



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
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ALINORM 68/3
SP 10/8 - 5th Session
October 1967

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAM

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Fifth Session, Rome 19 February - 1 March 1968

REPORT OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE
COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE

Vienna, 6-8 September 1967

INTRODUCTION

1. The fifth Session of the Coordinating Committee for Europe was held 6 - 8 September 1967 in Vienna by courtesy of the Government of Austria. The Meeting was opened by Dr. R. Wildner, Coordinator for Europe, and the participants were welcomed by Ministerialrat F. Lang for the vice chancellor the Federal Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry in the presence of Sektionschef Dr. K. Schindle for Staatssekretär F. Soronics from the Ministry for Social Affairs and Amtsrat Q. Peschl for the Lord Mayor of the City Vienna. Dr. Wildner presided as Chairman of the session. The meeting was attended by delegates and observers from the following countries of the European region: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, Yugoslavia, and observers from the following non-European countries: Australia, Cuba, Japan, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Peru and United States of America. Officers of FAO and WHO were the Joint Secretaries of the Meeting. A completelist of participants is set out in Appendix I.

2. The provisional agenda was adopted by the Committee after some re-arrangement of the order of items of business.

DRAFT PROVISIONAL STANDARD FOR HONEY

3. The Coordinating Committee carried out a detailed examination of the Draft Provisional Standard for Honey at Step 7 of the Procedure for the Elaboration of

Regional Standards. The Committee had before it a document prepared by the Austrian Committee (Codex/EURO/67/3) containing the comments of a number of European and non-European governments and a proposed modification for each paragraph, where necessary. In addition, there were supplementary comments issued as addenda to the above mentioned document. The Draft Provisional Standard was examined paragraph by paragraph in the light of these comments and the text of the Standard as revised by the Committee is contained in Appendix II to this Report.

4. The Committee, in examining the Draft Standard, wished to draw attention to the following matters :

- (a) 3.2 c) Pressed Honey. The temperature limitation was removed from the requirement for this honey since the measure of the degree of over-heating will appear in the Standard later (see (b) below).
- (b) 4.1 b) Moisture Content. The figures for the moisture content were agreed generally by the Committee, but the delegation of the Netherlands reserved its position pending further consultation, since honeys of higher moisture content were found in the Netherlands.
- (c) 4.1 c) Apparent Sucrose Content. In the opinion of the French delegation, the apparent sucrose content should be raised to 10% in order to cover exceptional cases.
- (d) 4.1 g) Diastase figure on Gothe scale and Hydroxymethylfurfural content. These two criteria were combined in the text given in Appendix II, since it was realised that these measures of over-heating were interdependent. The figures appearing in the Standard were selected on the basis of numerous analyses for these criteria made on honeys from all over the world.
- (e) 4.3 d) This paragraph was expanded to ensure that honey from which the debris had not been removed may be shipped in international trade.
- (f) 4.3 e) This new paragraph was added to cover possible changes in acidity which might be brought about artificially without the use of additions, e.g. with ion-exchange resins.
- (g) 5. Labelling.
5.4 This paragraph was amplified in accordance with the comments of the United Kingdom in order to accommodate the unavoidable variation in the floral source of honey.
- (h) 6. Methods of Analysis
The Coordinating Committee agreed that the methods of analysis set out in this Standard for honey, and subject to review by the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling, are the only ones which are required at present. The indicated figures are subject to revision taking into account the development of methods of analysis (including optical activity).
- (i) Hygienic Requirements for Honey

The Committee considered that all the various criteria in the Standard would ensure that honey meeting the requirements of this Standard would be satisfactory from a hygienic point of view. It was agreed to insert a statement in the Standard that the General Principles of Food Hygiene would apply.

5. The Coordinating Committee for Europe recommended that the Standard should be submitted to the Commission at Step 8 of the Procedure as a Regional Standard in conjunction with the decisions of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling relative to the methods for the analysis of honey. The Coordinating Committee for Europe unanimously agreed that the Standard should be a European Regional Standard. The Committee stressed that this standard has tried, as much as possible, to take into account the view of all the non-European countries and noted that the differences between the European and non-European countries had been narrowed considerably. The Austrian delegation was complimented on its work on the Standard for honey.

