumers in Greece and around the globe.

The introduction of 'extra' class will motivate the producers to apply good manufacturing practices from field to packaging in order to meet the requirements necessary, while fair trade will be ensured for those who already do so.

Another important provision achieved was the inclusion of the mandatory indication of country of harvest, so that the authenticity of saffron is protected, since it is only cultivated and harvested in a few countries. This is also expected to provide safeguards against any potential mislabelling practices regarding the harvest country of this product, since spices are frequently packaged in different countries before reaching the consumer.

CODEX AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

This year, four of the six regional coordinating committees (RCCs) met to discuss Codex work in the regions and to hear updates from the Codex Secretariat.

The Secretariat reported to the meetings that the upcoming 60th anniversary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission will be marked by Codex at the global level and World Food Safety Day will celebrate the Codex milestone by dedicating the 2023 observance to food standards. Each region was asked to contribute ideas they would like to see implemented at the international level and to consider how the anniversary might be celebrated at the regional level.

The Secretariat also updated each region on work being done by CCEXEC on the operationalization of the Codex Statements of Principle. Members of each coordinating committee were asked to reflect on the work being done in order to be able to contribute constructively to Commission discussions on the subject.

Each meeting presented progress on regional workplans, which outline how the coordinating committees aim to support implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan.

In each region, specific issues were discussed, but certain issues were raised in every meeting: the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the threats posed by antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and changing consumer demands and dietary patterns were concerns common to all regions. The COVID-19 pandemic recurred frequently as an issue since it disrupted the implementation of workplans and impacted significantly on food supply chains around the world. Committees did, however, highlight some positives that have emerged from the pandemic: improved hygiene standards generally and a revolution in the way we meet and debate. For Codex, many have concluded, these positives should not be overlooked.

A keynote speech was given at the committee meetings, each one dedicated to a regionally important issue. For Africa, this was the recently launched Food Safety Strategy for Africa and in Asia, emerging food safety issues in the region. In Europe, it was the sustainability of food systems and for Latin America and the Caribbean, new technologies in the agri-food chain. These speeches resulted in discussion around regional food safety concerns. ■

EUROPE COMMENDS CODEX CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

Left to right:
Hilde Kruse,
Mary Kenny,
Nailya Karsybekova,
Zhanar Tolysbayeva.



FROM/TO (DATE)

16–20 May 2022



PARTICIPATION

38 MEMBER COUNTRIES

1 MEMBER ORGANIZATION

9 OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS

13 MEMBER COUNTRIES FROM OUTSIDE THE REGION



HOST COUNTRY

Kazakhstan

Marta Hugas, former Chief Scientist at the European Food Safety Authority gave a keynote speech on “Sustainability of food systems and the role of Codex”. A subsequent discussion on the subject saw delegates agree that Codex is already playing a role in food systems transformation and should continue and strengthen this work. In the discussion, it was agreed that sustainability depends in part on collaboration and information sharing about emerging food safety issues in the region, and that a One Health approach is integral to a sustainable, food secure and food safe world. Relevant Codex work will also contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. The newly established Regional One Health Coordination Mechanism for Europe was also

discussed and the advantages of other information sharing platforms were commended.

The conflict in Ukraine and “the short as well as long-term effects it may have on food security, food quality, and food safety in Ukraine and beyond” are of particular concern to the region and played a part in discussions. Other current and emerging issues were also discussed, including food fraud, which was the subject of a CCEURO side event, the COVID-19 pandemic, changing consumer demands and food safety-related strategies for emergency situations.

The regional workplan 2020–2021 for Europe focused on Goals 1 and 2 and good progress has been made despite disruptions caused by the pandemic.

In respect of regional standards, CCEURO32 agreed to amend the text for Section 8.2, labelling of non-retail containers, in the *Regional Standard for Chanterelles (CXS 40R-1981)*.

CCEURO32 unanimously agreed to recommend CAC45 to appoint Germany as the next Coordinator for Europe. ■

FROM THE COORDINATOR



**NAILYA KARSYBEKOVA,
Kazakhstan**

Chairing the session in a virtual mode has been a very valuable and exciting experience for me and working online allowed more delegates to

participate, also from other regions. However, the reduced schedule, different time zones, and occasional technical glitches, continue to make it difficult for delegations to ensure that their positions are heard. It is well known, in the online mode that silence is taken as consent, and only those who object should make a verbal intervention. However, this practice can limit the ability of others who want to express their concerns, compared to the physical environment.

Vice-Minister of Agriculture of Kazakhstan, Mr Rustem Kurmanov and Vice-Minister of Health Care of Kazakhstan, Doctor Mrs Aizhan Yesmagambetova, spoke at CCEURO32.

FROM CODEX



HILDE KRUSE, Codex Secretariat

CCEURO, the first RCC to be held since the COVID-19 pandemic started and the first RCC ever to be held virtually, proved to be a successful meeting both logistically

and content-wise despite a very difficult political situation in the region. Having the Chairperson and Host Secretariat physically together with the Codex Secretariat was an important factor in ensuring a smooth conduct of the meeting.



STANDARDS

- Amendment to *Regional Standard for Chanterelles (CXS 40R-1981)*.

STANDARDS IN THE REGION

AZERBAIJAN

- In 2020 Azerbaijan prepared a series of national standards based on Codex texts. These include work on contaminants made with reference to the *General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (CXS 193-1995)*; MRLs for veterinary drugs based on Codex MRLs, and work on minimum quality and safety requirements for named vegetable oils which makes reference to the eponymous Codex text (*CXS 210-1999*).
- Harmonization of national technical regulations, sanitary norms and rules in compliance with Codex Alimentarius standards will help to improve the safety and quality of domestic foods and contribute to consumer health protection.

COOPERATION AND COORDINATION CENTRAL TO REGIONAL SUCCESS

Kenyan delegation at CCAFRICA24.

