

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
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HEALTH
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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
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**NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEMS AND CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN FOOD
STANDARD SETTING (CL 2008/4-EURO, PART A)**

Replies from the European Community, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia and Sweden

1. STATUS OF THE NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEM

(i) Structure and Organization of Official Services Responsible for Food Control

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The European Union (EU) integrated approach to food safety aims to ensure a high level of food safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health within the EU through coherent farm-to-fork measures and adequate monitoring, while ensuring the effective functioning of the internal market.

The implementation of this approach involves the development of legislative and other actions, to:

- ensure effective control systems and evaluate compliance with EU standards in the food safety and quality, animal health, animal welfare, animal nutrition and plant health sectors within the EU and in third countries in relation to their exports to the EU;
- manage international relations with third countries and international organisations concerning food safety, animal health, animal welfare, animal nutrition and plant health;
- manage relations with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and ensure science-based risk management.

Food safety activities cover the entire food production chain, ranging from animal health and plant health to the labelling of food products, as well as animal welfare.

At the European Commission level, food safety legislation and food safety controls fall under the responsibility of the **Directorate General for Health and Consumers**, DG SANCO (updated organisational chart annexed). There are three Directorates directly in charge of food safety matters. Two of these are in responsible for food legislation, i.e. by managing existing legislation and by drafting and submitting to the European Parliament and Council of the EU legislative proposals, most of which fall under the co-decision procedure.

The third Directorate in relation to food safety is the **Food and Veterinary Office (FVO)**. The Commission, in its role as guardian of the European Community Treaties, is responsible for ensuring that Community legislation on food safety, animal health, plant health and animal welfare is properly implemented and enforced. As a Commission service, the FVO plays an important role in fulfilling this task, through its evaluations to:

- promote effective control systems in the food safety and quality, veterinary and plant health sectors;
- check on compliance with the requirements of EU food safety and quality, veterinary and plant health legislation within the EU and in third countries exporting to the EU;
- contribute to the development of EU policy in the food safety and quality, veterinary and plant health sectors,
- inform stakeholders of the outcome of evaluations.

The FVO works to ensure effective control systems and to evaluate compliance with EU standards within the EU, and in third countries in relation to their exports to the EU. The FVO does this mainly by carrying out inspections in Member States and in third countries exporting to the EU.

Each year the FVO develops an inspection programme, identifying priority areas and countries for inspection. The findings of each inspection carried out under the programme are set out in an inspection report, together with conclusions and recommendations. The FVO makes recommendations to the country's competent authority to deal with any shortcomings revealed during the inspections. The competent authority is requested to present an action plan to the FVO on how it intends to address any shortcomings. Together with other Commission services, the FVO evaluates this action plan and monitors its implementation through a number of follow-up activities.

The European Commission is provided with independent scientific advice and risk assessment on all matters with a direct or indirect impact on food/feed safety by the **EFSA**. It is a separate legal entity, independent from the other EU institutions. In close collaboration with national authorities and in open consultation with its stakeholders, EFSA provides independent scientific advice and clear communication on existing and emerging risks. EFSA's work covers all stages of food production and supply, from primary production to the safety of animal feed, right through to the supply of food to consumers. It collects information and analyses new scientific developments so it can identify and assess any potential risks to the food chain. It can carry out scientific assessment on any matter that may have a direct or indirect effect on the safety of the food supply, including matters relating to animal health, animal welfare and plant health. EFSA also gives scientific advice on non-food and feed GMOs as well as on nutrition in relation to EC legislation. It can communicate directly with the public on any issue within its area of responsibility.

LITHUANIA

(i) Official Agencies

Responsibilities of the different ministries and institutions are described in the Law on Food of the Republic of Lithuania. Responsibility for food safety including import/export in Lithuania is divided in the following way:

1. Within the sphere of its competence the Ministry of Health:

1) shall lay down the following mandatory requirements for food, taking into account the assessment of risk to human health based on scientific research: maximum permitted levels of pesticides and contaminants in food, requirements for the safety of food additives and nutritious matter, the safety of foodstuffs for particular nutritional purposes, irradiated, genetically or otherwise modified food, novel foods or food prepared using unconventional methods, safety requirements for articles, intended to be in contact with food, requirements for food hygiene and control, the procedure for the introduction of hazard analysis and critical control points system at food handling entities, requirements for health of persons handling food, their health examination procedures and obligatory hygiene training;

2) shall co-ordinate implementation of the policies of food safety, wholesome nutrition of the population and reduction of food-borne morbidity;

- 3) shall develop and approve programmes for food safety and improvement of nutrition of the population, monitor the nutrition of the population, food safety and food-borne diseases, promote habits of wholesome nutrition and discharge other functions laid down by the mentioned Law and the other legal acts;
- 4) shall establish the mandatory food labelling requirements.

