

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of  
the United Nations



World Health  
Organization

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**Agenda Item 14**

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## **JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

### **CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**

**36<sup>th</sup> Session, FAO Headquarters,**

**Rome, Italy, 1-5 July 2013**

### **RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **BACKGROUND**

1. In accordance with Rule IX.4 of the Rules of Procedure, the Directors-General of FAO or WHO may invite intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations to attend as observers sessions of the Commission and of its subsidiary bodies. Participation of international organizations in the work of the Commission, and the relations between the Commission and such organizations are governed by the relevant provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission and of the Constitutions of FAO or WHO, as well as by the applicable regulations of FAO or WHO on relations with international organizations; such relations are handled by the Director-General of FAO or of WHO as appropriate.
2. The present document describes the relations with intergovernmental organisations (Part A) and nongovernmental organisations (Part B).
3. Following the request of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Executive Committee, the information is presented according to Activities 4.1 (Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies), 4.2 Encourage Codex contributions to the work of other international bodies) and 4.3 (Encourage contributions from other international bodies in Codex work) of the Codex Strategic Plan 2008-2013, where applicable in the case of standard-setting organisations, taking into account available information, and with an analysis of how Codex works with IGOs. As regards NGOs, the only relevant organisation is ISO.

#### **A. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

##### **World Trade Organization (WTO)**

4. The Codex Secretariat regularly participated in the sessions of the SPS and TBT Committees of the WTO and informed the Committees, orally and in writing, of the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission relevant to the WTO. The Codex Secretariat also participated in, and provided support to selected regional WTO workshops on the SPS Agreement, as well as the specialised course held in conjunction with the SPS Committee. The Codex Secretariat provided inputs to the meetings of the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), as required. Representatives of WTO, in return, participated in selected meetings of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies.

5. The information provided by the WTO Secretariat on activities relevant to Codex work is contained in document CAC/36 INF/3 and an update on STDF is presented in CAC/36 INF/4.

##### **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**

6. Representatives of FAO/IAEA regularly participate in relevant Codex Committees, especially the Committees on Contaminants in Foods, on Pesticide Residues and on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods, in which IAEA provides important technical input, in particular on the work of the Committees on methods of analysis and sampling.

7. The IAEA also participated in the discussion on the revision of the Guideline Levels (GLs) for radionuclides in the Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF). The IAEA informed the CCCF that it

had established an Inter-Agency Working Group in collaboration with FAO and WHO, to carry out work in relation to the control of foodstuffs and drinking water contaminated with radioactive substances. The CCCF having agreed to discontinue work on the revision of the GLs for radionuclides, would consider the work of the IAEA Inter-Agency Working Group to decide if it is necessary to start new work on radionuclides in the future. The Codex Secretariat was invited and participated in the May 2013 meeting of the IAEA Inter-Agency Working Group.

8. Information provided by the IAEA Secretariat on activities relevant to Codex work is contained in document CAC/36 INF/7.

### **World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)**

#### ***a) Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies***

9. Information provided by the OIE Secretariat on activities relevant to Codex work will be presented in document CAC/36 INF/2.

10. Continued collaboration between Codex and OIE has resulted in a number of Codex and OIE texts, which have been developed with inputs of the two organizations and which include cross reference to relevant texts of the two organizations (Annex 1 provides lists Codex texts, which include cross-references to reference to the work of OIE).

#### ***b) Encourage Codex contributions to the work of other international bodies***

##### **OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety**

11. The Codex Secretariat attended the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety (APFSWG), held in Paris (France) on 20-22 November 2012. At the meeting the Codex Secretariat provided an update on texts adopted by 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and ongoing work in Codex subsidiary bodies. Participation of the Codex Secretariat in the APFSWG contributes to the coordination of work between the OIE and Codex and to the exchange of information of common interest.

##### **OIE ad hoc Groups**

12. The Codex Secretariat has been invited to participate as an observer in the work of the OIE *ad hoc* Groups on zoonotic parasites (July 2012) and on antimicrobial resistance (January 2013). Participation of the Codex Secretariat in the OIE *ad hoc* Groups contributes to ensure coherence and complementarities between Codex and OIE texts and to limit duplication of work while ensuring coverage of the whole food chain. The two co-chairs of the electronic Working Group on parasites in meat of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene also participated in the meeting of the *ad hoc* Group on zoonotic parasites at the invitation of the Director General of the OIE.