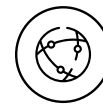


FROM/TO (DATE)
5–9 September 2022



PARTICIPATION

- 34** MEMBER COUNTRIES
- 14** OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS
- 8** MEMBER COUNTRIES AND **ONE** MEMBER ORGANIZATION FROM OUTSIDE THE REGION



HOST COUNTRY
Uganda

The keynote address delivered by the African Union's (AU) John Oponong-Otoo, detailed the aims of the Food Safety Strategy for Africa (FSSA), which was launched on World Food Safety Day this year. The FSSA aims to help countries strengthen their food control systems domestically and facilitate trade at every level through enhanced cooperation and coordination, and investments into research, innovation and technology. A One Health approach, development of the capacities of food business operators and sustained investment in the generation, analysis and use of scientific data will all be crucial to achieving the objectives of the FSSA. As part of this strategy, CCAFRICA will have a key role in promoting Codex standards to manage food safety risks across the continent, as well as in coordinating information exchange between the AU, FAO and WHO.

Discussions on regional matters opened with the agreement to forward for adoption the Regional Standard for Dried Meat and

the Guidelines for Developing Harmonized Food Safety Legislation for the CCAFRICA Region. There was an agreement not to further discussion on the development of a regional standard for mahewu (a fermented non-alcoholic cereal-based drink). Codex Trust Fund (CTF) support to Members was praised and eligible Members were encouraged to take advantage of the CTF support available. In the meeting the COVID-19 pandemic, antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and the challenges posed by the conflict in Ukraine were identified as some of the ongoing and emerging issues challenging food safety and security across Africa.

The regional workplan for Africa is focusing on Goals 1, 3 and 4 and making good progress despite disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The meeting unanimously agreed to recommend the reappointment of Uganda as Regional Coordinator. ■

STANDARDS

- Regional Standard for Dried Meat
- Guidelines for Developing Harmonized Food Safety Legislation for the CCAFRICA Region
- Amendment to *Regional Standard for Unrefined Shea Butter (CXS 325R-2017)*
- Amendment to *Regional Standard for Fermented Cooked Cassava Based Products (CXS 334R-2020)*
- Amendment to *Regional Standard for Fresh Leaves of Gnetum spp (CXS 335R-2020)*

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



HAKIM MUFUMBIRO, Uganda

Food standards elaborated through the Codex system will be key enablers in facilitating trade in food and agriculture commodities and products across the continent and

ensuring that the health of the over 1.3 billion Africans is protected.

FROM CODEX



PATRICK SEKITOLEKO, Codex Secretariat

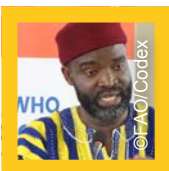
The guidelines were developed in response to the AfCFTA and link very well between the work of Codex and the ongoing regional integration

and harmonization of food safety approaches on the continent. CCAFRICA completed this work in a timely manner responding to a specific need in the region.

Delegations present in Kampala for CCAFRICA24.



FROM THE EXPERTS



JOHN OPPONG-OTOO, African Union

Codex standards present a unique opportunity for the continent to raise food safety standards and that is exactly what Member Countries have committed to.



LUCY NAMU, Kenya

By providing a framework, the new Codex guidelines will assist countries in identifying their capacity needs, facilitate trade and encourage wider use of the Codex standards. The guidelines

are already informing several governments as they update their national legislation.

FOOD SAFETY: A PRIORITY IN THE FACE OF CURRENT AND EMERGING CHALLENGES IN ASIA



FROM/TO (DATE)

12–21 October 2022



PARTICIPATION

12 MEMBER COUNTRIES

2 OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS

5 MEMBER COUNTRIES AND
ONE MEMBER ORGANIZATION
FROM OUTSIDE THE REGION



HOST COUNTRY

China

The CCASIA22 session looked particularly at how food safety in the Asian region will be impacted by emerging trends globally. Discussions highlighted the fact that foods such as edible insects and seaweed, understood as “new” outside of the region, are in fact part of a traditional diet in Asia so regional trade should not be disrupted by any new standards governing these foods. In addition, the “psychological” safety of these foods such as culture, beliefs or religion should not be affected.

The keynote speeches, delivered by Professor Purwiyatno Hariyadi of the Department of Food Science and Technology at the Institute Pertanian Bogor in Indonesia, and Dr Ning Li, Director-General of the China National Center for Food Safety Risk Assessment focused on food safety trends and challenges. Hariyadi identified climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and conflict as the three key factors currently impacting both food security and food safety across the globe. The response to these threats, he

suggested, should prioritize food safety and include new technologies to “produce more with less”. Dr Li reminded the meeting that climate change in particular is creating new risks, and traditional risks such as microbial hazards, poisonous fungi, pesticide residues and environmental contaminants such as heavy metals remain a challenge. Research, surveillance, and in particular, data, are all needed now more than ever to help address the range of challenges confronting risk managers. In addition, she made the point that communication with consumers about food safety needs attention.

The regional workplan for Asia is focusing on Goals 1, 2 and 3 and making good progress despite disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The meeting agreed to amend a number of regional standards to bring them in line with the *General Standard for the Labelling of Non-Retail Containers of Foods (CXS 346-2021)* and ongoing work

on new standards was discussed. Proposed standards for soybeans products fermented with *Bacillus* species, for quick frozen dumpling, for cooked rice wrapped in plant leaves and for traditional sweets were all debated. Possible future work on a standard for cooked rice and a standard for canned congee was also discussed.

In addition, the meeting agreed to publish the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) as an information document on the Codex website for internal use, which lays down recommendations and procedures for the Coordinator of CCASIA and Member Countries to promote mutual communication and enhance cooperation among Member Countries in order to facilitate active participation in Codex activities.

CCASIA22 unanimously agreed to recommend CAC45 to reappoint the People’s Republic of China for a second term as the Coordinator for Asia. ■

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



TIAN JING, China

This is the first CCASIA meeting since China became the Regional Coordinator for Asia. In order to better promote the discussion of agenda items and reach a consensus in the

plenary session, we had invested a lot of time and energy to carry out preliminary work and discussion on many key items before the meeting. The outcome of the plenary session has once again proved that these preparatory works and the active participation of Member countries are very necessary.

FROM CODEX



LINGPING ZHANG, Codex Secretariat

The virtual working groups laid the foundation for the smooth progress of standard setting work at CCASIA22.

The Committee then worked diligently to progress the texts that are now before the Commission. In view of the high demands of setting standards in the region, we need guidance from CCEXEC on how to address new work proposals, which cover processed (and often ready-to-eat) products mainly produced in the region and traded globally and for which no appropriate commodity committee exists or is currently active.

