

codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

JOINT OFFICE:

Via delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME: Tel. 57971 Telex: 610181 FAO I. Cables Foodagri

ALINORM 87/4

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Seventeenth Session

Rome, 29 June to 10 July 1987

REPORT OF THE THIRTY FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION FAO, ROME, 25-26 JUNE 1987

INTRODUCTION

1. The Executive Committee held its Thirty Fourth Session at FAO Headquarters, Rome, from 25 to 26 June 1987. The Executive Committee was presided over by the Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Mr. E.F. Kimbrell (United States of America), in the presence of Dr. E.R. Méndez (Mexico), one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Commission. The following representatives from the geographic locations mentioned were present, for Africa, Mr. M.B. Mboundja from Cameroon; for Asia, Dr. Baik Duck-Woo, from the Republic of Korea; for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mr. A.M. Sanchez from Argentina; for North America, Dr. N.W. Tape from Canada; for the South-West Pacific, Mr. B.A. Schick from Australia. The Coordinator for Europe, Mr. P. Rossier (Switzerland) and the Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean Minister Ing. R. Darias Rodés (Cuba), were present. Also present was Dr. F.G. Winarno (Indonesia), who, following the resignation of the current Coordinator for Asia, had chaired the Fifth Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia and who had been nominated by the Committee for appointment as Codex Coordinator for Asia by the Seventeenth Session of the Commission.

2. Apologies for absence were received from Dr. Ms. A. Brincker (Denmark), and Dr. L. Twum Danso (Ghana) the other Vice-Chairmen of the Commission.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 1)

3. The Executive Committee agreed to include the following items under "Other Business" for discussion

Item 14(a) Report of Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Consultation to Examine the Need for International Standards for Tropical Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

Item 14(b) Proposal Concerning the Format and Endorsement of Labelling Provisions in Codex Standards. (CX/EXEC 87/34/7, prepared by Canada)

Item 14(c) Oral report on FAO activities related to the control of animal diseases transmitted through food products.

4. The Executive Committee adopted the agenda as amended.

REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME FOR 1986/87 AND 1988/89 (Agenda Item 2)

5. The Executive Committee had before it document ALINORM 87/5 which was introduced and commented upon by the Secretariat.

6. Dr. E. Méndez, Vice-Chairman, asked whether the budget proposals included items which would support the promotion of Codex activities as had been previously recommended by the Executive Committee. It was noted that these had been included in the budget for the biennium 1986/87, and as a result an Information Booklet, designed for popular distribution had been prepared. Other promotional activities had also taken place within the regular programme activities of FAO and WHO. The Representative from North America recommended that such activities should continue to include other scientific and technical organizations as well.

7. The Executive Committee noted the financial difficulties facing both FAO and WHO in the current biennium and congratulated the Secretariat for keeping generally within the budget allocated to the Programme. It also noted that additional expenses due to senior staff movements and certain heavy non-recurring expenses had placed particular pressure on the budget of the 1986/87 biennium. It expressed its appreciation of the commitments of both Organizations to maintain the budget at the present level, but did express concern that further financial restrictions on the parent Organizations might have a negative impact on the Programme. It indicated the need for continued support for the activities of the Commission in order to implement fully the Joint Programme.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE PUBLICATION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS AND ON DISTRIBUTION ARRANGEMENTS (Agenda Item 3)

8. The Executive Committee had before it document ALINORM 87/2 outlining the situation of the publication of the Codex Alimentarius and distribution arrangements. The report was introduced by the Secretariat. It was noted that a number of texts finalized at the Sixteenth Session of the Commission may not be distributed before 1988 due to financial constraints.

9. Dr. E. Méndez (Vice-Chairman) asked whether further action had been taken to explore the possibility of the sale of final Codex Standards and Codes of Practice and distribution through sales outlets. The Representative of the South-West Pacific, Mr. B.A. Schick, stated that it would be unfortunate if distribution of these documents through commercial outlets would adversely affect established distribution channels through Codex Contact Points. The Coordinator-designate for Asia, Dr. F.G. Winarno

raised the question of translation of Codex texts into local languages, and what the implications of this would mean.