##### **Others**

13. The Codex Secretariat was also invited to participate and present a paper on Codex and international cooperation with the OIE at the OIE Regional Seminar for the OIE National Focal Points on Animal Production Food Safety, held in Tokyo (Japan), on 31 October – 2 November 2012.

#### ***c) Encourage contributions from other international bodies in Codex work***

14. As an Observer organization to Codex, OIE contributes to the work of Codex providing comments and participating in the sessions of the Commission and of its Codex subsidiary bodies and in the work of electronic and physical working groups. The OIE is also invited to prepare information papers on relevant activities at the Codex Alimentarius Commission and at a number of Committees and Task Force, including the Codex Committees on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods, on Food Hygiene, Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems and the Task Force on Animal Feeding.

15. Since the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission, OIE has attended and /or provided inputs to a number of Codex Committees and Task Force as outlined below:

- 44<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Food Hygiene (New Orleans, United States of America, 12-16 November 2012) (Ref. REP 13/FH);

- 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the Task Force on Animal Feeding (Berne, Switzerland, 4-8 February 2013) (Ref. REP13/AF);
- 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (Chiang Mai, Thailand, 18-22 February 2013) (Ref. REP 13/FICS);

### **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)**

#### ***a) Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies***

16. The *UNECE Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards* develops agricultural marketing standards to facilitate trade with and within the ECE Region covering a wide spectrum of agricultural products. This work is carried out through a number of Specialized Sections such as the *Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables*. UNECE standards are used internationally by governments, producers, traders, importers, exporters and international organizations. Membership to the Working Party and its Specialized Sections are open to all members of the United Nations.

17. The Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables is entrusted to elaborate worldwide standards and related texts as may be appropriate for fresh fruits and vegetables. As established in its Terms of Reference, this task is performed in consultation with the *UNECE Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards and its Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* to ensure harmonization of texts, that they follow the same broad format and to avoid duplication of work.

#### ***b) Encourage Codex contributions to the work of other international bodies***

18. The Codex Secretariat regularly attends meetings of the UNECE Working Party and its Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables as Observer to exchange information on standardization work being performed by the two parties and to provide inputs on matters of common interest that are being discussed both in the Specialized Section and the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

19. The Codex Secretariat attended the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNECE Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (Geneva, Switzerland, November 2012), the 61<sup>st</sup> Session of the UNECE Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (Geneva, Switzerland, May 2013) and the 60<sup>th</sup> session of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce (Geneva, Switzerland, June 2013).

#### ***c) Encourage contributions from other international bodies in Codex work***

20. The UNECE Secretariat regularly attends meetings of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables as Observer to exchange information on standardization work being performed by the two parties and to provide inputs on matters of common interest that are being discussed both in the Specialized Section and the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

21. The Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables takes UNECE standards as a starting point for the development of corresponding Codex standards and, in order to facilitate this process, relevant UNECE standards are distributed as working documents for the Committee when like products were being considered as recommended by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Also, information on matters arising from other international organizations on the standardization of fresh fruits and vegetables, i.e. UNECE and OECD, constitutes a standing item on the agenda of the Committee.

22. In addition, Codex standards for fresh fruits and vegetables are currently presented in a combination of the UNECE layout and the Format of Codex Commodity Standards in accordance with the decision of the Commission, by which UNECE format would be respected for quality characteristics elaborated under Codex standards, while the Codex format would be respected for those provisions not dealing exclusively with commercial quality". This is in term in correspondence with the mandate of the Committee as regards consultation with the UNECE in order to ensure that the standards follow the same broad format.