STANDARDS TO BE FORWARDED TO CAC46

- Regional Standard for Soybean Products Fermented with *Bacillus* species
- Regional Standard for Cooked Rice Wrapped in Plant Leaves
- Amendment to *Regional Standard for Gochujang (CXS 294R-2009)*
- Amendment to *Regional Standard for Fermented Soybean Paste (Asia) (CXS 298R-2009)*
- Amendment to *Regional Standard for Edible Sago Flour (Asia) (CXS 301R-2011)*
- Amendment to *Regional Standard for Chilli Sauce (CXS 306R-2011)*



STANDARDS IN THE REGION

THAILAND

One of the most used Codex texts in Thailand is *General Principles of Food Hygiene (CXC 1-1969)*. Since its revision in 2020, the related Thai agricultural Standards, i.e., TAS 9023 and TAS 9024 have been revised accordingly. The adoption of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) helps ensure that a hazard analysis has been carried out for every step in the production process. Also, the likelihood and severity of each hazard is evaluated, critical control points are identified, and preventive and hygiene monitoring measures are put in place.

CHINA

Since 2016, China has been carrying out the revision of its dairy product standards, in which many product definitions and descriptions in Codex texts have been used for reference. This in order to adapt to the rapid development of China's dairy market, protecting consumer health, maintaining market order and facilitating trade. For example, during the revision of the National Food Safety Standard: Concentrated Milk Products (GB 13102-2022), China referred to the definition of "Evaporated Milks" of *Standard for Evaporated Milks (CXS 281-1971)* to make the definition more accurate and clearer.

THE LAC REGION LOOKS TO THE FUTURE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIONS IN FOOD SAFETY



Bernardo Manzano, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Ecuador (second left) welcomes delegates to CCLAC22.

©FAO/Codex



FROM/TO (DATE)
24–28 October 2022



PARTICIPATION

- 33** MEMBER COUNTRIES
- 6** OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS
- 7** MEMBER COUNTRIES AND **ONE** MEMBER ORGANIZATION FROM OUTSIDE THE REGION



HOST COUNTRY
Ecuador

The meeting focused significant attention on how Codex will address and embrace new technologies and new foods, both of which were the subject of the keynote speech delivered by Professor Marcos X. Sánchez of Texas Tech University in the United States of America. Recognizing, as the FAO representative noted, that ‘the future is now’, delegates agreed that there is a need to espouse both the use of sensors, drones and robots for the collection of large volumes of data and also new approaches to analysis of data such as artificial intelligence and machine learning. Such technologies will permit deeper understanding of and quicker responses to food safety hazards, particularly if they are utilized in a spirit of collaboration and information sharing. The meeting also agreed that when considering new foods, important factors include potential food safety hazards and possibilities for ensuring sustainable food security, as well as sociocultural

contexts. New foods include foods that are ‘new’ to many parts of the world, such as edible insects, and novel foods such as cell-based foods, vegetable proteins, and protein alternatives. Delegates were clear that it is these issues that should be the focus of Codex work, rather than issues around food production systems which are globally diverse and locally specific. The meeting also reiterated that expert groups should have regional representation precisely because production systems are different all over the world.

The positive work of the Codex Trust Fund (CTF) was highlighted, and eligible countries were encouraged to apply. A number of countries in the region are currently implementing CTF projects, including El Salvador and Guatemala (group project), the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Guyana, Cuba and Honduras.

A key agenda item for CCLAC is the discussion of Codex work relevant to the region. This includes the establishment of regional positions on a range of topics including zilpaterol, nutrient profiles for front-of-pack labelling, pesticide MRLs, contaminants, food additives in wine and fruit juices, and harmonized probiotic guidelines for use in food and food supplements.

The meeting also agreed to amend regional standards on culantro coyote, lucuma and yacon, to bring them into line with the updated *Standard for the Labelling of Non-Retail containers of Foods (CXS 346-2021)*. These amendments will be forwarded to CAC46.

Ecuador was reappointed as regional coordinator. ■

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



ROMMEL BETANCOURT, Ecuador

The meeting ran successfully in a virtual format. Interventions by the highest authorities of the Ministries of Agriculture and Livestock, and Public Health highlighted the importance of respect for science in Codex. In subsequent discussions the region showed its commitment to the work of Codex and concluded with several regional positions. Finally, it gave its support to Ecuador's work as regional coordinator, nominating it for a second consecutive term.

FROM CODEX



GIUSEPPE DI CHIERA, Codex Secretariat

CCLAC deals with themes of both regional and broader relevance to Codex. Although the virtual format of the session might have presented problems, mainly due to the limited meeting time available and the lack of face-to-face contact, the Members were able to make focused and valuable interventions in a variety of areas, from new technologies in the agri-food chain to several food additive provisions, all well-coordinated by the CCLAC Secretariat.



STANDARDS TO BE FORWARDED TO CAC 46

- Amendments to *Regional Standard for Culantro Coyote (CXS 304R-2011)*
- Amendments to *Regional Standard for Lucuma (CXS 305R-2011)*
- Amendments to *Regional Standard for Yacon (CXS 324R-2017)*

Host secretariat with Codex and FAO colleagues discuss preparations for CCLAC22 in Quito.