10. The representative of North America, Dr. N. Tape, recalled the Executive Committee's discussion at its 33rd Session regarding possible distribution of documents by using computer data banks as well as conventional distribution of printed documents. He recommended that continuing efforts be made to introduce document distribution using computer data banks.

11. The Executive Committee noted that working documents, reports of Codex sessions, and final Codex documents would continue to be provided to Codex Contact Points as in the past. In regard to final Codex texts, the Committee was informed that there were difficulties in proceeding with plans to distribute free of charge these through FAO and WHO authorized sales agencies for a fee and that FAO and WHO were seeking solutions to this problem. However, the Committee recommended that governments, or other interested parties should be encouraged to translate the final documents into local languages, but that the Secretariat should be informed of such translations to verify their accuracy. The Committee noted that the total documentation of the Codex system including the final texts was quite voluminous, and expressed the desire to provide an improved system so that individual Standards or Codes could be provided to persons or institutions requiring such abridged information. An alternative might be the sale of final documents as priced publications to those that wished to purchase them.

12. The Executive Committee stated that the distribution of working documents for Codex meetings, especially those in French and Spanish, could be improved. Due to late issuance or receipt of documents some delegations were unable to brief themselves adequately before the meetings, and this was thought to have a negative effect on participation. The Executive Committee confirmed its previous opinion that shorter and fewer working documents for meetings would help the situation by reducing time and costs spent in translation, so long as the documents adequately covered all relevant technical and policy matters.

REPORT ON VIEWS OF FAO'S COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE ON PAPER PREPARED FOR THE COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE ROLE OF FOOD QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN FOOD SECURITY, TRADE AND HEALTH (Agenda Item 4) and DISCUSSION OF THE WORK OF THE CAC BY THE WHO EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY (Agenda Item 5)

13. By agreement of the Executive Committee Agenda Items 4 and 5 were both presented to the Committee at the same time for discussion.

14. Mr. J.R. Lupien, Chief, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme introduced ALINORM 87/10 which contained a summary of the views of FAO's Committee on Agriculture on the Role of Food Quality and Standards in Food Security, Trade and Health. He noted that the Council of FAO, currently in session, had reviewed this report and had also given warm support to the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the goals of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme. Introduction of this item included an audio-visual presentation that had been used in presenting this topic to the FAO Committee on Agriculture.

15. Introducing document ALINORM 87/16 on the discussion of the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission by the WHO Executive Board and the World Health Assembly, the WHO Joint Secretary informed the Committee that, at the request of a member of the WHO Executive Board, the Director-General of WHO had prepared a paper on the Codex Alimentarius Commission for consideration by the Executive Board during its 79th Session in January 1987. Several members of the Executive Board recognized the important role of the Commission for the promotion of food safety and the facilitation of international food trade and commended the Director-General for its support to the work of the Commission. In conclusion the Executive Board adopted a resolution, recommending to the 40th World Health Assembly the adoption of a resolution on the Commission. During its 40th Session, May 1987, the Assembly reviewed this resolution presented to it. Several delegations spoke and again highlighted the contribution of the Commission for food safety and thus for health promotion and disease prevention. In conclusion, the 40th World Health Assembly adopted this resolution on the Codex Alimentarius Commission (annexed).

16. The Representative for North America, Dr. N. Tape, noted that the unanimous support of the work of the Commission by the governing bodies of the two parent organizations had increased the visibility of the Programme and had opened the way for new areas of development. The general priorities of the Commission, particularly those referring to the emphasis on the general subject committees, and the regional coordinating committees, had been confirmed. The Representative noted that there was a clear indication to avoid duplication of work and to seek new members of the Commission, and to develop, as quickly as possible, maximum levels of contaminants, including radionuclides.