NATURAL MINERAL WATERS

6. A report was presented by the Chairman of the Regional Codex Committee on Natural Mineral Waters, Professor O. Högl, which indicated the considerable degree of agreement which had already been reached on the Standard for natural mineral waters. The Coordinating Committee for Europe took note of the Report and agreed that the Standard should be sent out to governments for comment at Step 3 of the Procedure for the Elaboration of Regional Standards.

SOUPS AND BROTHS

7. The Coordinating Committee for Europe took note of the report of the Swiss delegation on this topic and noted the offer of the Swiss Delegation to accept financial and all other responsibilities for a Committee on Soups and Broths. The Committee noted that there was considerable scope for work on Soups and Broths and recommended that the Commission should consider establishing a Committee on this subject at an early stage. The Commission should also decide whether the proposed Committee should be regional or world-wide in view of the trade figures presented in the report. Due consideration must be given to the availability of financial resources for this work both by the Swiss government and by the Directors General of FAO and WHO. Delegates were asked to ensure that the representatives of their governments at the meeting of the Commission to take place next February were fully briefed on the question in order that they could give a definitive indication as to the possible participation of their governments in the work of the proposed Committee.

EDIBLE FUNGI

8. The Committee discussed the provisional draft standard for edible fungi and fungus products, and agreed that the Standard would need a section entitled "Scope". The list below is illustrative and not exhaustive, and represents the main species in international trade of fresh or dried fungus or other fungus products :-

- (a) Cultivated mushrooms Agaricus (Psalliota) hortensis (Cook) or Agaricus (Psalliota) bisporus (Lange) - (not within scope of Standard).

- (b) Boletus edulis Bull ex Fr. and Boletus castania.
- (c) Truffles (Tuber brumale Vitt. and Tuber melanosporum Vitt.).
- (d) Chanterelle (Cantharellus cibarius Fr.).
- (e) Morels (Morchella esculenta Pers. and Morchella conica Pers.)
- (f) Gyromitra esculenta Pers. which may only be marketed internationally if dried.
- (g) Shii-take (Lentinus edodes (Berk) Sing.)
- (h) Auricularia auricula (Hook.) Underw.
- (i) Volvaria volvacea (Bull. ex Fr.) Quel.

Given the fact that the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations is working on the Standardization of cultivated mushrooms (Agaricus hortensis and agaricus bisporus) this Committee is of the opinion that at this stage cultivated mushrooms should not be included within the scope of its work. In view of this Committee suggested that a re-draft of these Standards be prepared by the delegation of Poland on the basis of the government comments presented in document Codex/EURO/1967/4(a). This re-draft is to be presented to the Commission at its next session and is to be distributed in advance of the session by the FAO Secretariat to all members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The Commission will then be able to decide whether the Standard should be developed on a regional or world-wide basis. The Commission would also need for its consideration the latest version of the ECE Standard for cultivated mushrooms and a statement by ECE of the present state of development of this Standard.

9. The Coordinating Committee took note of the Standard submitted by the delegation of Japan for a specific mushroom, the wood mushroom or forest mushroom, shii-take (Lentinus edodes). The Japanese delegation indicated that a separate Standard is needed for this mushroom since it is cultivated on trees and not in the earth and thus more strict standards of cleanliness are possible. The international trade in this mushroom was reported to exceed seven million dollars per annum. The Committee recommended that the Polish delegation should include provisions for this product in the re-draft to be presented to the Commission. The delegation of Japan expressed its willingness to assist in the drafting of the Standard for this product.

DIETETIC FOODS

10. The Committee took note of a Report of the Chairman of the Committee on Dietetic Foods, Ministerialdirigent Dr. E. Forschbach. He indicated that the Codex Committee had become world-wide in scope, but noted that it had been agreed that regional Standards could be developed for specific products when this was judged to be necessary. Preparatory work was reported to be well in hand for the next session at Freiburg-in-Breisgau in November, 1967.

OTHER BUSINESS AND DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

11. The Coordinating Committee was informed of the state of affairs in various Codex Committees working on Standards on a world-wide basis and expressed the wish that, where it was apparent that these were serious differences of opinion between regions which could not be reconciled, the work could continue to be carried out as at present, without excluding the possibility of elaborating a Regional Standard at a later date.

12. The Committee suggested to the Commission that a suitable date and place for the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee would be the second part of October, 1968, in Vienna.