2. Within the limits of its competence the Ministry of Agriculture:

- 1) shall implement the policy on improved quality of food products and raw materials, production of organic agricultural products, and enhancement of the competitiveness of Lithuanian products on the international market;
- 2) shall develop and approve programmes for the improvement of food quality, production and marketing of wholesome, organic food, shall establish the mandatory requirements for the assessment of quality and composition of food, the assessment of raw materials quality, growing of plants for food and their placement on the market as well as for using and control of plant protection means;
- 3) shall establish the mandatory requirements for labelling of foodstuffs offered for sale;
- 4) shall control the implementation of quality requirements for fresh fruits and vegetables.

3. Within the limits of its competence the Ministry of Economy:

- 1) shall implement the food trade policy;
- 2) shall establish the requirements for foodstuffs trade.

4. Within the limits of its competence the State Food and Veterinary Service (SFVS):

- 1) shall implement the policy for official control and monitoring foodstuffs safety and reduction of the morbidity of animals intended for food;
- 2) shall establish the mandatory requirements for safety of raw materials of animal origin food; for hygiene and control of animal origin food handling and its placing on the market; hazard analysis and critical control points system at handling entities of the food of animal origin;
- 3) shall monitor contamination of animals and raw materials of animal origin food with harmful substances.

Lithuania has an extensive framework of legislation and official control in place to ensure food safety. The establishment and continuous updating of these controls and their enforcement involve the combined activities of a number of departments and services, centers operating at both national and local level augmented by a wide spectrum of medical, veterinary and scientific experts who provide specialist support services. In general, responsibility for food safety policy rests with central government departments, which are Competent Authorities under the EU food legislation, while these, together with a number of other national/regional/local agencies, undertake food safety enforcement activities on behalf of the State Food Veterinary Service.

5. The State Consumer Rights Protection Authority

The Law on Food of the Republic of Lithuania, article 7.2 provides that:

"Manufacturers, sellers and service operators who violate the requirements of the Law on Food of the Republic of Lithuania and other legal acts, shall be held liable and shall compensate the injured party for the damage under the Law on Product Safety of the Republic of Lithuania and other laws".

Responsibilities of the State Consumer Rights Protection Authority are described in the Law on Product Safety of the Republic of Lithuania. Article 27.1 of this Law provides, that:

"The State Consumer Rights Protection Authority shall examine the cases referred to in the Law on Product Safety of the Republic of Lithuania and impose the prescribed penalties. Preparation and examination of the cases and the procedure of imposing penalties shall be laid down by this Law, the rules of the State Consumer Rights Protection Authority approved by the Government, and the regulation adopted by the State Consumer Rights Protection Authority.

6. National Nutrition Centre (NNC) of Ministry of Health

NNC co-ordinates implementation of food safety, wholesome nutrition and reduction of food-borne morbidity policies in Lithuania.

NNC is responsible for drafting legal acts on:

1. Hygiene of foodstuffs
2. Food additives
3. Food contaminants
4. Pesticide residues,
5. Microbiological criteria
6. Food labelling
7. Food supplements
8. Novel and genetically modified food
9. Materials intended to come into contact with food
10. Food for special dietary uses
11. Drinking and mineral water
12. Food irradiation, etc.

NNC carries out regular monitoring of food consumption in the country, executes risk assessment procedures, takes part in food standards development and consumers education.

NORWAY

No change.

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority (NFSA) was established in January 2004 following the merger of: The Norwegian Food Control Authority, the Norwegian Agricultural Inspection Service, the Norwegian Animal Health Authority, the Directorate of Fisheries' seafood project and the Local Government food control units. The Authority consists of three administrative levels: Head office, 8 regions and 62 district offices and has approx. 1,300 employees. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food has the Administrative responsibility, NFSA report however to both the Ministry of Health and Care Services and the Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs.

The NFSA's mission is to promote safe food, healthy plants, fish and animals, ethical keeping of fish and animals, environmentally friendly production and good quality, fair production and trade. The core activities are supervision, developing regulations, collecting information and analysing the current situation and informing, advising and informing about the regulations.

Legislation administered by the NFSA; The Food Safety Act, the Act on the welfare of animals, the Act relating to measures to combat livestock diseases, the Act on veterinarians and other animal health personnel, the Act relating to the plant breeder's right and the Act relating to cosmetic products and body care products, etc.

PORTUGAL

The main ministry responsible for controls in Portugal is the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Affairs and Fisheries (MADRP).

The Directorate for Policy and Planning of Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries responsible for coordinating the controls legislation. It is also responsible for implementation of food safety controls for food of non-animal origin. Operational activities are carried out through five regional authorities, which report direct to GPP. The control services of the Azores and Madeira operate independently

The Veterinary Directorate (DGV) of the Ministry of Agriculture is largely responsible for controls in the areas of animal health, food of animal origin and imports thereof, animal nutrition, TSE/ABP, veterinary medicinal products and animal welfare.

GPP and DGV share responsibilities with other bodies such as the Customs Services in respect of imports.

SLOVENIA

In general, the structure and organization of official services responsible for food control, is the same as at the 25th Session:

Responsibility within the Republic of Slovenia for official controls and enforcement functions in respect of feed and food law is divided between three CAs: Veterinary Administration of the Republic of Slovenia (VARS), Health inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia (HIRS) and Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia for Agriculture, Forestry and Food (IRSAFF). VARS and IRSAFF are constituent bodies within

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food (MAFF), while HIRS is constituent body within Ministry of Health (MH). The CAs responsible for official controls are designated in national acts and legislation that gives effect to Regulation (EC) 882/2004 at national level.