17. The Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean, Ing. Ramon Darias Rodés, emphasized the importance of Codex at the national, regional and world-wide level. He stressed the need for continued technical and financial support to the Programme. He also stressed the importance of personal contacts by coordinators at national and regional levels. The Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mr. A.M. Sanchez, in commending the value of the audio-visual presentation prepared for the Committee on Agriculture stated the need for additional clear and concise information to be made available to facilitate promotion of the Commission's work. The Executive Committee noted that the audio-visual presentation was being converted to a video presentation which would be more convenient for use wherever such equipment was available.

18. In discussing agenda items 4 and 5 the Executive Committee recognized the importance of the support received from the governing bodies of FAO and WHO and accepted the recommendations of action made by both of them. It encouraged governments to inform all potential users of Codex documents about the information contained in them, and stressed the need for governments to promote the use of Codex standards in international trade. The forthcoming "Uruguay Round" of negotiations within the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade was highlighted in this regard.

REPORT ON CASE STUDIES CONCERNING THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF CODEX WORK ON TRADE OF TWO SELECTED MEMBER COUNTRIES (BRAZIL AND USA) (Agenda Item 6)

19. The Secretariat introduced ALINORM 87/11 (Parts I and II) containing the summaries of the reports prepared. The full reports, in English only, were available to the Executive Committee as Appendices to the document.

20. The Executive Committee noted that the reports showed the need for countries to accept and use Codex standards in order to realize fully the benefits of participation in the Commission's work. They also showed how the impact of Codex work could be evaluated and what future actions might be envisaged at the national level. The Executive Committee expressed satisfaction at the generally positive tone of the reports and proposed that they might be combined and presented as an information document for use by governments.

PUBLICATION OF CODEX SPECIFICATIONS OF IDENTITY AND PURITY OF FOOD ADDITIVES (Agenda Item 7)

21. The Executive Committee had before it document CX/EXEC 87/34/3 which contained a proposal of the 18th and 19th Sessions of Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) that Codex Advisory Specifications be published separately, preferably in loose leaf form and the reasons cited by the CCFA in support of its request. The document also contained a proposal for action from the Secretariat.

22. The Committee noted that 70 percent of the 189 Codex Advisory Specifications which had been so far adopted by the Commission were specifications prepared by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) adopted without any modifications. For the rest corrections only of an editorial nature and not of substance had been proposed by CCFA. These editorial corrections were available in the various reports of CCFA.

23. The Executive Committee was informed that a series of immediate and medium term steps were under consideration to assure availability of up-to-date food additive specifications to Codex member countries. The Codex Secretariat is updating Codex Alimentarius Vol. XIV, with cross references to JECFA specifications recommended as Codex Advisory Specifications along with any CCFA editorial corrections. FAO is exploring the possibilities of preparing a consolidated publication, updated each five years, of all JECFA specifications which could be annotated to indicate the JECFA reviews of each substance and their status as Codex Advisory Specifications. Until this publication is available and has been used by Codex member countries and the food chemical industries along with the cross referencing system mentioned above, separate publication of Codex Advisory Specifications is not justified and would result in duplication of existing materials and unnecessary costs to the Programme.

24. The Executive Committee recognized the importance of making up-to-date documentation on Food Additive Specifications available to member countries and agreed that no separate publication of Codex Advisory Specifications was justified. It supported the actions of the Secretariat outlined in para 22.

REPORT ON DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING RADIONUCLIDE CONTAMINATION OF FOODS AND THE NEED FOR ACTION BY CODEX (Agenda Item 8)

25. The Executive Committee had before it a document, CX/EXEC 87/34/4 containing a report on developments within FAO and WHO on the radionuclide contamination of foods. The Chief of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme introduced the report, provided background on the activities within both organizations and highlighted the efforts at coordination between major international agencies since the last meeting of the Executive Committee. He noted that an FAO Expert Consultation had been held in December 1986 on Recommended Limits for Radionuclide Contamination of Foods, the report of which had been distributed to all member countries and discussed by the Nineteenth Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives. This Committee had recommended consideration of the report by the Commission together with the establishment of a special ad hoc working group of government experts, if necessary, to consider certain technical details of the report. The levels recommended in the report were considered to be applicable to international shipments and not necessarily to food in countries more immediately affected by contamination from an accident.