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DRAFT PROVISIONAL STANDARD FOR HONEY1) Definition of Honey

Honey means exclusively the sweet substance produced by honey bees from the nectar of blossoms or from secretions of or on living parts of plants, which they collect, transform, and combine with specific substances, and store in honey combs.

2) Description

Honey consist essentially of a concentrated solution of different sugars, predominantly glucose and fructose.. Besides glucose and fructose honey contains protein, amino acids, enzymes, organic acids, mineral substances, pollen and other substances, and may include sucrose, maltrose, melezitose and other oligo-saccharides (including dextrans) as well as traces of fungi, algae, yeasts and other solid particles resulting from the process of obtaining honey. The colour of honey varies from nearly colourless to dark brown. The consistency can be fluid, viscous or partly to entirely crystallized. The flavour and aroma vary but usually derive from the plant origin.

3) Subsidiary Definition and Designation

3.1 According to origin:

- a. Blossom or nectar honey is the honey which comes mainly from nectaries of flowers.
- b. Honeydew honey is the honey which comes mainly from secretions of or on living parts of plants. Its colour varies from very light brown or greenish to almost black.

3.2 According to Mode of Processing:

- a. Comb honey stored by bees in the cells of freshly built broodless combs, and sold in sealed whole combs or sections of such combs
- b. Extracted honey is honey obtained by centrifuging decapped broodless combs.
- c. Pressed honey is honey obtained by pressing broodless combs with or without the application of moderate heat.

4) Composition4.1 Compositional Criteria for Honey

- a) Reducing sugar content, calculated as invert sugar

honey:	not less than 65%
blossom honey, when labelled as such	not less than 70%
Honeydew honey, and blends thereof	not less than 60%

- b) Moisture content:
Heather (Calluna) and clover honey (Trifolium) not more than 21%
not more than 23%
- c) Apparent sucrose content:**
Honeydew honey and Clover honey: not more than 5%
not more than 10%*
- d) Water-insoluble solids content:
Pressed honey not more than 0.1%
not more than 0.5%
- e) Mineral content (ash)
Honeydew honey not more than 0.4%
not more than 1.0%
- f) Acidity: not more than 40 milliequivalents acid per 1000 grams
- g) Diastase activity** and hydroxymethylfurfural content:**

Determined immediately after processing and blending,
diastase figure on Gothe scale: not less than 8

and the hydroxymethylfurfural content: not more than 40 mg/kg

Honeys with low natural enzyme content, e.g.

Citrus, diastase content on Gothe scale: not less than 4

provided the hydroxymethylfurfural content is: not more than 10 mg/kg.

4.2 Additives and additions - none

4.3 Specific Prohibitions

- a) Honey must not have any objectionable flavour, aroma or taint absorbed from foreign matter during the processing and storage of honey.
- b) Honey must not have begun to ferment, be effervescent and should not contain more than traces or budding yeast.
- c) Honey must not be heated to such an extent as to inactivate greatly or completely the natural enzymes it contains (see 4.1 g).
- d) Honey must be free from inorganic or organic matters foreign to its composition, such as mould, insects, insect debris, brood or grains of sand, when the honey appears in retail trade or is used in any product for human consumption.
- e) The acidity of honey must not be changed artificially.

* Values for true sucrose content will be determined when agreement has been reached upon the methods of analysis recommended by the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling.

** The indicated figures are subject to revision taking into account new development in methods of analysis.

5) Labelling

- 5.1 Honey shall be subject to the general provisions laid down by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling.
- 5.2 Subject to the provisions of paragraph 5.5 below, only products conforming to the standard may be labelled "honey".
- 5.3 No honey may be designated by any of the designations in paragraph 3 unless it conforms to the appropriate description contained therein.
- 5.4 Honey may be designated according to colour, and according to floral or plant source if the predominant part of the honey originates from the floral or plant source or sources so designated and if the honey has the characteristics of the type of honey concerned. Honey may be designated by the name of the geographical or topographical region if the honey was produced exclusively within the region referred to in the designation.
- 5.5
 - a) Honey not complying with the requirements of paragraph 4.3a or 4.3b of this standard must, if offered for sale, be labelled "baking honey" or "industrial honey".
 - b) Honey not complying with the requirements of paragraphs 4.1g or 4.3c of this standard must, if offered for sale, be labelled "overheated honey", "baking honey", or "manufacturing honey".

6) Methods of Analysis

(The methods of analysis elaborated by the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling will be inserted here. See paragraph 4(h) of this report).