



Agenda item 9

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

Twenty-first Session

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Codex works concerning the region

(prepared by Cameroon)

1. After consulting the country delegates, the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) has, with the support of the Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources of the African Union (AU/IBAR), identified approximately twelve Codex committees whose works concern African countries.
2. These are:
 - Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods, (CCCF)
 - Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)
 - Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP)
 - Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV)
 - Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH)
 - Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS)
 - Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL)
 - Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO)
 - Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)
 - Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR)
 - Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF)
 - Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH)
3. In addition to these twelve committees, there are the works of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the works of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa.
4. Africa's interest in these works arises from the constant concern among African governments with protecting consumer interests and health and making food exports safe as regards the quality requirements imposed by trading partners in their markets.
5. The works of the above committees concern matters relating to foods produced or distributed on African soil.
6. The participation of African countries in these committees has been quite outstanding over the last ten years, owing not only to the efforts of the governments themselves but also to the support of the Trust Fund, for the Codex and the AU/IBAR.
7. The CCAFRICA coordinating committee has placed special emphasis on improving the participation of African countries in works that affect the continent. Cooperation with the US Codex office and the AU/IBAR has greatly contributed to preparing African delegates for Codex works.
8. The coordinating committee has been committed for some time to participating in all works concerning Africa, by holding consultation meetings with African delegates. The aim of these meetings is to align national positions on pertinent matters and to develop strategies for presenting countries' positions.

9. All African countries that are CCAFRICA members show an interest in the works of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa as regards matters relating to food safety and regional standards for Africa. In this respect, African countries would like these to apply to the majority of foodstuffs produced on African soil and being traded on a sub-regional, regional and international scale. This would facilitate their widespread distribution across all markets the world over.
10. Despite their great interest in the above works, African countries have unfortunately participated very little in either the electronic or physical activities of Codex working groups. The same applies to their participation in the works of expert bodies of the Codex, notably the JMPR, JECFA and JEMRA.
11. It should be borne in mind, in the latter case, that the need to produce scientific opinions and data is a limiting factor for African countries whose research capability is still very limited.
12. It is nevertheless surprising that these countries have been involved so little in the working groups, even those which are CCAFRICA members.
13. The coordinating committee would like to start a discussion on this subject to find ways and means of tackling this challenge.