26. The Chief of the Programme also informed the Executive Committee that WHO was in the process of preparing Guideline Values for Derived Intervention Levels, however this work had not yet been completed. The 40th World Health Assembly had called for this work to be completed and presented to the 81st Session of the WHO Executive Board which will meet in January 1988. In view of this it had been agreed by the FAO and WHO Secretariat of the Commission to withdraw the report of the FAO Expert Consultation from consideration and to present it to the Commission for information only. Following the meeting of the January 1988 WHO Executive Board an intersecretariat meeting would be held to further consider a joint approach for making recommendations to the Executive Committee and the Commission.

27. The Executive Committee expressed disappointment that the FAO report would not be considered by the Commission for decision and that a joint FAO/WHO proposal would not be available for consideration. It stressed that the Codex Alimentarius Commission by its statutes had an important role to play in providing advice to member countries in this area, and noted that the only guidance provided by a major international organization, to date, was that contained in the FAO report. The Executive Committee recommended that FAO and WHO should consider ways and means of convening special sessions of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies to deal quickly with such emergency situations as the Chernobyl accident.

28. The Executive Committee recommended that the Commission:

- (i) take note of the Report of the FAO Expert Consultation on Recommended Limits of Radionuclide Contamination in Foods;
- (ii) note that WHO had confirmed that the levels recommended in the report presented no unacceptable hazards to health;
- (iii) note that the FAO report was available for use by countries as required.

29. The Executive Committee recommended that FAO and WHO provide joint proposals for future action at the Committee's next session.

REPORT ON DEVELOPMENTS ON THE SUBJECT OF ISLAMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR FOOD OF ANIMAL ORIGIN (Agenda Item 9)

30. The Secretariat drew attention to the discussions on this topic during the 33rd session of the Committee which was summarized in ALINORM 87/3, paras. 122-124. At that time the Secretariat had been requested to look into the desirability of elaborating a Codex Code of Practice for the Preparation and Labelling of Food according to Islamic Requirements. In view of the fact that WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, jointly with the League of the Muslim World, had issued, in 1986, the report of a Meeting on Islamic rules governing food of animal origin (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 5-7 December 1985), the Secretariat felt that no further action was really required by the CAC.

31. In this context, the representative of the Region for the South-West Pacific, Mr. B.A. Schick, while agreeing with the view of the Secretariat, informed the Committee that Australia followed a Code of Practice for slaughtering animals according to Islamic rules, developed jointly by Australia and several Muslim countries, the requirements of which were not fully identical with those contained in the above Jeddah Meeting report. The Committee took note of this information but concurred with the Secretariat proposal of not taking further action in this matter.

CONSIDERATION OF NEED FOR A CODEX COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR COUNTRIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND POSSIBLY THE NORTH AFRICAN LITTORAL (Agenda Item 10)

32. The secretariat presented an oral report of activities undertaken since the 33rd meeting of the Executive Committee, when this matter was last discussed. It was noted that members of the secretariat had visited several countries in the region and had discussed the proposal with government officials, and that the response was generally positive. It was also noted that when the matter was raised at the Eighth Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles too few countries from that area were in attendance to discuss the proposal adequately.

33. The Executive Committee was informed that no financial arrangements for holding such a Committee had been made for the forthcoming biennium since further discussions of the matter would take place at the Sixth Session of the Coordinating Committee for Asia in January 1988. Hosting of the present Committee in the future by one of the countries of Western Asia could be considered as one possibility, in addition to considering establishing a new Coordinating Committee.

