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CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
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World Health
Organization

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CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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Communication from the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML)**(Report of activities relevant to Codex work)****Introduction**

The OIML, the International Organization of Legal Metrology, is an intergovernmental organization established by the OIML convention (Paris, 1955). The main objective of the OIML is to harmonize technical and metrological regulations for measuring instruments and measurements. To this end, the OIML develops and publishes Recommendations, which, under the terms of the WTO/TBT Agreement are considered international standards (model regulations).

In the past year, the OIML welcomed two new corresponding members: the Dominican Republic and the UEMOA (West African Economic and Monetary Union). The OIML currently has 57 full members and 58 corresponding members, representing 87 % of the world population and 97 % of world trade.

For further information about the OIML please see the information document [CAC/31 INF/12](#), submitted to the Thirty-first Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the OIML web site at: www.oiml.org.

Overlap in scope between OIML and Codex standards

The OIML has published two Recommendations relating to prepackaged products:

- OIML R 79:1997 *Labeling requirements for prepackaged products*, and
- OIML R 87:2004 *Quantity of product in prepackages*.

The scope of these Recommendations overlap with Codex texts on the requirements for (the control of) the quantity of product (content) in prepackages and the associated labeling of prepackages.

The OIML wishes to develop a constructive liaison with Codex Committees in order to identify and resolve any conflicting provisions and to align methods and procedures.

Current OIML activities relevant to Codex

OIML's Technical Committee 6 (*Prepackaged products*) currently has the following projects:

- the revision of OIML R 79,
- the revision of OIML R 87,
- test procedures for drained weight, drained washed weight and deglazed weight,
- a certification system for the quantity of product in prepackages.

The main issues in the discussions on the revision of OIML R 79 on the labelling of prepackages include the requirements for the Principle Display Panel for displaying the main product information, including the quantity statement, the legibility (height) of characters, the unit of measurement to be used for semi-solid and viscous products and misleading practices (deceptive packages).

A first Committee Draft (1CD) for the revision of OIML R 79 will be available for comment shortly¹.

Currently, the scope of OIML R 87 is limited to prepackages labeled in predetermined constant nominal quantities of weight, volume, linear measure, area, or count. The Recommendation also contains sampling plans and procedures for use by legal metrology officials in verifying the quantity of product in prepackages.

The following main items are under discussion:

- to include prepackages labeled with variable nominal quantities,
- the statistical requirements for the sampling plans,
- terminology and definitions, in particular concerning concepts around “drained weight”.

A first Committee Draft (1CD) for the revision of OIML R 87 is expected later this year.

OIML R 87 contains informative annexes with test procedures for the determination of drained weight, drained washed weight and deglazed weight for products packed in a liquid medium and glazed (frozen) products. These procedures are currently not internationally harmonized.

In view of the development of an OIML certification system for the quantity of product in prepackages, it is considered necessary to harmonize such test procedures. This work is undertaken by OIML TC 6 in cooperation with WELMEC WG 6².

The OIML is developing a certification system for the quantity of product (content) of prepackages, based on the requirements of OIML R 87 and OIML R 79. The objective of this certification system is to foster confidence in the declaration of the quantity of product on prepackages in order to facilitate trade, to protect the consumer and to reduce the resources required for controlling the quantity of product by authorities. The system will be voluntary for packers and is not intended to replace existing systems, nor to create legal obligations for enforcement of national legislation.

A second Committee Draft (2CD) for an OIML Basic Publication “*International system for the certification of prepackages as complying with requirements for the quantity of product and associated labeling*” will be available later this year.

Information

Further information on the activities of OIML TC 6 (Prepackages) may be obtained from the TC 6 web site at: <http://workgroups.oiml.org/tcsc/tc-6>.

1 OIML Committee Drafts are available for download from the OIML web site at:

<http://www.oiml.org/download/cds.html>

2 WELMEC (European Cooperation in Legal Metrology), Working Group 6 “Prepackages” (www.welmec.org)

OIML Recommendations are available free of charge at: <http://www.oiml.org/publications/> .

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For general information about the OIML, please visit: www.oiml.org .