23. Furthermore, the Terms of Reference of the Committee allows the Working Party: to recommend that a worldwide Codex standard for fresh fruits and vegetables be elaborated and submit its recommendation to the Committee for consideration or to the Commission for approval; may also prepare "proposed draft standards" for fresh fruits or vegetables at the request of the Committee or of the Commission for distribution by the Codex Secretariat at Step 3 of the Codex Procedure or for further action by the Committee; may consider "proposed draft standards" and "draft standards" for fresh fruits and vegetables

and transmit comments on them to the Committee at Steps 3 and 6 of the Codex Procedures; and may perform specific tasks in relation to the elaboration of standards for fresh fruits and vegetables at the request of the Committee. Moreover, Codex “proposed draft standards” and “draft standards” for fresh fruits and vegetables at Steps 3 and 6 of the Codex Procedures should be submitted to the UNECE Secretariat for obtaining comments.

24. As part of this mutual exchange of collaboration, it is expected that the UNECE Secretariat would be attending the upcoming session of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables in February 2014.

### **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**

#### ***a) Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies***

25. The OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruits and Vegetables aims at facilitating the mutual recognition of the export quality inspection regimes by participating countries of the Scheme through the harmonization of implementation and interpretation of internationally recognized marketing standards which includes the development of explanatory brochures, guidelines on sampling plans and testing methods for conformity checks, inspections and certification procedures, etc. Membership to the Scheme is open to any OECD or non-OECD country that is a member of the United Nations or of the World Trade Organization. The OECD Scheme

26. The Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables cooperates on a regular basis with the OECD Scheme on various standardization-related activities concerning fresh fruits and vegetables aimed at facilitating the implementation of international agricultural grade standards.

#### ***b) Encourage Codex contributions to the work of other international bodies***

27. The Codex Secretariat regularly attends Plenary Meetings of the OECD Scheme as Observer to exchange information on standardization-related work being performed by the two parties and to provide inputs on matters of common interest that are being discussed both in the OECD Scheme and the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables. The later Meeting attended was the 71<sup>st</sup> Plenary Meeting (Paris, France, December 2012). The Codex secretariat was also involved in a number of OECD capacity building activities to make presentations on Codex work in the area of quality of fresh fruits and vegetables. It is expected that the Codex Secretariat will participate at the 72<sup>nd</sup> Plenary Meeting in particular due to the adoption of the OECD Brochure for Pomegranates based on the Codex Standard for Pomegranate proposed for final adoption by the 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission.

28. In addition, the OECD Council Decision C(2006)95 revising the OECD Scheme includes a reference to the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme so that also the relevant standards adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, once approved by the Plenary Meeting of the OECD Scheme, shall be applied under the “Scheme” to the products specified in this Decision, at the export stage, when they enter into international trade between countries participating in the “Scheme”. The standards approved by the Plenary Meeting could be also used in the elaboration of explanatory brochures to facilitate inspection and other procedures for conformity to quality standards. Further information on OECD activities relevant to the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission can be found in INF 1.

#### ***c) Encourage contributions from other international bodies in Codex work***

29. The OECD Secretariat regularly attends meetings of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables as Observer to exchange information on standardization-related work being performed by the two parties and to provide inputs on matters of common interest that are being discussed both in the OECD Scheme and the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables. As part of this mutual exchange of collaboration, it is expected that the OECD Scheme would be attending the upcoming session of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables in February 2014.

### **International Olive Council (IOC)**

#### ***a) Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies***

30. The International Olive Council is an intergovernmental organization that brings together olive oil and table olive producing and consuming stakeholders. The Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables is entrusted with the elaboration of worldwide standards for all types of processed fruits and vegetables including canned, dried and quick frozen fruits and vegetables.

31. The Committee usually takes into account the work carried out by other international organizations active in the area of standardization of processed fruits and vegetables such as the IOC for the revision of the Codex Standard for Table Olives which is now for final adoption by the Commission and is harmonized with the corresponding IOC Standard.

32. As regards the IOC work on olive oils, the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils took into account the work of the IOC when revising the standard for olive oils and olive pomace oils.

33. The Codex Secretariat receives the documents for the meetings on olive oil chemistry organised by the IOC, and participates, as required, to provide an update on the work of the Committee on Fats and Oils on olive oil. As the methods are under regular revision and new methods are developed for various parameters, it is expected that when new methods are developed in the IOC they would be forwarded to the Committee on Fats and Oils for consideration.