PROPOSED CODEX TEXTS FOR FINAL ADOPTION BY CAC45

CCFO27

- Proposed draft revision to the *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CXS 210-1999)*: Essential composition of Sunflower seed oils
- Editorial amendments/changes to the *Code of Practice for the Storage and Transport of Edible Fats and Oils in Bulk (CXC 36-1987)*: Appendix 2

CCNFSDU42

- Guidelines for Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF)

CCFH52

- Guidelines for the Management of Biological Foodborne Outbreaks
- Revision to the *General Principles of Food Hygiene (CXC 1-1969)*

CCFFV22

- Standard for Onions and Shallots
- Standard for Berry Fruits
- Standard for Fresh Dates
- Amendment to the *Standard for Bananas (CXS 205-1997)*

CCCF15

- Code of Practice for the prevention and reduction of cadmium contamination in cocoa beans
- MLs for cadmium in cocoa powder (100 percent cocoa solids on a dry matter basis) (*CXS 193-1995*)
- MLs for lead in cereal-based foods for infants and young children, white and refined sugar, corn and maple syrups, honey and sugar-based candies (*CXS 193-1995*)
- MLs for methylmercury in orange roughy and pink cusk eel (*CXS 193-1995*)
- MLs for total aflatoxins in maize grain, destined for further processing; flour meal, semolina and flakes derived from maize; husked rice; polished rice; sorghum grain, destined for further processing; cereal-based food for infants and young children (excluding foods for food aid programmes), and cereal-based food for infants and young children for food aid programmes (*CXS 193-1995*)

CCPR53

- Guidelines for the Recognition of Active Substances or authorized uses of active substances of low public health concern that are considered exempted from the establishment of maximum residue limits or do not give rise to residues
- MRLs for different combinations of pesticide/commodity(ies) for food and feed

CCSCH6

- Standard for Dried Saffron
- Standard for Dried Seeds – Nutmeg
- Standard for Dried Chilli Peppers and Paprika

CCEURO32

- Amendment to *Regional Standard for Chanterelles (CXS 40R-1981)*: Section 8.2, labelling of non-retail containers

CCAFRICA24

- Standard for Dried Meat
- Guidelines for Developing Harmonized Food Safety Legislation for the CCAFRICA region
- Revisions to Section 7.2 (Labelling of non-retail containers) of the:
 - *Regional Standard for Unrefined Shea Butter (CXS 325R-2017)*;
 - *Regional Standard for Fermented Cooked Cassava Based Products (CXS 334R-2020)*;
 - *Regional Standard For Fresh Leaves of Gnetum spp. (CXS 335R-2020)*.

PROPOSED NEW WORK FOR APPROVAL BY CAC45

CCFO27

- Amendment/revision to the *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CXS 210-1999)* to include – Camellia seed oil; – Sacha inchi oil; – High oleic acid soya bean oil
- Amendment/revision to the *Standard for Fish Oils (CXS 329-2017)* – Inclusion of Calanus oil

CCFFV22

- Standard for Castilla Lulo
- Standard for Fresh Curry Leaves

ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE CODEX TEXTS. WHAT IS ACT?

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a pressing food safety issue that poses a threat to global health. The Action to support implementation of Codex AMR Texts (ACT) project aims to help six countries – the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Cambodia, Colombia, Mongolia, Nepal, and Pakistan – implement Codex standards on foodborne AMR globally and locally.

FAO is working very closely with colleagues in regions and countries to provide harmonized information on foodborne AMR and clear, targeted messages to relevant stakeholders, to raise awareness and encourage the implementation of Codex AMR standards. The ACT team is developing case studies to share best practices and lessons learned.

In many countries AMR data is not often analyzed or used as a basis for decision-making. The *Guidelines on Integrated Monitoring and Surveillance of Foodborne AMR (CXG 94-2021)* outline the elements needed to establish a surveillance system to gather data on



📍 Laboratory visit in Mongolia

antimicrobial use and resistance in the food chain.

Also, to ensure global support, FAO is developing the International Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring (InFARM) data platform, as the mechanism to collect food and agriculture-related AMR information at national, regional, and global levels. This will support data-informed risk management in the countries and contribute to the global integrated system for surveillance developed by the UN Quadripartite Collaboration.

The *Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne AMR (CXC 61-2005)* supports countries to build and implement effective collaborative One Health strategies, simultaneously addressing the health of people, animals, plants, and the environment. The Codex AMR standards represent a global achievement, and their implementation can make a significant difference. It covers the entire food chain, outlining the responsibilities of different stakeholders in reducing the need to use antimicrobials (competent authorities, pharmaceutical industry, veterinarians,



FOODBORNE ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE
COMPENDIUM OF STANDARDS

ABOUT THE PROJECT

DONOR
Republic of Korea

BUDGET
USD 10 million

TARGET COUNTRIES
Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cambodia, Colombia, Mongolia, Nepal and Pakistan.

PERIOD
July 2021–July 2026

THE COMPENDIUM CONTAINS ALL CODEX TEXTS ON AMR

DID YOU KNOW?

An estimated 500 000 people die each year from antimicrobial resistant (AMR) infections and an untold number of sick animals may not be responding to treatment.

AMR causes a reduction in the effectiveness of medicines, making infections and diseases difficult or impossible to treat in humans, animals and plants.

Food can be one of the vehicles of transmission and spread of AMR and a potential route of exposure for everyone.

Many of the bacteria that contaminate our food are now resistant to antimicrobials, making foodborne diseases more difficult to treat.

Scientific knowledge and science-based evidence are needed to identify, manage and mitigate AMR risks before they become large-scale emergencies.

plant/crop health professionals, food producers, consumers). ►

The ACT project helps each country to assess their status regarding the implementation of Codex AMR standards. Together with the country, the project aims to outline the activities that need to take place, and support how to improve the adoption of the code of practice. For example, how to stop the use of antimicrobials as growth promoters in food-producing animals.

Results from this project will be used to promote the adoption of Codex standards in other regions. It is important to understand how countries use Codex standards and a recently launched survey (see page 52) will seek valuable input from countries on the reach and usefulness of those texts. The data will contribute to monitoring under the Codex Strategic Plan 2022–2025. ■



TOM HEILANDT
CODEX SECRETARY

“This is the way it should be. Codex texts fresh from the Commission to be directly implemented on the ground.”