Responsibility for development and implementation of feed and food law, and responsibility for monitoring and verifying compliance with it and enforcement of it, is divided. Responsibility for developing and implementing national and EU feed and food law in the whole production chain lies within ministries mentioned in previous paragraph (MAFF and MH). Responsibility for monitoring and verifying compliance with legislation and enforcement of it lies on VARS, HIRS and IRSAFF.

COMPETENT AUTHORITIES		
FOOD		
VARS	HIRS	IRSAFF
<p>Range of legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general food law - biological safety - chemical safety <p>Production stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - importation (FAO - food of animal origin) - processing (FAO) - manufacture (FAO) - wholesale (FAO) - storage (FAO) - distribution (FAO) - transport (FAO) - retail sale of non-pre-packed raw meat, fish and other water organisms 	<p>Range of legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general food law - food labelling and nutrition - biological safety - chemical safety - irradiation - biotechnology <p>Production stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - importation (FNAO - food of non-animal origin) - processing (FNAO) - manufacture (FNAO) - wholesale - storage (FNAO) - distribution (FNAO) - transport (FNAO) - retail except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o retail sale of non-pre-packed raw meat, fish and other water organisms o first step of putting primary products of plant origin on the market by primary producer 	<p>ISQC:</p> <p>Range of legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general food law - food labelling - quality aspect - organic farming - specific character agricultural products and foodstuffs - geographic indications and designations of origin - false or misleading labelling, quality or compositional claims - quality aspect - food adulteration - quality aspect <p>Production stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - processing - manufacture - wholesale - storage - distribution - retail <p>ISAg:</p> <p>Range of legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general food law - organic farming - biological safety (mycotoxins) - chemical safety (contaminants, pesticide residues) - biotechnology <p>Production stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - primary plant production - first step of putting agricultural products of plant origin on the market by primary producer

SWEDEN

No change

**(ii) Legislation and Regulations on Food Safety and Quality - Including Import/Export Matters¹
(Update Information since the 25th CCEURO)**

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

At the 25th CCEURO, the EC already gave an overview on the EC basic legislation on food safety. More information, updated EC legislation in different areas as well as on proposals currently under consideration can be found in SANCO's Website:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/index_en.htm

For example on food additives, the European Commission has adopted a package of legislative proposals which would introduce harmonised EC legislation on food enzymes for the first time and upgrade current rules for flavourings and additives. The texts aim to clarify and update current legislation in this area and to create a simplified common approval procedure for food additives, flavourings and enzymes, based on scientific opinions from the EFSA. For additives and flavourings, which are already covered by EU legislation, the proposals bring the rules into line with the latest scientific and technological developments and will improve the clarity of the legislation. With regard to food enzymes, the draft Regulation proposes replacing divergent national legislation with new, harmonised EU rules.

Other proposal adopted in January by the Commission is a draft Regulation ensuring that a product's essential nutritional information will be provided on its packaging in a legible and comprehensible manner thus improving the EU's food labelling rules.

LITHUANIA

The Lithuanian's legislation and regulations on food safety and quality were harmonised among the member states of the European Union and of the European Economic Area.

Food safety is being regulated by following major laws of the Republic of Lithuania:

1. Law on Food (approved on 2000).
2. Law on Drinking water (approved on 2001).
3. Law on Veterinary (approved on 1992).
4. Law on Plant Protection (approved on 1995).

The Minister of Health lays down mandatory requirements for food safety taking into account the assessment of risk for human health based on scientific research, EU legislation and Codex Alimentarius standards. It is responsible for health and safe foodstuff consumption of inhabitants as well as for their healthy living. The basic type of legal acts is Hygiene norms approved by the Minister of Health.

The National Nutrition Centre (NNC) under Ministry of Health is a headquarter for food legislation and responsible for coordination of healthy and wholesome nutrition of population. The NNC drafts legal acts on foodstuffs and nutrition and executes risk assessment. The NNC has compiled a compendium of food legislation in Lithuania and maintains this on its website, www.rmc.lt

The Minister of Agriculture issues orders on quality requirements of foodstuffs, products of organic agriculture and their labelling:

Order No. 210 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 20 May 1999 On Compulsory Quality Requirements (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 46-1147, 1999, No. 65-2318, 2004)

Order No. 3D-560 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 29 December 2003 „On Quality Regulation for Meat Products” (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 124-5651, 2003).

Order No. 422 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 31 October 2002 „On the Assessment of Technical Regulation of Meat and Fowl Freshness” (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 106-4772 2002).

Order No. 279 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 29 July 2002 „On Regulation of Quality Assessment and Technical Classification of pigs' carcass” (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 79-3351, 2002, No. 115-5175 2002, No. 54-1869, 2004)

¹ Where appropriate: “Lessons learned” from any reform of the food control system (e.g. using the risk analysis framework, farm-to-fork approaches, policy, organizational and/or procedural changes).