***b) Encourage Codex contributions to the work of other international bodies***

34. The Codex Secretariat attended the IOC Expert Meeting on Table Olives held in Madrid, Spain in February 2012 which was devoted to the harmonization of the IOC Standard for Table Olives, in order to provide an update on the revision of Codex Standard for Table Olives (see para. 31 above).

***c) Encourage contributions from other international bodies in Codex work***

35. The IOC has a long-standing cooperation with Codex in the development and revision of Codex texts concerning olive-related products. The revised text produced by the February 2012 IOC Meeting has been taken into account by the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables when further revising and finalising the Codex Standard for Table Olives. The IOC attended this meeting in order to assist in the harmonization of both Standards.

36. The IOC participates regularly in the meetings of the Committee on Fats and Oils, and the Committee took into account the parameters for olive oils in the revision of the Codex Standard for Olive Oils and olive Pomace Oils.

**International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV)**

***a) Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies***

37. OIV regularly provides information on its relevant activities in the Codex Alimentarius Commission and several Codex Committees, in particular the Committee on Food Additives, the Committee on Contaminants in Foods and the Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

***b) Encourage Codex contributions to the work of other international bodies***

38. Several standards and principles laid down by the Codex Alimentarius have been taken into consideration when drafting specific OIV standards. These include, in particular:

- The role of science in developing standards
- The principles established by the Committee on food import and export inspection and certification systems adopted by the Commission, in developing the OIV draft resolution regarding the traceability guidelines in the wine and viticulture sector
- The principles and definitions established by the Codex Alimentarius on biotechnologies which were taken into account when drafting certain definitions specific to the vine and wine sector with regard to biotechnologies.

***c) Encourage contributions from other international bodies in Codex work***

39. The OIV took an active participation in the work of the Committee on Contaminants in Foods on the development of the standards and related texts relevant to grapes and grape products and is currently involved in the review of maximum levels of lead in the General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed.

40. The OIV also participates in the work by the Codex Committee on Food Additives, especially regarding provisions relating to food additives in the General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA), in particular for the “grape wine” category and its sub-categories and in the review of the food category system.

41. As regards the Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, OIV contributed to the work on the Standard for Table Grapes and has proposed the revision of the maturity requirements at the 17<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (September 2012).

42. Detailed information on OIV activities and cooperation with Codex is available in CAC/35 INF/5.

### **International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)**

#### ***a) Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies***

43. The Codex Secretariat regularly attends sessions of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures of the International Plant Protection Convention. In addition, informal liaison between Codex and IPPC Secretariats continues on matters of common interest to both parties.

#### ***b) Encourage Codex contributions to the work of other international bodies and***

#### ***c) Consider cooperation with other relevant international intergovernmental organizations***

44. The IPPC and Codex Secretariat have on several occasions discussed how to work closer together on technical/administrative issues such as websites, interaction with contact points, electronic working groups etc. The IPPC Secretariat has recently established an online commenting system allowing secure reception of comments and their automatic compilation. The system also has a component allowing members to establish their comments in cooperation with their technical experts. The Codex Secretariat has now started a project to adapt the IPPC online commenting system for Codex needs and it is expected that the system will be piloted early next year. The system will facilitate the work of the Codex and host country secretariats and avoid that comments are lost or accidentally deleted as records are kept of all transactions. It is expected that the system will start piloting in autumn 2013.

## **B. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Procedure for Observer Status**

45. In accordance with Article 6 of the *Principles Concerning the Participation of International Non-Governmental Organizations in the Work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission*, a report is made to the Commission on the relations between the Codex Alimentarius Commission and international non-governmental organizations established in accordance with the present procedures and provides a list of organizations granted Observer Status, with an indication of the membership that they represent.

46. The review of the organisations which have applied for observer status and were considered by the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee in the light of the criteria set out in the *Principles* will be presented to the Commission in the report of these sessions.

