

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD  
HEALTH  
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**Agenda Item 2**

**CX/CF 08/2/2  
March 2008**

**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME  
CODEX COMMITTEE ON CONTAMINANTS IN FOODS  
Second Session**

**The Hague, the Netherlands, 31 March - 4 April 2008**

**MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS  
COMMISSION AND/OR OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES/TASK FORCES**

**A. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 30<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS  
COMMISSION AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Matters for action**

**Proposed Amendments to the “Relations between Commodity Committees and General Committees”  
in the Procedural Manual<sup>1</sup>**

1. The Commission, at its 30<sup>th</sup> Session (July 2007), recalled that the proposed changes to the “Relations between Commodity Committees and General Committees” applied only to additives and that, if they were adopted, the current provisions applicable to contaminants would be lost, and noted that the Executive Committee had recommended to defer the adoption of the amendment proposed, with the understanding that the Secretariat would review the current provisions and prepare a revised proposed amendment addressing both additives and contaminants.
2. Some delegations expressed the view that it would be preferable to adopt the proposed text at the present session as it was necessary in order to clarify the relations between Commodity Committees and the Committee on Food Additives, although it would result in the deletion of the provisions applicable to contaminants in the immediate future. It was however recognised that similar provision for contaminants should be developed for inclusion in the Relations between Commodity Committees and General Committees. The Commission therefore adopted the provisions applicable to additives as proposed, and recommended that the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF) develop necessary provisions for contaminants, on the basis of a draft to be prepared by the Secretariat.
3. The Codex Secretariat, following the above recommendation by the Commission, prepared a draft proposed texts of provisions for contaminants in the “Relations between Commodity Committees and General Committees”, as presented in ANNEX I to this document.
4. The CCCF is invited to consider the proposal.

<sup>1</sup> ALINORM 07/30/REP paras 36-37

**Strategic Plan 2008-2013 of the Codex Alimentarius Commission<sup>2</sup> (see ALINORM 07/30/REP paras 131-138 and Appendix IX)**

5. The Commission adopted the Strategic Plan 2008-2013 of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. In view of this, the CCCF should draw attention to the following Activities listed in Part 2 and relevant Output/Measurable Indicators listed in Part 3 of the Strategic Plan since the Committee has been identified as one of the responsible parties to implement those Activities.
- Goal 1: Activity 1.1: Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food safety
  - Goal 2: Activities 2.2: Review risk analysis principles developed by relevant Codex Committees; 2.3 Enhance communication among relevant Codex subsidiary bodies and the FAO/WHO scientific expert bodies; 2.5: Encourage countries to channel their requests for scientific advice to FAO/WHO through the CAC
  - Goal 3: Activity 3.3: Develop committee-specific decision making and priority setting criteria
  - Goal 4: Activity 4.1: Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies
  - Goal 5: Activities 5.5: Enhance participation of non-governmental organizations at international, regional and national levels; and 5.6: Enhance communication about Codex work at international and national levels

**Review of Codex Committee Structure and Mandates of Codex Committees and Task Forces<sup>3</sup>**

6. The Commission considered 11 Proposals as contained in Circular Letter CL 2006/29-CAC. Due to time constraints, the Commission only made decisions regarding Proposal 1 (numbers of meetings), Proposal 2 (number of subsidiary bodies), Proposal 3 (interval of meetings), Proposal 4 (duration of meetings) and Proposal 8 (conversion of regional standards into world-wide standards) and agreed to request the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee for further consideration of the remaining six Proposals<sup>4</sup>.
7. The CCCF should draw attention to the Proposal 3 (interval of meetings) and Proposal 4 (duration of meetings). With regard to Proposal 3, as agreed by the Commission, the CCCF is invited to consider adopting a longer interval with the understanding that a structured, effective inter-session working mechanism should then be put in place in accordance with the Guidelines on Physical Working Groups and on Electronic Working Groups.
8. With respect to Proposal 4 (duration of meetings), the CCCF should note that the duration of a Codex session should be kept within seven days, including the pre-session meetings of working groups, if any, in order to keep its proceedings well focused, ensure transparency, and facilitate effective participation of the members, with the understanding that certain margin of flexibility should be allowed, depending on the workload of each subsidiary bodies.