34. The Executive Committee noted the contacts that had been made and agreed to await any further recommendations which might arise from the Sixth Session of the Codex Regional Coordinating Committee for Asia. The Executive Committee authorized the Secretariat to take action as required.

FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE WORK OF THE JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
(Agenda Item 11)

35. In considering this matter the Executive Committee recalled its previous recommendations given in paragraph 124, ALINORM 87/3, especially as regards the need to give high priority to work on environmental contaminants through the establishment of a separate Codex Committee.
36. As regards the establishment of a Codex Committee on Contaminants, the Executive Committee noted the conclusion of the Codex Committees on General Principles and on Food Additives that environmental contaminants (including mycotoxins and radionuclides) should be considered by the Codex Committee on Food Additives. The proposal at the last session of the CCFA that the Committee's name be changed to include reference to contaminants was also noted.
37. The Executive Committee considered that the establishment of a new Codex Committee was a matter for discussion by all countries attending the Commission's session, in the light of the views expressed by the Codex Committees on Food Additives and General Principles. The Executive Committee reconfirmed its previous view that action on environmental contaminants was a matter of high priority.
38. The Executive Committee also noted the various other recommendations for future work of the Codex Committees on Food Additives and General Principles, but considered that these should be considered by the Commission under the appropriate items on the agenda.
39. It was noted that it was for lack of time for the receipt of comments that the Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean had not been in a position, at its last Session, to discuss future work as requested by the Codex Committee on General Principles. The question had been referred to the 6th Session of that Coordinating Committee.
40. The Executive Committee also noted that the Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean had considered improving the working mechanisms of the Commission through the development of a description of the programme of work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. This would facilitate participation in the work of the Commission by indicating details of ongoing activities. The Secretariat agreed to prepare a summary of the Commission's work following each session of the Commission.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE OF CODEX SESSIONS FOR 1988/89 (Agenda Item 12)

41. The Executive Committee had before it ALINORM 87/25 containing the Provisional Timetable of Codex Sessions for 1988/89. It was noted that the timetable had been prepared in detail for 1988, while the date and place of several of the sessions planned for 1989 had yet to be confirmed.
42. The Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean Ing. R. Darias Rodés drew attention to the recent, very successful, meeting of the Codex Committee on Vegetable Proteins which was hosted by Canada but held in

Havana. He asked the secretariat to stimulate countries who hosted the Codex Committees to consider holding more of them in developing countries. This view was supported by other members of the Committee including the Representative of Africa, Mr. M.B. Mboundja. The Representative of the South-West Pacific, Mr. B.A. Schick drew attention to the need to group together meetings with similar subject matter as this facilitated travel arrangements for delegations from this distant Region.

43. The Executive Committee noted the Provisional Timetable and expressed the view that developing countries with an interest in having meetings of Codex Committees held in their country should contact the hosting countries as a first step in making such arrangements.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE REPORTS OF CODEX COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 13)

Establishment of Maximum Levels for Mercury in Fish

44. The Executive Committee had before it document CX/EXEC/87/34/5 - Part I containing extracts from the reports of the 19th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) and the 17th Session of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP) dealing with the subject.

45. The Committee noted that CCFA agreed to undertake the work on establishing levels of mercury in fish at its 17th Session since in its view groups of populations with a high proportion of fish in their diet might be at risk. The CCFA recommended guideline levels for mercury in fish and fish products at its 19th Session (0.5 mg/kg for all fish, except for predatory fish such as shark, swordfish, tuna and pike for which the levels should be 1 mg/kg) and agreed to submit them to governments for comments at Step 3 if the Commission agreed.

46. The CCFFP however believed that there was a potential adverse impact of setting limits for mercury in fish and shell fish and expressed the view that CCFFP should be involved if any limits for mercury were proposed for fish.