Order No. 3D-335 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 13 June 2008 On Description of Quality Requirements for Cheese (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 70-2675 2008).

Order No. 188 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 19 June 2000 On Technical Regulation of Lacto protein (caseins and caseinat), designed for human consumption (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 52-1514, 2000).

Order No. 488 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 11 December 2002 On Quality Requirements for Curd and Curd's products (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 119-5366, 2002; No. 61-2176, 2005).

Order No. 3D-165 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 17 April 2003 On Methods of Sensual Analysis (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 60-2733, 2003).

Order No. 3D-237 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 27 April On Compulsory Quality Requirements for A Class Butter (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 65-2318, 2004).

Order No. 3D-335 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 8 July 2005 On Quality Requirements for Pickled Milk Products (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No.90-3393, 2005).

Order No. 3D-225 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 18 April 2005 On Quality Requirements for Cream and its Products (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 52-1768, 2005).

Order No. 3D-303 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 25 July 2006 On Instruction of Primary Index of Quality Assessment for Raw Milk (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No.85-3337, 2006).

Order No. 3D-138 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 14 March 2008 On Technical Regulation of Dehydrated Canned Milk, Designed for Human Consumption (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No.32-1130, 2008).

Order No. 3D-455 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 24 October 2003 „On Order No. 60 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 29 February 2000 “On the Endorsement of Technical Regulation for Jam and Similar Products” as well as Order No. 61 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 29 February 2000 “On the Confirmation of Technical Regulation for Fruit Juice and Similar Products” (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 101-4564, 2003).

Order No. 3D-333 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 12 August 2003 „On the Confirmation of Technical Regulation for Honey“ (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No.81(1)-3714, 2003; No. 49-3200, 2007).

Order No. 282 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 13 August 2001 „On the Confirmation of Compulsory Quality Requirements for Vinegar privalomųjų“ (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 71-2537, 2001).

Order No. 3D-155 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 19 April 2006 „On the Confirmation of Quality Requirements for Dried Fruits“ (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 45-1635, 2006).

Order No. 3D-548 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 11 October 2004 „On the Confirmation of Quality Requirements for Forest Mushrooms and their products” (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 153-5590, 2004).

Order No. 174 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 8 May 2002 „On the Confirmation of Compulsory Quality Requirements for Canned Strawberries and Canned Applies Sauce“ (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 49-1917, 2002).

Order No. 436 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 1 November 2002 „On the Confirmation of Compulsory Quality Requirements for Canned Cucumbers, Canned Carrots and Canned Cultivated Mushrooms“ (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 112-5019, 2002).

Order No. 3D-353 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 28 August 2003 „On the Confirmation of Compulsory Quality Requirements for Quick Frozen Cauliflower and Quick Frozen Strawberries“ (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 87-3946, No.106-4766, 2003).

Order No. 355 of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania of 14 December 2000 „On Methods of Quality Research for Quick Frozen Fruits and Vegetables, Fruit Juices, Jams and similar Products” (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), No. 109-3497, 2000; No. 104-3727, 2001).

The Director of State Food and Veterinary Service issues orders in the field of official food control, food hygiene supervision, animal health, welfare and drugs.

The food legislation system is directed to tight governmental responses to food safety threats at various stages as dictated by evolving public health criteria and/or trade requirements. It rooted by membership of the EU where the drive to harmonise technical standards has served to focus increased attention on food safety. The most notable development, in recent times, has been the negotiation and adopting of the so-called

EU Hygiene Package aimed at consolidating and simplifying a raft of existing measures into 5 broad instruments. In this regard, Lithuania is currently engaged in drawing up a multi-annual control plan for current year. In Lithuania all EU derived legal norms and control arrangements take effect either directly, in the case of Regulations and Decisions, or indirectly in the case of Directives, following their transposition into national legislation within a specified period. The body of Lithuanian food law stemming from this process is and continues to be strongly influenced by developments in Codex as a result of the historical participation in the Codex activities.

Designation of legal limits critical to public health is stated in relation to food and to the humans, animals and processes involved in the different areas of the food chain. system is based on approval, licensing, inspection, testing and scientific analysis - to ensure adherence to prescribed standards. An administrative framework is staffed by appropriately qualified and skilled personnel monitors and enforces the prescribed standards. Effective legal, financial and other sanctions are applied for failure of legal limits.

Arising out of the above a complex and comprehensive body of food law is in place in Lithuania which is too voluminous to describe here. This is constantly changing and evolving in response to a variety of internal, EU and internationally derived factors.

PORTUGAL

Portuguese food law is generally harmonised with EU legislation. We don't have any specific requirements to add EU regulation

SLOVENIA

In general the situation on legislation and regulations on food safety and quality in Slovenia is the same as at the 25th Session:

The General Principles of Food Law are in force and must be followed when measures are taken. Existing EU food law principles and procedures have been adapted since 1 January 2006 in order to comply with the general framework established by Regulation EC/178/2002.

The food law aims at ensuring a high level of protection of human life and health, taking into account the protection of animal health and welfare, plant health and the environment. This integrated "farm to fork" approach is now considered a general principle for food safety policy and is implemented / enforced in Slovenia in general.