**Proposed Draft Standard for Bitter Cassava<sup>5</sup>**

9. The Commission concurred with the recommendation of the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee<sup>6</sup> to adopt the Proposed Draft Standard for Bitter Cassava, as elaborated by the Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables<sup>7</sup>, at Step 5 and that, as a separate issue, the Committee on Contaminants in Foods should consider the safety levels of hydrogen cyanide proposed in the Standard, with a view to a re-evaluation of cyanogenic glycosides by JECFA.

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<sup>2</sup> ALINORM 07/30/REP paras 131-138 and Appendix IX

<sup>3</sup> ALINORM 07/30/REP paras 146-161)

<sup>4</sup> ALINORM 07/30/REP paras 146-161.

<sup>5</sup> ALINORM 07/30/ REP para.92

<sup>6</sup> ALINORM 07/30/3 para.30

<sup>7</sup> ALINORM 07/30/35 paras 73-82 and Appendix VI

10. The proposed levels of hydrogen cyanide are indicated in footnote 2 of the Draft Standard for Bitter Cassava, which is reproduced as follows *in italic*:

*[Bitter varieties of cassava are those that contain more than 50 mg/kg but less than 200 mg/kg hydrogen cyanide (fresh weight basis). In any case, cassava must be peeled and fully cooked before being consumed.]*

11. The levels of hydrogen cyanide had been established to define bitter cassava, as compared to sweet cassava, that the maximum level was not considered as a contaminant level and that issues related to the safety of cassava, which may need to be considered by JECFA, should be considered separately.

## **Matters for information**

### **Amendments to the Procedural Manual**

12. The Commission adopted the following three proposed amendments and one definition and included them in the Procedural Manual<sup>8</sup>:

- Proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods<sup>9</sup>;
- Proposed amendments to the “Risk Analysis Principles Applied by the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants”<sup>10</sup>;
- Proposed amendments to the “CCFAC Policy for Exposure Assessment of Contaminants and Toxins in Foods or Food Groups”<sup>11</sup>; and
- Definition for “Codex Maximum Level for a Contaminant in Food or Feed Commodity” for inclusion in Section I in the Procedural Manual<sup>12</sup>.

### **Approval of new work for the elaboration of new standards and related texts**<sup>13</sup>

13. The Commission agreed to start new work to develop a “Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Dried Figs”.

### **Adoption of the Draft Standards and Related Texts at Step 8 or Step 5/8**<sup>14</sup>

14. The Commission adopted the following maximum levels and other texts at Step 8 or Step 5/8:
- Draft Maximum Levels for Tin in Canned Foods (other than beverages) and in Canned Beverages at Step 8 and agreed to include them in Schedule I of the General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Foods (GSCTF); and
  - Proposed Draft Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Ochratoxin A in Wine (N05-2006) at Step 5/8.

### **Adoption of the Draft Standards and Related Texts at Step 5**<sup>15</sup>

15. The Commission adopted the following texts at Step 5 and advanced them to Step 6:
- Proposed Draft Maximum Levels for 3-MCPD in Liquid Condiments containing Acid-Hydrolyzed Vegetable Proteins (excluding Naturally Fermented Soy Sauce) (N08-2004); and
  - Proposed Draft Code of Practice for the Reduction of 3-Monochloropropane-1,2-diol (3-MCPD) during the Production of Acid-Hydrolyzed Vegetable Protein (Acid-HVPs) and Products that Contain Acid- HVPs (N09-2005)

<sup>8</sup> ALINORM 07/30/REP para. 35 and Appendix III

<sup>9</sup> ALINORM 07/30/41 para. 15 and Appendix II

<sup>10</sup> ALINORM 07/30/41 para. 18 and Appendix III

<sup>11</sup> ALINORM 07/30/41 para. 18 and Appendix IV

<sup>12</sup> ALINORM 07/30/41 para. 38 and Appendix V

<sup>13</sup> ALINORM 07/30/REP para. 96 and Appendix VII. ALINORM 07/30/41 paras 120 – 121 and Appendix XIII