THE CODEX TRUST FUND IN 2022



MICHAEL HINSCH
Programme Administrator

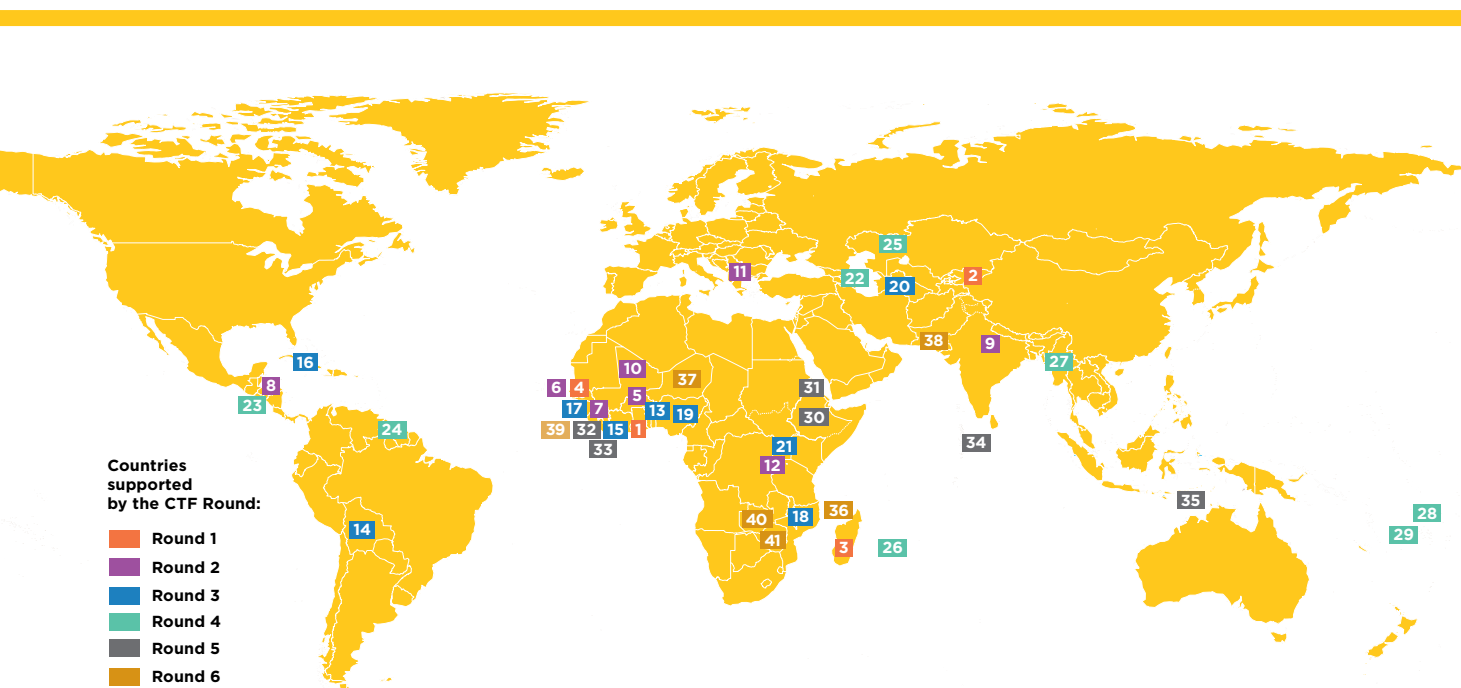
The Codex Trust Fund (CTF) had an excellent year in 2022, as we were able to reach several important milestones.

An increasing number of countries were able to loosen restrictions that had been implemented to curb the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This allowed the majority of countries implementing CTF projects to accelerate their project work that had been significantly affected in the years before.

As travel and physical meetings are becoming more common again, the CTF was also able to hold its first physical training workshop at the global level, convening trainees from five CTF beneficiary countries (Bhutan, the Gambia, Maldives, Mauritius and Nepal) in Seoul to benefit from training on good Codex practices delivered by the Republic of

Korea. This pilot was held to test the training format and its potential for inclusion in regular training support provided by the CTF, in addition to direct country support already provided to 50 countries around the globe.

Furthermore, 2022 sees the implementation of the mid-term evaluation of the second iteration of the Codex Trust Fund (or CTF-2). Since the beginning of the year, external evaluators have been reaching out to key stakeholders of the CTF-2 and worked to collect insights about how well the trust fund has been performing during the first half of its mandate and what adjustments may be required to ensure the most efficient and effective mechanisms are in place to best serve its beneficiary and target countries. Results of the evaluation are expected in early 2023 and we are looking forward to seeing how we can continue to help countries increase their capacities to engage more effectively in Codex work – in 2022, 2023 and beyond. ■



COUNTRY	TYPE OF PROJECT	CODEX REGION
1 GHANA	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
2 KYRGYZSTAN	INDIVIDUAL	CCEURO
3 MADAGASCAR	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
4 SENEGAL	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
5 BURKINA FASO	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
6 CABO VERDE	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
7 GUINEA	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
8 HONDURAS	INDIVIDUAL	CCLAC
9 INDIA (LEAD COUNTRY)–NEPAL–BHUTAN	GROUP	CCASIA
10 MALI	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
11 NORTH MACEDONIA	INDIVIDUAL	CCEURO
12 RWANDA	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
13 BENIN	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
14 BOLIVIA (PLURINATIONAL STATE OF)	INDIVIDUAL	CCLAC
15 CÔTE D'IVOIRE	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
16 CUBA	INDIVIDUAL	CCLAC
17 GAMBIA	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
18 MALAWI	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
19 NIGERIA	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
20 TURKMENISTAN	INDIVIDUAL	CCEURO
21 UGANDA (LEAD COUNTRY)–BURUNDI–KENYA–UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA–SOUTH SUDAN	GROUP	CCAFRICA

COUNTRY	TYPE OF PROJECT	CODEX REGION
22 AZERBAIJAN	INDIVIDUAL	CCEURO
23 EL SALVADOR (LEAD)–GUATEMALA	GROUP	CCLAC
24 GUYANA	INDIVIDUAL	CCLAC
25 KAZAKHSTAN	INDIVIDUAL	CCEURO
26 MAURITIUS	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
27 MYANMAR (LEAD)–LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC–CAMBODIA	GROUP	CCASIA
28 SAMOA	INDIVIDUAL	CCNASWP
29 TONGA	INDIVIDUAL	CCNASWP
30 ETHIOPIA	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
31 ERITREA	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
32 GUINEA-BISSAU	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
33 LIBERIA	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
34 MALDIVES	INDIVIDUAL	CCASIA
35 TIMOR-LESTE	INDIVIDUAL	CCASIA
36 COMOROS	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
37 NIGER	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
38 PAKISTAN	INDIVIDUAL	CCASIA
39 SIERRA LEONE	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
40 ZAMBIA	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA
41 ZIMBABWE	INDIVIDUAL	CCAFRICA

¹⁷ Source: UN Geospatial. 2021. Map of the World. Washington, D.C., UN. <https://www.un.org/geospatial/content/map-world>. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined.

