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# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



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## Agenda Item 2

### JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR ASIA

*Thirteenth Session, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 17-20 September 2002*

### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 24<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND 49<sup>TH</sup> AND 50<sup>TH</sup> SESSIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### -ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBER COUNTRIES-

The following issues are raised by India, China as matters to be discussed in the 13<sup>th</sup> session of Coordinating Committee.

## INDIA

### 1. Issue of Traceability

The issue of traceability was discussed in the meeting of CCFICS and a working group was constituted which is scheduled to meet in August, 2002 at Geneva. This issue was also discussed in the CCGP meeting and the French proposal was generally opposed. It was decided at the CCGP that the Codex Secretariat would circulate the draft document after the Regional Committees would give their draft to the General Secretariat. This issue is, therefore, necessary to be discussed at the Regional Coordination Committee meeting.

### 2. Working principles of Risk Analysis

(a) During the CCGP meeting, there was a major discussion as to whether risk analysis should refer only to protection of consumer health or also give due regard to fair trade practices. The developing countries have been arguing in favour of fair trade practices but for the first time, all Latin American countries including Brazil were in favour of removing the reference to fair trade. This issue needs to be considered in detail.

(b) How the principles of risk analysis especially concerning developing countries will be put into practice.

### 3. Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food

The main issue that we need to discuss is whether the quality of food exported by a country could be lower than the quality of such food applicable under the national standards of the exporting country if it met the quality requirements of the importing country. Other issues are treatment of export rejects and the need for some shelf life for imports.

### 4. Involvement of Inter-Governmental Organisation in Codex Work

This is one agenda which the EU has been keen to push for speeding up of the Codex Working. The benefits that have been advocated are that the Codex would take advantage of the work already done and the expertise otherwise not available to the Codex would be readily available. The developing countries did not support the involvement of inter governmental organisations for various reasons. A decision needs to be taken on this.

### 5. Capacity Building in Developing Countries

Capacity building in developing countries has been discussed in CCGP as well as in other Codex Committee meetings. It is felt that due to inadequate technical expertise and resource constraint, developing countries

are unable to participate in the codex working. Therefore, it is imperative that technical assistance in the form of advice, credits, donation or grant to build adequate capacity in the developing countries to address the issue of sanitary and phyto-sanitary protection be extended from developed countries/Multilateral organisations like WHO/FAO. This issue needs to be debated in the Regional Meeting to take a position in this regard in reference to Article 9 of the SPS agreement under WTO.

#### **6. Draft Code of Hygienic Practices for Primary Production and Packing of Fruits and Vegetables**

In the CCFH meeting held in October, 2001, it was proposed under Clause – 3.2.3 (Personnel Health, Hygiene and Sanitary facilities), that the reference to contamination through indirect means should be deleted because the probability of contamination was only from persons who came in direct contact with the produce during or after harvesting. However, this was not agreed to. This can be a matter of concern for the developing countries where farming practices are still not on modern lines and if this is agreed to, it may result in non-tariff barriers in the near future.

#### **7. Draft Guidelines on the application of HACCP in SLDBs**

The developed countries were not in favour of inclusion of Annex-2 in the HACCP document as it stated various obstacles faced by small and less developed businesses. This was generally opposed by various developing countries and it was suggested that there should be adequate flexibility in the proposed text to address the concern of SLDBs in developing countries.

#### **8. Draft Guidelines on the Judgement of Equivalence of Sanitary Measures Associated with Food Inspection and Certification System**

There has been a clear divergence of views on this issue ever since this subject has been discussed in the CCFICS meetings. A drafting group had also been formulated with most of the members from the developed world. The draft guidelines have not yet been received from the drafting group and it may be difficult for the developing countries to send their comments by 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2002. This document needs to be considered in detail before comments can be sent. It is felt that this issue may be discussed at the Regional Coordination meeting.

#### **9. Issue of Aflatoxin levels in Peanuts, Milk etc**

Implementation of the Codex decision on total aflatoxin levels in peanuts by the European Union needs to be emphasized.

#### **10. Draft Code of Hygienic Practices for Milk and Milk Products**

The draft code has been prepared on the presumption that every where in the world milk is produced in big farms having large herds of animals where machine milching and other similar advanced technology can be applied. These conditions do not prevail in developing countries where an average farmer has about 1-3 animals and milching is done by hand. A position would need to be taken on this issue.

#### **11. Anomalies in Governance Structures and Decision-Making Processes in Codex and Other Food Standard Work**

There appear to be some anomalies in the working process of CAC and its subsidiary committees, e.g., the maximum limits for residues of pesticides and veterinary drugs are recommended by JMPR and JECFA respectively (refer CAC Procedural Manual 11<sup>th</sup> edition, page 21, part 2, Step 2). On the other hand, CCFAC is authorized to decide the MRLs for other chemical contaminants, including heavy metals. India is of the view that JECFA, the body of impartial experts, should only be responsible for fixing of Maximum Levels for the other chemical contaminants including heavy metals. Contrary to this, by allowing CCFAC to decide the MRLs for other chemical contaminants, the scientific principles often take a back seat and extraneous considerations result in decisions that are not only inconsistent but also harmful to the interest of international trade and developing nations. This is an important issue and needs to be taken up at CAC and CCFAC meetings.

#### **12. Codex FAO/WHO Evaluation**

## **CHINA**

### **1. Soybean products in food category system (FCS) of GSFA**

As discussed at the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the CCFAC, soybean products were proposed to be classified separately in various food categories rather than being covered in 6.8 (CX/FAC 02/6 Part II para 2). However, China and other Asian countries hold the view that since soybean products is an important protein source in oriental diet and has become a standardized food category in many countries, it is inappropriate to assigned soybean products separately in different categories in FCS. In the effort to justify the original proposed category 6.8 of soybean products (Alinorm 01/12A para 60), it is necessary to collect more information on the name of soy bean products, method of processing and the food additives used in the region of Asia. In this case, it is proposed to include this issue in the agenda of CCAsia session, and also request all the delegates to prepare the above mentioned information and submit to Malaysia before the CCAsia session in September.

### **2. Maximum level for Chloropropanols in acid-VP**

During the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the CCFAC, several Asian delegations, led by Thailand, were in favor of setting maximum levels for chloropropanols only in non-naturally fermented soy- sauce and hydrolyzed vegetable protein. This opinion should be reemphasized in the next CCFAC, in order to have an unanimous decision on ML setting of chloropropanols, i.e. only for condiments using HVP as major ingredients and not for traditional fermented soy sauce. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss this issue in the CCAsia session