<sup>14</sup> ALINORM 07/30/REP paras 41-43 and Appendix IV, ALINORM 07/30/41 para. 82 and Appendix IX, ALINORM 07/30/41 para.77 and Appendix VIII

<sup>15</sup> ALINORM 07/30/REP para. 80 and Appendix V, ALINORM 07/30/41 para. 88 and Appendix X, ALINORM 07/30/41 para.93 and Appendix XI

## **Adoption of the proposed amendment to Schedule I of the General Standards for Contaminants and Toxins in Foods<sup>16</sup>**

16. The Commission adopted the following amendments to Schedule I: i) deletion of references 'CS 248-2005' and their replacement by the adoption year '2005'; ii) reorganization of contaminants into the following four categories: metals, mycotoxins, other chemicals and radionuclides, as proposed by the Committee.

## **Revocation of the standards and related texts<sup>17</sup>**

17. The Commission approved the revocation of the CODEX STAN 248-2005 concerning the maximum levels for cadmium in Brassica vegetables; bulb vegetables; fruiting vegetables, cucurbits; fruiting vegetables, other than cucurbits; leafy vegetables; potato; root and tuber vegetables; stalk and stem vegetables; and wheat.

## **Guideline levels for Methylmercury in Fish<sup>18</sup>**

18. The Commission recalled that its 29<sup>th</sup> Session<sup>19</sup> had requested FAO and WHO for scientific advice on the health risks associated with methylmercury and dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in fish and the health benefits of fish consumption. The Representative of FAO, speaking on behalf of FAO and WHO, informed the Commission that a step-wise preparatory process was being taken, given the complex nature of the issue and the need for innovative principles and methodology. The Representative indicated that, possibly at a first stage, FAO and WHO would consider conducting qualitative risk-benefit assessment of fish consumption, specifically addressing issues related to the impact of methylmercury exposure on women of child-bearing age and at a later stage, conducting quantitative assessment including the intake of dioxin and dioxin-like PCBs, taking into account consumption of fatty fish, considered as a significant source of beneficial fatty acids.

## **Elaboration of new standards and related texts**

19. The Commission noted that project documents submitted to the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee contained information that, while respecting the overall format as set out in the Procedural Manual, varied significantly in terms of quantity and quality, and therefore, endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to encourage Codex committees, task forces and Codex Members to prepare future project documents according to the format set out in the current revision of the Procedural Manual and provide sufficiently detailed, relevant information with particular regard to the evidence-based assessment against each of all the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities<sup>20</sup>.

## **B. MATTERS ARISING FROM OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES**

### **Matters for action**

#### **Proposed amendment to the Codex Standard for Natural Mineral Waters (CODEX STAN 108-1981) (referred by the 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Natural Mineral Waters)<sup>21</sup>**

20. The Committee on Natural Mineral Waters, at its eighth Session, agreed to forward the proposed draft amendments to the Codex Standard for Natural Mineral Waters for final adoption by the Commission at Step5/8 while requesting the CCCF to endorse them.

21. The CCCF is invited to consider and endorse the proposed draft amendments, as appropriate, which are reproduced in ANNEX II to this document.

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<sup>16</sup> ALINORM 07/30/REP para. 191, ALINORM 07/30/41 para. 46

<sup>17</sup> ALINORM 07/30/REP para. 95 and Appendix VI, ALINORM 07/30/41 para.46

<sup>18</sup> ALINORM 07/30/REP para. 192

<sup>19</sup> ALINORM 06/29/41 para.195

<sup>20</sup> ALINORM 07/30/3, para. 46

<sup>21</sup> ALINORM 08/31/20 para. 81 and Appendix II

**Draft Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve molluscus (elaborated by the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products)<sup>22</sup>**

22. The Committee on Fish and Fishery Products, at its 29<sup>th</sup> Session, agreed to forward the Draft Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscus for final adoption by the Commission at Step 8.
23. The CCCF is invited to consider and endorse the section on Contaminant of the Draft Standard, which is reproduced in ANNEX III to this document.

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<sup>22</sup> ALINORM 08/31/18 paras 77-81 and Appendix III

**Proposed draft provisions applied to contaminants in the  
“Relations between commodity committees and general committees”  
(Prepared by the Codex Secretariat)**

**Contaminants**

Commodity committees shall examine the General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Foods with a view toward incorporating a reference to the General Standard.

