



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON CONTAMINANTS IN FOODS

Seventh Session

Moscow, Russian Federation, 8 – 12 April 2013

PROPOSED DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE TO REDUCE THE PRESENCE OF HYDROCYANIC ACID IN CASSAVA AND CASSAVA PRODUCTS

Comments at Step 3 submitted by Brazil, Costa Rica, European Union, Ghana, India, Kenya, Russian Federation and African Union

BRAZIL

Brazil suggests deleting the word sweet on paragraph 18. The sentence should refer to both sweet and bitter cassava. While sweet cassava is to be consumed after home processing, such as cooking and/fryin, bitter cassava is used by the industry to produce cassava flour and cassava starch, a process that reduces significantly the cyanide levels.

COSTA RICA

Costa Rica welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on document CX/CF13/7/11 Proposed Draft Code of Practice to reduce the exposure to Hydrocyanic Acid in cassava products.

Comment:

Costa Rica does not have comments on the document. We support the development of a code of practice that would lead to a reduction in exposure to HCA as a good risk management measure in cassava products.

EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union and its Member States (EUMS) welcome and appreciate the good work performed by the electronic Working Group under the lead of Australia, co-chaired by Nigeria on the development of a draft Code of Practice to reduce the presence of hydrocyanic acid in cassava and cassava products, whereby the work on the Code was under the lead of Nigeria.

The EUMS have no comments and would agree to forward the proposed draft Code of Practice to reduce the presence of hydrocyanic acid in cassava and cassava products to the 36th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for adoption at Step 5/8 (with omission of Steps 6 and 7), if this would be found appropriate.

GHANA

Comment: Ghana supports the Draft Code of Practice to reduce the presence of hydrocyanic acid in cassava and cassava products.

Rationale: The draft Code of Practice seeks to provide member countries especially developing countries with guidance on how to produce cassava and cassava products with safe concentrations of residual cyanogenic compounds. It has also outlined Good Agricultural Practices and Good Manufacturing Practices.

INDIA

General Comment

India supports the proposed draft code of practice to reduce the presence of Hydrocyanic Acid in Cassava and Cassava Products.

Specific Comments

The text of sub-heading (b) under paragraph 15 under heading "DRIED CASSAVA CHIPS" should be modified as follows:

Chipping/slicing: The objective of chipping is to expose the maximum surface of the cassava roots and encourage rapid drying. Best drying in terms of quickness and quality of the end product is achieved when the peeled cassava is thinly sliced - less than 10 mm thick. **In the case of bitter varieties with high cyanide content, thicker chips (10-15 mm size) should be dried to enable slow drying, facilitating more time for the linamarase to act on linamarin, the complex cyanoglucoside of cassava and release free hydrocyanic acid which could easily escape to the air at temperatures above 28 °C.**

Rationale: *This way of slicing will help in reducing the HCN level in bitter varieties.*

KENYA**COMMENT:**

We support the recommendations laid down in this text and strongly urge committee members to take into consideration in their countries the recommendations given in the text such as Non-industrial, small-scale producers of cassava and cassava products should have access to materials with information on the specific recommendations based on Good Manufacturing Practice and guidance on methods for reducing residual cyanogens in cassava products.

40. Food Safety Authorities and Public Health Monitoring bodies may consider introducing scientific kits such as picrate kits (Egan et al., 1998; Bradbury et al., 1999) to monitor cyanide concentrations in cassava products the point of use and urinary thiocyanate concentrations in the population (Hague and Bradbury, 1999) among others.

We also request this committee in future to look into aflatoxin levels in other products such as bitter almond, lima beans, stone fruits and bamboo shoots and other products which might be prone to hydrogen cyanide, cyanogenic glycosides and cyanohydrins.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION**Position:**

We agree with the proposed approaches to decrease the content of cyanogenic acid in cassava and cassava products proposed in the document.

We suggest to develop the national programs on implementation of elaborated measures for reducing of hydrocyanic acid and cyanogenic glycosides content in home-made cassava based food products.

AFRICAN UNION

<p>African Union supports the Draft Code of Practice</p> <p>The Draft COP has outlined measures to reduce the levels of hydrogen cyanide in cassava products and has in addition covered the typical production processes for various African cassava products. The document has also recommended practices based on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Manufacturing Processes (GMP).</p>	<p>The draft Code of Practice seeks to provide guidance on how to produce cassava products with safe concentrations of residual cyanogenic compounds and covers several African foods such as as gari, fufu and fufu powder, dried cassava chips etc.</p> <p>It is possible for African countries to implement this code of Practice.</p> <p>Countries should however be encouraged to continue data collection on levels of total HCN in cassava and cassava based products, methods of preparation and consumption amounts.</p>
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