Besides EU legislation there have been some national rules implemented in the field of import control of food of non-animal origin and food contact materials. All imports must be routed through one of 10 designated points of entry. Customs may release goods into free circulation only after clearance by HIRS. There are 100% documentary checks and HIRS at central level defines the risk-based criteria regarding to which identity checks, physical checks and sampling are to be undertaken at the entry points. The criteria include product type, country of origin etc. Random identity and physical checks are undertaken on this basis.

Official control is carried out in compliance with Regulation (CE) N° 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 29 April 2004.

SWEDEN

Swedish legislation complies with the EC legislation

(iii) Establishment of Equivalence or other Trade Facilitation Agreements with other Governments

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The EC has already signed Agreements with: Andorra, Canada, USA, New Zealand, Chile, Island, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Mexico and San Marino.

Since the last session of CCEURO the EC has not concluded any new trade Agreement on SPS issues. At present the EC is negotiating trade Agreements with the following countries/regions: India, South Korea, ASEAN, Andean Community and Central America. In addition Economic Partnership Agreements are currently being negotiated with associations of countries in Africa.

LITHUANIA

At Central Government level, officials have regular contact with their colleagues in the other Member States of the EU. There is also considerable contact through participation at meetings in the various EU Commission and Council committees and working groups located in Brussels dealing with the development of food legislation, and also contact with other food-relevant international organisations including the various committees in Codex.

Lithuania works in close collaboration with FAO and since 2000 participates in CEECFOODS programme (Cooperation of Central and East European Countries in Food Composition Activities) and NordBalt network (exchange of food safety information between Nordic and Baltic Countries). In 2003-2004 relevant institutions of Lithuania took part in international MATRA project managed by Nyderland's "Strengthening of Food Surveillance and Food Safety". The NNC cooperates with UNICEF in the area of breastfeeding promotion and of elimination of iodine deficiency disorders in Lithuania. In 2006 NNC joined the network of foodstuffs composition databases compilers which links over 40 institutions in the EU. In 2003-2004 SFVS together with German twinning partners carried out PHARE project "Strengthening of Food Safety Control, Food Control Laboratories in Lithuania".

Lithuanian laboratory staff maintains regular contacts with their counterparts in other countries via networks, through participation in proficiency test schemes and through informal exchanges.

Scientists working on food safety in Lithuanian research organisations are also heavily involved in collaborative research projects with their counterparts across Europe and beyond.

PORTUGAL

Portuguese law is generally harmonised with EU legislation

SWEDEN

This is harmonized area in the EU.

(iv) Identified Need For Capacity Building and Training to Strengthen the National Food Control System

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

"Better Training for Safer Food" is a Commission initiative aimed at organising a EU training strategy in the areas of food law, feed law, animal health and animal welfare rules, as well as plant health rules.

Article 51 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, provides the legal instrument for this initiative.

Training is designed for all staff of competent authorities of Member States involved in official control activities so as to keep them up-to-date with all aspects of Community law in the areas specified above and ensure that controls are carried out in a more uniform, objective and adequate manner in all Member States.

It is also essential that third countries and in particular developing countries are familiar with EU import requirements and, where it exists, with the possibility of EU support. For this purpose, training organised for Member States in the EU is open to participants from third countries and specific training sessions are organised for third country participants on the spot.

Better Training for Safer Food contact points have been designated in the EU Member States, Candidate and Associated Countries to coordinate aspects such as participant selection. Competent authority staff from these countries interested in participating in training should contact their national contact point. Interested parties from third countries should refer to the contractor for the activity in which they wish to take part.

The main objective of the initiative "Better Training for Safer Food" is the organisation and development of a Community training strategy with a view to:

- ensuring and maintaining a high level of consumer protection and of animal health, animal welfare and plant health;
- promoting a harmonised approach to the operation of Community and national control systems;
- creating an equal level playing field for all food businesses;
- enhancing trade of safe food;
- ensuring fair trade with third countries and in particular developing countries.

Ten programmes are scheduled to take place in the EU in 2008, some of which were also held in 2007. These cover veterinary checks at Border Inspection Posts, animal by-products and animal welfare standards, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point principles, plant protection products and zoonoses. New programmes for 2008 deal with plant health controls, hygiene and controls of meat, milk, fish and products thereof, as well as eradication of BSE and similar diseases. Third country participants can also attend EU-based training, with a number of places set aside for them at most workshops. However, most participants at EU programmes come from national authorities of Member States, candidate and European Free Trade Association countries. These programmes should train over 4,000 participants globally during the year, via 120 events including workshops, seminars and assistance missions.

A new initiative starting in 2008 is the launch of "Better Training for Safer Food in Africa". This programme provides training for African countries on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues. The main aim of the programme is to raise SPS awareness within Africa, thereby contributing to driving up the standards of safety controls.

LITHUANIA

National Nutrition Centre needs for more staff for work on food and nutrition legislation and needs for training on risk assessment (esp. pesticides).