47. Having recognized that guideline levels are not mandatory in character and may not affect trade, the Executive Committee recommended to the Commission that the guideline levels for mercury in fish be sent to governments for comments at Step 3, unless the Chairman of CCFFP could provide justification that would need delay for action.

Labelling of Pesticide Residues in Exported Foods

48. The Executive Committee had before it a paper (CX/EXEC 87/34/5 - Part II) on the question of providing information to importing countries on pesticide residues likely to be present in exported foods in order to facilitate their determination and thereby ensuring the acceptability of the food. The question had been raised by the delegation of India at the 16th Session of the Commission. The Commission had decided to refer the matter to the Codex Committees on Pesticide Residues and Food Labelling (paras. 252-254, ALINORM 85/47).

49. The Executive Committee noted that the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) had considered the question in detail and had made a number of practical recommendations, although it had considered that providing information on pesticides would meet with practical difficulties (paras. 10-15, ALINORM 87/24). The Codex Committee on Food Labelling had supported the proposals of the CCPR (paras 26-28, ALINORM 87/22). At the 5th Session of the Coordinating Committee for Asia the delegation of India had indicated that India's proposal referred only to shipping documents and did not involve labelling of foods offered directly to the consumer (para 186, ALINORM 87/15).

50. The Executive Committee considered the suggestions of the Secretariat based on the conclusions of the above Codex Committees as follows:

"a) Wherever possible, exporters of food products, especially of staple foods such as cereals, should endeavour to provide information on pesticides used in post-harvest treatments (e.g. during storage and shipment);

b) Exporters of food should, in conformity with the Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food, ensure that exported foods are in conformity with the appropriate legal limits for pesticide residues in the importing country;

c) The suggestion to consider the Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides in relation to the problem raised by India (i.e. information on pesticides and their residues in shipping documents of exported foods) should be referred to the FAO Group of Experts on Pesticide Registration Requirements."

51. In discussing the suggestions of the Secretariat, the Executive Committee noted that they would apply equally to developing countries exporting food commodities and could cause difficulties in trade for these countries. It therefore recommended that Coordinating Committees should be asked to consider the question further, in the light of the proposals of the Secretariat from the point of view of both importers and exporters of food. The Commission should be advised of further developments.

OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 14)

Proposal to Establish a Codex Committee on Fresh Tropical Fruits and Vegetables

52. The Executive Committee was informed of the outcome of an Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Consultation to consider the need for International Standards for Tropical Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, held in Mexico City, 19 - 24 February 1987. The report of this meeting has been issued as ALINORM 87/35. It was noted that the meeting had recommended the establishment of a new Codex Committee on Fresh Tropical Fruits and Vegetables. To ensure that there would be no duplication of the work of other international organizations e.g. the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and OECD, "tropical" fresh fruits and vegetables had been carefully defined. Also, arrangements had been proposed so that the work of the Committee

would be coordinated with that of the other international organizations in so far as presentation of the standards was concerned.

53. The Coordinator for Europe, Mr. P. Rossier, noted that there was some hesitation in the Region of Europe concerning the creation of a new Committee due to existing UN/ECE work and because most previous Codex work had related mainly to packaged foods. He noted that there might be a possibility of duplication of work and suggested that a Joint Codex/ECE Committee might be a preferable approach.

54. The Executive Committee noted these concerns and recommended that the Commission approve the establishment of the new proposed Committee and instruct the Committee to avoid duplication of work with UN/ECE and OECD.

Follow-up Action on the Development of Guidelines for the Prevention of Transmission of Animal Diseases through Meat Products

55. The Executive Committee was informed that the Animal Health Service of the Animal Production and Health Division, FAO had made a provision for convening an Expert Consultation in Rome on "Prevention of Trade Diseases through Meat" in November 1988.

56. The objective of the Consultation would be to review the broad field of the transmission and prevention of animal diseases and would give priority to the development of Guidelines for transmission of four common animal diseases, Foot and Mouth Disease, African Swine Fever, Rinderpest and Newcastle Disease.

