



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES
Thirty-second Session**

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INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO RELEVANT TO THE WORK OF CCGP

Prepared by FAO and WHO

Introduction

1. This paper presents information on activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) that could be of interest or relevant to the work of CCGP.

Matters arising jointly from FAO and WHO:

The International Food Safety Conference

2. Under the overall theme “The future of food safety – Transforming knowledge into action for people, economies and the environment”, FAO and WHO contributed, together with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the African Union (AU) to The First International Food Safety Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 12-13 February 2019, as well as the International Forum on Food Safety and Trade in Geneva, Switzerland on 23-24 April 2019.

3. The two international events brought together more than 1500 food safety leaders from over 140 national governments and agencies, academia, international organizations and the private sector. They highlighted the integral role of food safety in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as in supporting the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition.

4. During the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees in six regions from September to November 2019, the Committees discussed further action to support the development of sustainable food safety systems for the next decades at global, regional and national levels which could be taken building on the momentum created by the aforementioned international events.

5. The FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees discussed some suggestions such as:

- took note of the Chairperson’s Summary of the First FAO/WHO/AU International Food Safety Conference¹ and the Joint FAO/WHO/WTO Statement of the WTO International Forum on Food Safety and Trade² and committed to making these documents available to high-level policy makers within their governments in order to gain high-level political support and investment in food safety;
- requested FAO and WHO to continue their activities to maintain a high profile for food safety through follow-up initiatives to the 2019 events, for example through the development of a global action plan for food safety;
- invited FAO and WHO to consider the areas for action proposed by Members in their ongoing efforts to support improvement of food safety in the region;
- committed to actively engage in the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025, and highlighted the importance of linking food safety to the achievement of the SDGs;
- recommended that more funds should be made available for sustainable funding of scientific advice from the FAO/WHO expert bodies for use in the development of Codex standards;
- requested Donors and development partners to support the efforts of low income countries by investing in initiatives to support the strengthening the critical food safety infrastructure, services and capacity;

¹ https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/resources/chairpersons-summary-addis-ababa-en.pdf?sfvrsn=865efacf_8

² https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/resources/joint-statement.pdf?Status=Temp&sfvrsn=61b890c4_12

- stressed the importance of capacity building related to diagnostic testing and other food safety control activities, including scientific advice at the national level;
- noted the ongoing efforts to improve food safety at the national level in an integrated manner and with multi-stakeholder engagement; and
- committed to use the occasion of the annual World Food Safety Day (WFSD) on June 7th to advocate for the food safety at the national level for consumer protection and public health, food security, economic development and trade and report on the activities through the WFSD webpage.

6. The overall meeting report also will be available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/events/international-food-safety-conference>

Matters arising from FAO

FAO Governing body

7. The 163rd Session of the FAO Council (December 2019) has endorsed the allocation of an additional USD 1 million for the food safety scientific advice programme during the 2020-21 biennium. In addition, the FAO Director-General has approved a special 2019 allotment of USD 500,000 for the food safety scientific advice programme.

Matters arising from WHO

WHO Governing Body

8. At the 146th session of the Executive Board in February 2020, the agenda item “Accelerating efforts on food safety”³ is expected to be discussed under “Pillar 3: One billion more people enjoying better health and well-being” of WHO’s Thirteenth General Programme of Work. The two most recent World Health Assembly resolutions related to food safety are WHA53.15 (2000)⁴ and WHA63.3 (2010)⁵, through which the Health Assembly has urged the Member States and requested the WHO Secretariat to implement a number of activities to promote and strengthen food safety worldwide.

Transformation of WHO

9. In March 2019, WHO announced reforms to strengthen the WHO’s role as the world’s leading authority on public health and to effectively support countries in achieving the “triple billion” targets. In this context, the Food Safety department and the Nutrition department were merged in one single department under the UHC/Healthier Populations Division to enhance synergies, reaffirm WHO’s commitment to supporting Codex and ultimately to provide safe and nutritious food to the most vulnerable populations.

³ http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB146/B146_1-en.pdf

⁴ http://apps.who.int/gb/archive/pdf_files/WHA53/ResWHA53/15.pdf

⁵ http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA63/A63_R3-en.pdf?ua=1&ua=1