There are six Codex regions each represented by a joint FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee: Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA), Coordinating Committee for Asia (CCASIA), Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO), Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC), Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific (CCNASWP), Coordinating Committee for Near East (CCNE).

MEASURING HOW CODEX TEXTS ARE USED

Members have been asking for a long time “what is the impact of Codex texts?”, “How can we demonstrate the effectiveness of our work collectively in standard setting to improve consumer health and fair trade?” Answering these questions will also help Codex ensure that (its limited) human and financial resources are used optimally.

As part of the implementation of the new Codex Strategic Plan for 2020–2025, the Codex Secretariat was therefore asked to develop a Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework to track the use and impact of Codex texts.

This important undertaking will help CAC Members better understand the impact, or potential for impact, of Codex texts. A Member survey was launched in September 2022 as an initial data gathering approach. A robust Codex M&E framework is a long-term initiative that will be built incrementally to help improve the implementation of Codex texts as well as help inform decisions on new/revised ones. ■

ADVANTAGES OF A CODEX MONITORING & EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

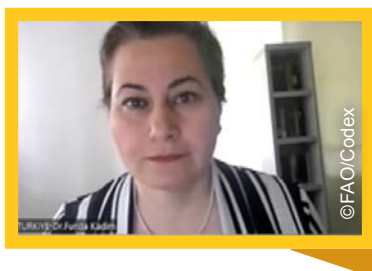
- Helps Codex Members make informed decisions based on evidence
- Identifies opportunities to use Codex resources more effectively and efficiently
- Captures successes and any gaps in implementation
- Provides data to encourage further investment
- Helps experts devise alternative approaches

LEARN MORE ON THE CODEX WEBSITE

The screenshot shows a website page with the following content:

- Logos for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, World Health Organization, and CODEX ALIMENTARIUS INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS.
- Section title: **NEW ONLINE SURVEY-USE AND IMPACT OF CODEX TEXTS**
- Text: Available 30 September 2022. We want to hear from Codex Members.
- Text: Codex standards ensure that food is safe and can be used to improve the use and impact of Codex texts, the Codex Secretariat was mandated to monitor the use and impact of Codex texts through the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025. In 2021 the Secretariat, in collaboration with FAO, WHO and other Codex Members, started to work on developing a mechanism to measure the use and impact of Codex standards. This survey is one of the solutions to help Members and Observers better understand the impact, or potential for impact, of Codex texts.
- Two circular portraits with names and titles:
 - STEVE WEARNE**, CHAIRPERSON OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION
 - TOM HEILANDT**, CODEX SECRETARY
- A vertical sidebar on the right with the heading **CODEX ALIMENTARIUS MANDATE** and three icons:
 - PROTECT the health of consumers
 - ENSURE fair practices in food trade

TACKLING FOOD FRAUD IN TÜRKİYE



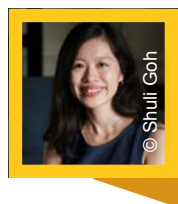
During CCEURO32, a side event was held to discuss food fraud and how competent authorities within the region are tackling it. Funda Kadim, Director-General of Food Control in Türkiye's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry outlined the detection and deterrence approaches Türkiye is taking to combat intentional adulteration of food, and the nuanced nature of the problem.

Food fraudsters, she explained, are generally one step ahead of the authorities, making use of "new techniques, new chemicals, new procedures" to gain economic advantage over legitimate food businesses. Türkiye has an army of 5 900 food controllers inspecting all food companies across the nation and a strong and constantly evolving laboratory infrastructure with a network of 39 validated laboratories.

Authorities acknowledge, though, that detection is very difficult: they cannot test every item on the market and thus, fighting food fraud cannot be all about laboratory techniques. Recognizing this, they also engage with consumers. Many inspections come as a result of tip-offs from the public via the national "Hello Food 174" hotline and there is popular approval of the "naming and shaming" approach to those companies that have been found guilty of food fraud. As part of this strategy of deterrence, other penalties are also applied to convicted fraudsters.

Kadim did, however, also sound a note of caution: if food fraud is the intentional adulteration of food, then we must be sure one way or another whether contaminants are added "willingly or by cross contamination". "In the food industry, to prevent food fraud, there is no black and white, there is also grey," she concluded. ■

GFI URGES CODEX TO GET AHEAD OF THE GAME ON ALTERNATIVE PROTEINS



SHULI GOH
Good Food Institute

Codex has a broad and active Observer membership. Observers are encouraged to participate in all areas of standard setting and to provide expert positions on the raft of issues addressed at Codex. However, during a webinar aimed specifically at Observers, Shuli Goh, a Policy Specialist from the Good Food Institute (GFI) went a step further and challenged Codex to stay relevant and keep pace with the fast-changing world of novel foods like alternative proteins.

Goh explained that GFI is an organization focused on the development of “a more sustainable, secure and just protein supply” by accelerating the adoption of “alternative proteins like plant-based, cultivated, or fermentation-derived products.” Going forward, more hybrid products are also expected – highlighting the importance of Codex’s early involvement.

Goh said that Codex’s focus on food safety and reducing barriers to trade puts it in a unique position to guide international regulations of alternative proteins. “These alternate protein products are already hitting the shelves, but regulations are lagging behind. Codex could actually play a key role in harmonizing nascent regulatory frameworks.” Explaining that Codex’s “impact is super influential,” Goh proposed that GFI and Codex, together with other experts and Observer organizations, work to produce new Codex guidelines on alternative proteins – by either reviewing and revising some of Codex’s current standards and guidelines to include alternative proteins, or by creating new ones through Codex’s existing processes.

“Codex can work with observers like GFI to deliver capacity building efforts and programmes, such as virtual webinars aimed at deepening countries’ understanding of novel foods,” added Goh. The FAO expert consultation on food safety of cultivated/cell-based products was a positive development that will produce concrete foundational documents that countries and Codex can leverage to start building guidelines on.