57. The European Commission for the Control of Foot and Mouth Disease had already indicated its interest in the participation of the Expert Consultation.

58. The holding of the Expert Consultation was subject to the approval of the FAO Conference. Once the Consultation was approved, the Animal Health Service would contact the Chairman and the Secretariat of the CCPMPP.

59. The Executive Committee noted with satisfaction the developments and agreed that these should be brought to the attention of the Commission.

Endorsement of Labelling Provisions in Codex Standards

60. The Representative of the Region of North America, Dr. Norman Tape, introduced on behalf of Canada as Host Country and Chairman of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL) a Conference Room Document on the Format and Endorsement of Labelling Provisions in Codex Standards (CX/EXEC/87/34/7).

61. He informed the Committee that in recent sessions of CCFL an increasing number of standards was submitted to that Committee for endorsement of the labelling sections. The present procedure of examining the full text of these provisions was very time-consuming and involved an exchange of views between the Secretariat and a limited number of delegations. The amendments decided on by the Committee were often editorial in nature.

62. Dr. Tape expressed the view that other Committees with endorsement functions might experience similar difficulties. He suggested as a possible solution to this problem the establishment of a specific Working Group of the Committee on General Principles which could consider more efficient procedures and report back to the next session of this Committee.

63. Mr. Pierre Rossier, the Coordinator for Europe, pointed out that the temporary increase of requests for endorsements was due to the revision of labelling sections in existing Codex Standards following the adoption of the revised General Labelling Standard. Examination of the detailed labelling provisions which represented an important part of the standards was, by its nature, a time-consuming task.

64. The Committee noted the views set out in the paper and concluded that the concern expressed by Canada should be brought to the attention of the Commission. It recommended to the Commission that the Secretariat should also be requested to examine the problem. The Committee agreed that a paper containing proposals for possible revision of the endorsement procedure from both the national and the Codex Secretariats should be prepared for its next session.

65. The Executive Committee and the Regional Coordinators expressed their sincere appreciation to the Chairman, Mr. E. Kimbrell, for his strong personal contribution to the work of the Commission during his tenure of office as Chairman, and for his guidance in a period in which the Commission had decided to change the direction of its programme of work. The Executive Committee and the Regional Coordinators wished him well in his future career.

RESOLUTION OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

FORTIETH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

WHA40.20

Agenda item 32.2

15 May 1987

THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

The Fortieth World Health Assembly,

Having studied the first report by the Director-General on the Codex Alimentarius Commission¹ and the discussions during the seventy-ninth session of the Executive Board;

Recognizing the role of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme and the Codex Alimentarius Commission for the promotion of food safety and the facilitation of international trade;

Recognizing the essential role of sufficient and safe food for health promotion and disease prevention;

Aware of the benefits to all countries to be derived from the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission;

1. CALLS UPON Member States:

- (1) to participate actively, particularly their health sectors, in the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its committees;
- (2) to make all appropriate efforts to adopt Codex standards, and to fully utilize the recommendations of the Commission for the promotion of food safety and the international food trade;
- (3) to promote active collaboration on the part of both the public and private sectors and nongovernmental organizations in national Codex work;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to continue to collaborate with FAO in support of the Commission;
- (2) to maintain appropriate technical and financial support of the Commission;
- (3) to collaborate with Member States in strengthening their infrastructure for food safety in order to facilitate the implementation of Codex standards and recommendations;

3. RECOMMENDS the Codex Alimentarius Commission:

- (1) to give priority consideration to the work of the general subject committees and the regional coordinating committees, which are responsible for food safety and consumer information;
- (2) to encourage Member States to fully utilize and implement Codex standards and recommendations;
- (3) to invite Member States which have not yet joined the Commission to do so without delay.

Twelfth plenary meeting, 15 May 1987
A40/VR/12

¹ Document EB79/1987/REC/1, Annex 12.