NORWAY

No identified need

PORTUGAL

PT participate in EU training "better training for safer food"

SLOVENIA

There is a need to establish more uniform approach used in official control carried out according to Regulation (CE) N° 882/2004 by different responsible authorities and to organise training of officials to strengthen SI food control system.

SWEDEN

The National Food Administration identifies competence to make a competence profile for municipalities. National Food Administration has organised several training and support activities in different subjects and in different parts of Sweden to update control authorities according to current EC legislation.

(v) Activities To Increase Awareness On Food Safety And Quality Among The Consumers And Other Specified Groups

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The European Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General attaches a high priority to the effective communication of information and advice on health, food safety and consumer issues to European citizens.

The main theme for 2007 was "Healthy food for Europe". This included a DVD "From farm to fork"; fact sheets on animal welfare, traceability in the food chain and food contaminants; a book to celebrate 50 years of food safety in Europe; a European day of healthy food and cooking; a DVD "Better training for safer food"; and leaflets on the EU Animal Health Strategy, "How to read a label" and the Scientific Committees.

In 2008 activities have continued, for example a new factsheet on pesticides will shortly be available and a major event – "veterinary week" – will take place in November with one of its aims to raise awareness of the link between animal health and human health.

In addition, a monthly magazine is published online – "Health and Consumer Voice". Furthermore, a wealth of information is available on the Commission's Health and Consumers website, which is constantly updated to reflect the latest news, policy developments and information for citizens.

LITHUANIA

Lithuanian public organisations for the protection of consumers' rights in ensuring the consumers' interests in the spheres of food safety, quality and information:

- 1) conduct consumer opinion polls about food safety and quality and publish an overview of the results of the survey in the media;
- 2) either at the request of a consumer or on its own initiative apply to the court for violation of the consumer's rights or his lawful interests;
- 3) collect information from the producers and traders about food safety and quality;
- 4) establish information and consultation centres, and test laboratories for the examination of food safety and quality;
- 5) notify the National Consumers Rights Protection Board and the food control authority about violations of legal acts regulating food safety and quality and make proposals about a more effective protection of consumers' rights;
- 6) take part as an observers at the meetings of the National Consumers Rights Protection Board.

The headquarters institution The State Consumer Rights Protection Authority coordinates state institutions' activities on protection of consumers. The Authority being comprised of the Chairman, 4 Members and the administration has been functioning since August 2001. The work procedure of the Authority is established by the Law on Consumer Protection and other laws as well as the procedure rules adopted by the Authority.

Functions and rights of the State Consumer Rights Protection Authority

The State Consumer Rights Protection Authority shall exercise the following functions:

- 1) ensures the protection of consumer rights;
- 2) coordinates activities of consumer rights protection institutions, responsible for the regulation of a certain area of consumption, in the sphere of the protection of consumer rights (analyses the accumulated information, obtained periodically from state and municipal institutions, about the protection of consumer rights, submits proposals regarding the improvement of the protection of consumer rights);
- 1) adopts and harmonises legal acts relating to the protection of consumer rights; presents conclusions and proposals on the laws and other legal acts relating to the protection of consumer rights;
- 2) considers complaints of consumers in accordance with the procedure of the settlement of consumer disputes out of court;
- 3) applies sanctions provided for by law;
- 4) defends public interest of consumers in accordance with the procedure laid down in chapter seven of this Law;
- 5) organises consumer education, coordinates activities of state and municipal institutions, consumer associations when organising consumer education, provides information about consumer rights to sellers and service suppliers;
- 6) creates and manages a database of the protection of consumer rights;
- 7) in conjunction with the Commission of the European Communities and other national authorities of other member states of the European Union implements Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws; represents the Republic of Lithuania in international organisations in the sphere of the protection of consumer rights.
- 8) There are more than 20 public and non-governmental institutions related with food and nutrition which take part in drafting of national food acts and provide own position concerning EU law.

- 9) It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that Lithuanian consumers have every opportunity to be involved, through their relevant NGO, in the preparatory process used to formulate the Lithuanian position on a variety of Codex issues.

NORWAY

Consumer organisations are invited to pre-meetings when discussing positions before Codex Meetings. They are also welcome to participate in the Norwegian delegations.

PORTUGAL

Portuguese authorities have a training strategy for food inspector's which includes procedures and on-site training.

SLOVENIA

For purposes to increase awareness on food safety among consumers and other specified groups Slovenia has carried out several actions:

Use of Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food (RASFF).

Strong Communication with the public and all stakeholders.

Regular meetings of all competent authorities.

Regular meetings of food business operators and competent authorities.

Development of guides to good hygiene practice.

SWEDEN

Great importance is given to presenting information on the website www.slv.se

Information to breastfeeding women and young women who are or intend to become pregnant has recently been updated.

2. NATIONAL CODEX CONTACT POINT AND OTHER NATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR CODEX MATTERS

- (i) **Activities of the Codex Contact Point (update information since the 25th CCEURO) and any information about change of contact details (if not yet notified)**

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

At the ec level the situation is unchanged since the last session of CCEURO. No need to update.

LITHUANIA

The Lithuanian Codex Contact Point function was appointed to National Nutrition Centre in 10 July 1992 by the Resolution No 668 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.