“Codex’s impact is super influential”

“I think Shuli’s point that Codex should seek to act before Member Countries’ positions get really hard-wired and divergent, is a key point to bear in mind,” said CAC Chairperson, Steve Wearne. “Codex comes in relatively late in the day,” he said, “where national positions are quite well established. It then almost becomes a discussion about whose existing system or rules is best.” This is an opportunity for Codex to get ahead on an important new topic.

“I am excited about new prospects coming up,” said the Codex Secretary, Tom Heilandt, who signalled a willingness to see Codex engaging on the topic. ■

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CODEX AND OBSERVERS IS A TWO-WAY DIALOGUE



JOANNA SKINNER
International Council
of Beverage Associations

For the International Council of Beverage Associations (ICBA), Codex is important for a number of reasons. “The texts are relevant to us because, with the diversity of countries and consumers that we serve and the range of products that we produce, harmonized guidance ensures that our ingredients and the products are, first of all, safe, but they also minimize barriers to trade,” said the ICBA’s representative Joanna Skinner during the recent Codex-hosted webinar held specifically for observers. The science-based nature of Codex standards guarantees that they are trusted globally by producers and consumers alike, meaning they “allow for a more level playing field for internationally traded foods,” according to Skinner.

But the relationship works both ways. Codex texts facilitate fair trade, thus benefitting producers, but equally, producers, through observer organizations like the ICBA, also contribute to standards and the standards-setting process. “We also appreciate that we’re able to contribute to the process, and we’re committed to coming to meetings, prepared to contribute to that consensus-focused approach,” continued Skinner, who went on to describe how the ICBA ensures its Members get a hearing within the process. Through internal working groups dedicated to relevant Codex topic areas, the ICBA informs governments about industry positions on specific subjects, ensuring “that we’re there to provide that scientific expertise, that technical expertise.” And the ICBA and its working groups participate not only in Commission and committee meetings, but also in EWG Groups as they develop documentation for discussion on different texts. “We see our role as listening and making sure that our positions have been heard,” said Skinner.

The mutuality of Codex’s relationship with observers means that all sectors can collectively address emerging issues in food safety. An area of importance for ICBA is technology and labelling. “I think that there is a lot of opportunity coming up around technology and labelling ... the committees are really working together to work towards future proofing and making sure there’s good guidance as we move into new ways of providing information to consumers,” said Skinner. “We’re really excited about that and see that it’s going to allow for innovation.” ■

NAMIBIA STRENGTHENS ITS APPROACH TO FOOD SAFETY WITH A NEW NATIONAL CODEX COMMITTEE

First meeting of National Codex Committee in Namibia.

MARGARET MATENGU
Codex Contact Point, Namibia

In 2022 Namibia took a major step towards ensuring greater policy-level engagement in food safety and Codex matters by establishing a National Codex Coordinating Committee (NCC), which met for the first time on 6 October 2022. Despite being a Member of Codex since 1999, and although Namibia's food trade is Codex compliant and there is a food safety policy in place, authorities felt that a more robust and coordinated strategy was needed. The renewed approach is a response to the changing food safety landscape in the country, which comes as a result of evolving consumer preferences and transforming priorities in food supply chains caused by increased import dependency.

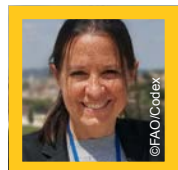
The Committee consists of 17 different stakeholder groups including ministries, the private sector and trade and consumer organizations. On the domestic front it will serve as the national reference point on matters of food safety, advising the government on an updated policy framework for Namibia's food safety strategy and ensuring that issues affecting national producers and the national food industry



are duly considered. The NCC will oversee national Codex activities in the country, ensuring national priorities and needs are adequately served by Codex standards and texts. Crucially, it will not only coordinate all Codex activities within the country, but it will also ensure and enhance Namibia's participation in regional and international food safety fora, and thereby contribute to Codex decision-making.

Immediate priorities for the NCC include ensuring national issues are established and then discussed among all stakeholder groups and shared at the regional level with CCAFRICA and the African Union to ensure they are then brought forward to the Codex Alimentarius Commission. National positions on Codex matters will be formulated and delegates nominated for participation in priority committees. ■

SAFER FOOD, BETTER HEALTH



**MIA ROWAN, FAO, and
LILIA SMIALKOVA, WHO**



In June 2022, World Food Safety Day sharpened our focus on how safer food brings about better health. That means people's health - better enabling children to learn and grow and adults to lead more productive lives. More than 450 events took place in 109 countries, an increase on both counts from the year before.

As the UN Day grows, so does the potential for lasting change. Consumers learn what to watch out for when they purchase or prepare food, food business operators build a stronger food safety culture and governments continue to prioritize food safety.

We are grateful to Codex Contact Points as well as FAO and WHO country and regional offices for their support in making the World Food Safety Day 2022 poster available in 44 languages and for making the observance an impactful initiative.



As the campaign enters its fifth year, it continues to grow, and next year we'll mark the progress achieved in the area of food safety standards. We invite you to think how 7 June 2023 can be a success and use the campaign to foster coalitions, advance policies and play an active role in keeping food safe, everywhere, for everyone. ■

📍 WHO Maldives supported the Maldives Food and Drug Authority to conduct a Virtual Run to raise awareness on Food Safety and Physical Activity on the occasion of World Food Safety Day 2022.

CODEX COMMUNICATIONS



DAVID MASSEY
Codex Secretariat

The Codex Alimentarius gets a facelift

Two large-scale projects, a new website and the redesign of Codex texts kicked off in 2022. The Codex website has grown so much over the last 10 years that a complete rebuild was needed, especially as our hosts FAO have moved to a new content management system. Under the bonnet, critical tools such as the food additives, pesticides and veterinary drugs databases have been redesigned and the new user interface experience will also allow for a smoother registration process for Codex meetings. Launch early 2023.

The other major project that got underway in earnest in 2022 was the redesign of the texts that make up the Codex Alimentarius. Aside from a refreshed graphical interface, all Codex texts will have a digital object identifier (DOI), a unique, never-changing url, standardized by our friends at the International Organization for Standardization. This considerable undertaking will also improve the way Codex texts can be referenced and how we track revisions and amendments.

Contributions to news on the website from Members and Observers are steadily on the increase with projects run under the Codex Trust Fund frequently featured. The Regional Coordinators have often been the valuable link between countries and the Codex Secretariat, aiming for the targets of their strategic plans and exploiting local knowledge and language to tease out stories from around the world.