### **International Organization for Standardization (ISO)**

#### ***a) Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies***

47. Codex has liaison status with ISO TC 34 on food products, ISO TC 234 *Fisheries and aquaculture* and the ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (ISO/CASCO). The Secretariat therefore receives all the documents for these committees, follows their work and participates in relevant meetings as far as possible (see below for details).

48. The Codex Secretariat and the JEMRA Secretariat follow the work of SC09 Microbiology and the Secretariat had participated in the plenary meeting for the first time in June 2012.

#### ***b) Encourage Codex contributions to the work of other international bodies***

49. The Codex Secretariat, participated in the regional workshop on Food Standards and Trade organised by ISO from 8 to 10 May 2013 in Havana, Cuba, with the support of the Oficina Nacional de Normalización (NC) in Cuba together with the cooperation of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). 70 participants from 26 countries from Latin America and the Caribbean participated in this regional workshop, which considered the food supply chains in the region, the role of various stakeholders in the food chain, and issues related to the implementation of standards especially at the import and export stages.

50. The Secretariat provided an update of Codex work, mainly the Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling and the Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems to the ISO CASCO STAR (Strategic Alliance and Regulatory Group) (Geneva, Switzerland, 9 April 2013), as well as general issues under discussion in the Commission and issues related to participation of developing countries and private standards.

51. The Codex Secretariat participated for the first time in the meeting of ISO/TC 34/SC 17 – *Management systems for food safety* in Saitama, Japan from 29 October to 1 November 2012, which operates in the field of food safety management systems, covering the food supply chain from primary production to consumption, human and animal foodstuffs as well as animal and vegetable propagation materials. The Secretariat presented activities of several committees, which are relevant to the work of TC34/SC17; in particular, the work of the Committees on Food Hygiene (CCFH), Contaminants in Foods (CCCF), Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) and the Task Force on Animal Feeding. Participation in this sub-committee is important to ensure harmonization with ISO in the areas of food safety through the food chain and risk-based inspection.

52. The Codex Secretariat participated in the Symposium ‘Standards and Trade’ in the IDF/ISO Analytical week 2013 (Rotterdam, Netherlands, 5 June 2013), in which discussions focused on Codex work in the area of methods of analysis and sampling, as well as general questions related to harmonisation of standards and international trade.

**c) *Encourage contributions from other international bodies in Codex work***

53. ISO participates regularly in the Codex Alimentarius Commission and in the Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling, where its technical contribution is very important, as regards methods of analysis and general issues such as sampling uncertainty.

54. The contribution of ISO in the area of methods of analysis and sampling is very substantial, as more than 300 methods of analysis refer to ISO methods especially ISO/TC 34 (food products) or water quality methods. As regards milk and milk products, reference is made in Codex standards to a large number of joint ISO and IDF methods for these products, developed by ISO/TC 43/SC 5 Milk and Milk Products.

55. Reference is made in several general Codex texts to ISO/IEC17025 for testing and calibration laboratories. ISO sampling plans are also referred to in the Codex General Guidelines on Sampling.

Annex 1**Codex texts with cross-references to OIE**

<b>Codex standards</b>		
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Notes</b>
CAC/RCP 54-2004	<a href="#"><i>Code of Practice on Good Animal Feeding</i></a>	
CAC/RCP 57-2004	<a href="#"><i>Code of Hygienic Practice for Milk and Milk Products</i></a>	
CAC/RCP 58-2005	<a href="#"><i>Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat</i></a>	
CAC/GL 38-2001	<a href="#"><i>Guidelines for design, production, issuance and use of generic model official certificates</i></a>	
CAC/RCP 61-2005	<a href="#"><i>Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Antimicrobial Resistance</i></a>	
CAC/GL 60-2006	<a href="#"><i>Principles for Traceability / Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System</i></a>	
CAC/GL 62-2007	<a href="#"><i>Working Principles for Risk Analysis for Food Safety for Application by Governments</i></a>	
CAC/GL 67-2008	<a href="#"><i>Model Export Certificate for Milk and Milk Products</i></a>	
CAC/GL 77-2011	<a href="#"><i>Guidelines for Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance</i></a>	
CAC/GL 78-2011	<a href="#"><i>Guidelines for the Control of Campylobacter and Salmonella spp. in Chicken Meat</i></a>	