NORWAY

No change.

PORTUGAL

The Portuguese Codex Contact Point (PCCP) is at Directorate for Policy and Planning at Ministry of Agriculture. The PCCP receives information from the Council Secretariat (EC) and from Codex Secretariat and distributes it to the different official bodies. The PCCP prepares the national positions for Codex meetings

SLOVENIA

The Slovenian Codex Contact Point is at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food. The National Contact Point receives information from the Council Secretariat (EC) and Codex Secretariat (CAC) and distributes it to the different organizations.

Slovenian Contact Point prepares the national positions for Codex meetings.

SWEDEN

No change. Information about the change a couple of years ago of E-mail to Swedish Codex Contact Point has been distributed. The correct address is codex@slv.se

- (ii) **Structure, Composition and Operation of a National Codex Committee (or equivalent or similar structure) or plans for its establishment (update information since the 25th CCEURO)**

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

At the ec level the situation is unchanged since the last session of CCEURO. No need to update.

LITHUANIA

According to the Decree 668p of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 10 July 1992, the National Nutrition Center under Ministry of Health is representative in the international organizations PSAO/FAO „Codex Alimentarius“ Commission and the organization of activities of international "Codex Alimentarius" Commission in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania is delegated to the Ministry of Health.

According to Order No. V-85 of the Director of Lithuanian Standards Board of 22 November 2005 as well as Decree No. 668p of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 10 July 1992, LST Lithuanian Food Codex Committee was cancelled.

National Codex Alimentarius Committee was established on the 18th of December 1997 by the order of the Director of Lithuanian Standards Board. It comprised from all main stakeholders, met on a regular basis and provided a forum to enable all relevant institutions, departments, NGO's, consumers and industry bodies to make known their views, in a structured way, for consideration in the formulation of the official national position on the Codex issues.

The main objectives for Codex Alimentarius Committee activities were stated:

- Formulate the country response to the proposals of the Codex Alimentarius Commission;
- Represent the country at various Codex meetings and events;
- Advise the government on the best possible decision as regards Codex standards and their implementation;
- Improve the quality of foodstuffs and health;
- Improve the state policy of health quality among Lithuanian population;
- Review and, as necessary, revise of existing standards.
-

National Codex Alimentarius Committee was established by comprising representatives from:

- National Nutrition Centre under the Ministry of Health
- Kaunas Technological University
- State Food and Veterinary Service
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Economy
- Institute of Food of the Kaunas Technological University
- Fishery Department under the Ministry of Agriculture
- Association of Lithuanian Consumers
- Association "Eurochem – Lithuania"
- Food Engineering Centre

The National Codex Alimentarius Committee it is revision now.

NORWAY

No update information.

PORTUGAL

In Portugal there isn't a National Codex Committee, but we intend to establish it in the near future.

SLOVENIA

In Slovenia we don't have a National Codex Committee or similar structure, but we plan to establish it in the next year.

SWEDEN

Sweden has not established a specific National Codex Committee. The relevant experts and interested parties are contacted in connection with every separate committee or Task Force. Information from every meeting in which the NFA has participated is published on the website.

(iii) Participation in Codex Committees (update information since the 25th CCEURO)**EUROPEAN COMMUNITY**

The EC actively participates in all Codex Committees. Since the 25th CCEURO the EC participated in 20 Codex Committee meetings, 2 Codex Alimentarius Commission meetings and 3 ad hoc Codex Intergovernmental Task Force meetings (on Food Derived from Biotechnology, on Antimicrobial Resistance and on the Processing and Handling of Quick Frozen Foods).

LITHUANIA

The representatives of National Nutrition Center participate in following Codex committees:

- General Principles subgroup;
- Food Additives subgroup;
- Food Hygiene subgroup;
- Food Labelling subgroup;
- Pesticide Residues subgroup;
- Nutritional and Foods for Special Dietary Uses subgroup;
- Contaminants in Foods subgroup;
- Natural Mineral Waters subgroup;
- Foods derived from Biotechnology subgroup;
- Antimicrobial Resistance subgroup;
- Europe subgroup.

According to the Order of Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania (2008, No 58-2181) the representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture participate in following Codex committees:

- Cocoa Products and Chocolate subgroup;
- Sugars subgroup;
- Processed Fruits and Vegetables subgroup;
- Fats and Oils subgroup;
- Fish and Fishery Products subgroup;
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetables subgroup;
- Milk and Milk Products subgroup;
- Meat Hygiene subgroup;
- Cereals, Pulses and Legumes subgroup;
- Vegetable Proteins subgroup;
- Quick Frozen Foods subgroup.

The representatives of State Food Veterinary Service participate in following Codex committees:

- Methods of Analysis subgroup;
- Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods subgroup;
- Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems subgroup.

NORWAY

Norway has participated in all CCFFP, CCGP, CCMAS, CCCF, CCPR, CCFA, CCFL, CAC, CTFFBT, CTFAR, CCNFSU, CCFICS and CCFH sessions since the 25th session of CCEURO. We have also participated in several WGs both electronical and physical.