One area we would still like to develop is the use of Codex standards amongst our Members. A goal for the Codex@60 celebrations will be to uncover these stories and build a set of case studies that advocate for Codex and shine a light on the value of our standards. ■

DID YOU KNOW?



The first text to be published with the new design is the *Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Lead Contamination in Foods (CXC 56-2004)*



OCTOBER 2021 → OCTOBER 2022



5.5
MILLION UNIQUE VIEWS



+5 100
NEW FOLLOWERS



OVER
2 500
TWEETS



3 800
MENTIONS

**THE CODEX
SOCIAL MEDIA
MANAGER'S FAVOURITE
TWEET**



❌ Don't wash fruits and vegetables with soap ❌ 🍅 🍌 🥕 🥔

✅ Soap and detergents can be absorbed by both and can make you sick 😷 Fruits and vegetables should be washed with safe, clean water only ✅ 🍅 🍌

Ps: only 🧴 should be washed with detergent and hot water.

[#FoodSafety](#)

**HOW TO CONTACT CODEX
ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

The best way to contact Codex on Social Media is via your own **Twitter** account and then follow and tag [@FAOWHOCodex](#), DM (direct message) us, retweet our posts and use typical hashtags like [#CodexFamily](#), [#FoodSafety](#) and [#SafeFood](#).

HOW CODEX IS FUNDED

REGULAR PROGRAMME BUDGET

MEMBERS FUNDING STAFF IN THE CODEX SECRETARIAT

FAO/WHO SCIENTIFIC ADVICE

CODEX COMMITTEE HOSTS

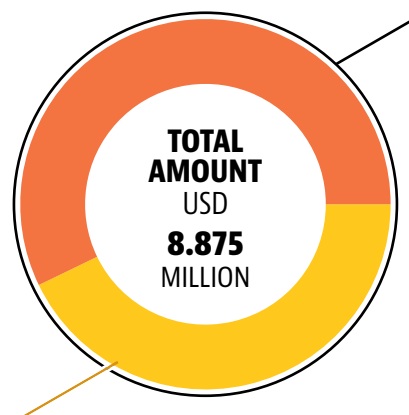
FAO/WHO CAPACITY BUILDING

CODEX TRUST FUND

The Codex system is funded by the Regular Programme Budgets of FAO and WHO and through a series of additional sources. These include in-kind contributions from Member Countries who host Codex Committees and their working groups, and the provision of scientific advice from experts of FAO and WHO. The parent organizations also fund capacity building projects and events related to Codex at national and regional levels, while individual Codex Members second staff to the Codex Secretariat. As of September 2022, the level of expenditure was about USD 3.8 million out of a total 2022-2023 biennium budget of USD 8.875 million (Regular Programme Budget).

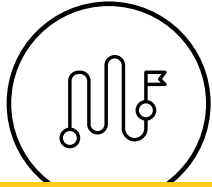
Travel and Other Operating Expenses are lower than expected since most Codex meetings took place virtually during 2022 while costs for translation and interpretation were higher than expected, mainly due to the fact that most Codex committees were run virtually in 2022, also requiring a range of preparatory meetings and webinars. ■

REGULAR PROGRAMME BUDGET 2022-2023



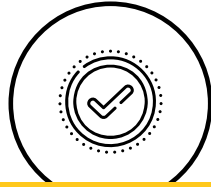
EXPENDITURE
AS OF 30 September 2022
3.8 MILLION

THE CODEX SCORECARD



81

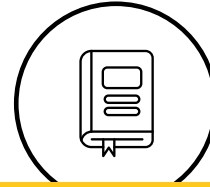
GUIDELINES



230

STANDARDS

OF WHICH
12
GENERAL
STANDARDS
219
COMMODITY
STANDARDS



55

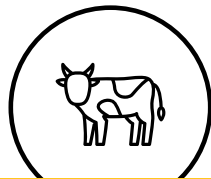
**CODES
OF PRACTICE**



113

**MAXIMUM
LEVELS (MLS) FOR
CONTAMINANTS
IN FOOD**

COVERING
18 CONTAMINANTS



632

**MAXIMUM
RESIDUE LIMITS
(MRLS)
FOR RESIDUES
OF VETERINARY
DRUGS
IN FOODS**

COVERING
85 VETERINARY DRUGS
RISK MANAGEMENT
RECOMMENDATIONS
(RMRS) FOR
13 VETERINARY DRUGS



5 906

**MAXIMUM
RESIDUE LIMITS
(MRLS)**

AND 63 EXTRANEOUS
MAXIMUM RESIDUE
LIMITS (EMRLS)
**FOR PESTICIDE
RESIDUES**

COVERING
238 PESTICIDES



4 468

**MAXIMUM
LEVELS (MLS)**

COVERING
296
**FOOD ADDITIVES
OR GROUPS
OF FOOD ADDITIVES**

Note: for the purposes of this scorecard, groups of food additives are counted only once

LIST OF MEMBERS

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- Angola
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bhutan
- Bolivia (Plurinational State of)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Brunei Darussalam
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cabo Verde
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Cook Islands
- Costa Rica
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Denmark
- Djibouti
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Eswatini
- Ethiopia
- the European Union
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- Gabon
- Gambia
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Greece
- Grenada
- Guatemala
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran (Islamic Republic of)
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Lao People's Democratic Republic
- Latvia

- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Libya
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Malta
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Micronesia (Federated States of)
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Namibia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Qatar
- Republic of Korea
- Republic of Moldova
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- Rwanda
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Samoa
- San Marino
- Sao Tome and Principe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syrian Arab Republic
- Tajikistan
- Thailand
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Türkiye
- Turkmenistan
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- United Republic of Tanzania
- United States of America
- Uruguay
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
- Viet Nam
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe





In 2022 Codex has lived in transition and explored how sustainable working remotely might be. This sixth year of the magazine highlights the achievements of the technical and regional committees that met since the 44th Commission in 2021 bringing over 20 texts for adoption at CAC45. With contributions from key stakeholders throughout the Codex family it captures a year in the life of the Commission and the Codex Secretariat – working to protect health and facilitate trade.

Contact

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