Should the commodity committee consider that the above general reference to the General Standard does not serve its purpose, a proposal should be prepared and forwarded to the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods for consideration, revision and inclusion of contaminant provisions concerned in the General Standard. When doing so, the commodity committee shall provide a justification why a general reference to the General Standards would not be appropriate.

This proposal should be referred to the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods, preferably in prior to the advancement of the draft commodity standards concerned to Step 5 of the Procedure for Elaboration of Codex Standards, though such referral should not be allowed to delay the progress of the Standard to the subsequent Steps of the Procedure.

**Proposed Draft Amendment to Sections 3.2 and 6.3.2 of the Codex Standard for Natural Mineral Waters (CODEX STAN 108 – 1981)**

**3.2 Health-Related Limits for Certain Substances**

Natural mineral water in its packaged state shall contain not more than the following amounts of the substances indicated hereunder:

<b>3.2.1</b>	Antimony	0.005 mg/l
<b>3.2.2</b>	Arsenic	0.01 mg/l, calculated as total As
<b>3.2.3</b>	Barium	0.7 mg/l <sup>23</sup>
<b>3.2.4</b>	Borate	5 mg/l, calculated as B
<b>3.2.5</b>	Cadmium	0.003 mg/l
<b>3.2.6</b>	Chromium	0.05 mg/l, calculated as total Cr
<b>3.2.7</b>	Copper	1 mg/l
<b>3.2.8</b>	Cyanide	0.07 mg/l
<b>3.2.9</b>	Fluoride	See section 6.3.2
<b>3.2.10</b>	Lead	0.01 mg/l
<b>3.2.11</b>	Manganese	0.4 mg/l
<b>3.2.12</b>	Mercury	0.001 mg/l
<b>3.2.13</b>	Nickel	0.02 mg/l
<b>3.2.14</b>	Nitrate	50 mg/l, calculated as nitrate
<b>3.2.15</b>	Nitrite	0.1 mg/l as nitrite
<b>3.2.16</b>	Selenium	0.01 mg/l

The following substances shall be below the limit of quantification<sup>24</sup> when tested, in accordance with the methods prescribed in Section 7:

- 3.2.17** *Surface active agents*<sup>25</sup>
- 3.2.18** *Pesticides and PCBs*<sup>25</sup>
- 3.2.19** *Mineral oil*<sup>25</sup>
- 3.2.20** *Polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons*<sup>25</sup>

**6.3 Additional Labelling Requirements**

**6.3.2**

If the product contains more than 1 mg/l of fluoride, the following term shall appear on the label as part of, or in close proximity to, the name of the product or in an otherwise prominent position: "*contains fluoride*". In addition, the following sentence should be included on the label: "*The product is not suitable for infants and children under the age of seven years*" where the product contains more than 1.5 mg/l fluorides.

<sup>23</sup> Pending further review of new scientific evidence by an appropriate scientific body to be determined by FAO/WHO.

<sup>24</sup> As stated in the relevant ISO methods.

<sup>25</sup> Temporarily endorsed pending elaboration of appropriate method(s) of analysis.

**DRAFT STANDARD FOR LIVE AND RAW BIVALVE MOLLUSCS****I-5. CONTAMINANTS**

**I-5.1** The products covered by this Standard shall comply with the Maximum Levels of the Codex General Standard for Contamination and Toxins in Foods (CODEX/STAN 193-1995) and the maximum residue limits for pesticides and veterinary drugs established by the CAC.

**I-5.2** The following provisions apply to the edible parts of live bivalve mollusc (the whole part or any part intended to be eaten separately)

Name of biotoxin groups	Maximum level /kg of mollusc flesh
Saxitoxin (STX) group	≤0.8 milligrams (2HCL) of saxitoxin equivalent
Okadaic acid (OA) group	≤0.16 milligrams of okadaic equivalent
Domoic acid (DA) group	≤20 milligrams domoic acid
Brevetoxin (BTX) group	≤200 mouse units or equivalent
Azaspiracid (AZP) group	≤0.16 milligrams