PORTUGAL

Portuguese experts have taken part in EU coordination meetings and in some Codex Sessions, mainly: CAC, CCGP, CCFA, CCNMW and CCCF

SLOVENIA

Slovenian experts have taken part in EU coordination meetings and also they have attended the following Codex sessions: CAC, CCGP, CCMAS, CCFA, CCFL and CCFICS.

SWEDEN

Sweden usually attends all Codex meeting except CCFFV, CCPFV, CCFO, TFFJ and TFQFF. In 2008 and/or during 2009 Sweden will participate also in CCFFV, CCPFV and CCFO because Sweden is having the presidency within the EU the second half of 2009. Sweden naturally does not participate in other regional committees than CCEURO.

3. PARTICIPATION OF CONSUMERS IN STANDARDS SETTING

(i) Consumer Participation in Codex Related Activities at National and International Level (update information since the 25th CCEURO)

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

In general at the EC level, Consumer Organisations actively participate in the work of Codex Alimentarius by taking part in the preparation of national positions together with the competent authorities of their countries. At the EC level, there are no direct public consultations prior to development of European common positions for Codex meetings, but consultations with relevant stakeholders and representative organisations. The final EC common positions are posted on the EU website².

The EC has established a system of consultation with consumer organisations via direct contacts and in the context of an advisory body: the **European Consumer Consultative Group -ECCG** (Commission Decision 2003/709/EC). The ECCG:

- Constitutes a forum for general discussions on problems relating to consumer interests
- Gives an opinion on Community matters affecting the protection of consumer interests.
- Advises and guides the Commission when it outlines policies and activities having an effect on consumers.
- Informs the Commission of developments in consumer policy in the Member States.
- Acts as a source of information and soundboard on Community action for the other national organisations.

The EC has also created an **Advisory Group on the Food Chain and Animal and Plant Health** in 2004 (Commission Decision 2004/613/EC). Its objective is to consult citizens in an open and transparent way at European level during the preparation, revision and evaluation of EU food legislation "from farm to fork". One of the key challenges is to involve stakeholders at an early stage of the decision-making process.

LITHUANIA

Lithuanian public organisations for the protection of consumers' rights in ensuring the consumers' interests in the spheres of food safety, quality and information:

- 1) conduct consumer opinion polls about food safety and quality and publish an overview of the results of the survey in the media;
- 2) either at the request of a consumer or on its own initiative apply to the court for violation of the consumer's rights or his lawful interests;
- 3) collect information from the producers and traders about food safety and quality;
- 4) establish information and consultation centres, and test laboratories for the examination of food safety and quality;
- 5) notify the National Consumers Rights Protection Board and the food control authority about violations of legal acts regulating food safety and quality and make proposals about a more effective protection of consumers' rights;

² http://ec.europa.eu/food/fs/ifsi/eupositions/eupositions_list_en.html

6) take part as an observers at the meetings of the National Consumers Rights Protection Board.

The headquarters institution The State Consumer Rights Protection Authority coordinates state institutions' activities on protection of consumers. The Board being comprised of the Chairman, 4 Members and the administration has been functioning since August 2001. The work procedure of the Board is established by the Law on Consumer Protection and other laws as well as the procedure rules adopted by the Board.

Board's activities:

- Coordinates state institutions' activities on protection of consumers;
- Protects consumers' public interest;
- Undertakes control on advertising;
- Within the limits of its competence applies action measures intended by law to trespassers infringing the Law on Consumer Protection, Law on Products Safety and Law on Advertising;
- Organizes and carries out education of consumers, sellers, producers and services providers;
- Provides information for consumers about unsafe products, which have appeared or may appear on the market;
- Organizes the exchange of information with the European Union and Member States;
- Represents the Republic of Lithuania in the European Union and international organizations in consumer rights protection field.

There are more than 20 public and non-governmental institutions related with food and nutrition which take part in drafting of national food acts and provide own position concerning EU law.

It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that Lithuanian consumers have every opportunity to be involved, through their relevant NGO, in the preparatory process used to formulate the Lithuanian position on a variety of Codex issues.

NORWAY

No update, same situation. That is, consumers are involved.

PORTUGAL

The PCCP plan to organize, in the near future the consumers participation in Codex related activities

SWEDEN

Codex matters are referred for consideration on NFA website www.slv.se. Codex matters are also discussed in the consumer board at the National Food Administration.

(ii) Activities aimed at increasing Consumer Participation in Food Standards Setting (update information since the 25th CCEURO)

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Opening up the policy making process is very important for the Commission in order to get more people and organisations involved in developing and implementing European policy so as to ensure better regulation. In DG SANCO consultation of stakeholders is a standard practice. It takes many forms depending on:

- The policy area and legal basis
- The type of initiative
- The specific nature of stakeholders concerned (e.g. representativeness of organisations, existence or not of European level groups)

In practice consultation is carried out in various ways:

- On-line consultations or web basis "virtual forums"
- Big annual events (EU health forum, annual assembly of consumer organisations)
- Conferences, hearings with all stakeholders, ad hoc meetings with specific categories of stakeholders.
- Formal advisory groups (see previous point).

SWEDEN

Same as (i)