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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
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Agenda Item 7

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Fifty-seventh Session, WHO Headquarters, Geneva, 6-9 December 2005

OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM FAO AND WHO

Prepared by FAO and WHO

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1. This document provides information related to activities carried out by FAO and WHO after the 28th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (July 2005). It complements information provided at the Commission in documents ALINORM05/28/9G and CAC/28 INF/5.

PART I: CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON THE PROVISION OF SCIENTIFIC ADVICE

2. The enhancement of the FAO/WHO work to provide scientific advice continues. Since the last Commission session, efforts have been concentrated in two main activities:

- a) The finalization of the framework for the provision of scientific advice which will include a compilation of all written procedures followed by FAO and WHO in relation to the provision of scientific advice. This document will be available early 2006.
- b) Organization of a technical meeting to explore new approaches to enhance participation of experts and the use of data from developing countries. The meeting is scheduled for 12 – 15 December 2005.

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3. The completion of the FAO/WHO review process on provision of scientific advice has been postponed to 2006 as it requires the support and involvement of member countries and requires additional resources to meet the expectations of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and member countries. The Executive Committee is **invited** to consider this factor and advise the Commission on the type of guidance and support to be provided to both organizations.

PART II: PRIORITY SETTING OF REQUESTS FOR SCIENTIFIC ADVICE

4. The document ALINORM 05/28/9G presented at the last session of the Commission included a list of pending requests for scientific advice. FAO/WHO have been implementing selected activities in order to fulfill Codex demand for scientific advice following the criteria for prioritization suggested at the 55th Session of the Executive Committee¹.

5. The activities implemented from July to December 2005 as well as those planned for the first 2 months of 2006 are reported on below. The final plan of activities for the provision of scientific advice for the period 2006 – 2007 will be defined jointly by FAO and WHO early next year when budget allocations for those activities will be known. The pending list will be updated prior to the next session of the Commission.

Table 1. Summary of scientific advice provided by FAO and WHO during 2004/2005

Activity	65TH Meeting of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee for Food Additives and Contaminants (JECFA) (Geneva, 7 – 16 June 2005).
Purpose	Evaluation of 14 food additives including safety evaluation for 7 of these additives, 138 flavouring agents and the safety of L-5-Methyltetrahydrofolic acid, calcium salt, when used as replacement for folic acid in dietary supplements, foods for special dietary uses and other foods. Specifications were considered for all 152 substances, for which full specifications were adopted for 140 substances, tentative specifications for 10 substances and 2 specifications were withdrawn.
Outputs	Summary and Conclusions are available at ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/jecfa/jecfa65_summary.pdf . Technical report and monographs are in preparation. This JECFA session also discussed the procedure for estimation of the dietary exposure to flavouring agents and recommended a working group to be formed to analyse the all relevant aspects of the introduction of additional use level-based screening methods to complement the existing procedure.
Activity	FAO Technical meeting on methods of analysis for food specifications (JECFA)
Purpose	Review the draft updated version of Volume 4 of the Second Edition of FAO Food and Nutrition paper 52: “Compendium of Food Additive Specifications” to be included in the second consolidated edition of FNP 52.
Outputs	Updated version of Volume 4 of the second consolidated edition of FNP 52 Compendium of Food Additive Specifications. Status: The sections on the various types of methods are being prepared by the experts and will be edited by a consultant before the meeting.

¹ ALINORM 05/28/3 para. 75

<p>Activity</p> <p><i>Purpose</i></p> <p><i>Outputs</i></p>	<p>FAO/WHO Technical meeting on the Lactoperoxidase system for Raw Milk Preservation. Rome, Italy, 28 November – 2 December 2005</p> <p>Determine the benefits (economic and nutritional) and the levels of health risks, if any, posed for the application of the LP-system for raw milk preservation and any milk products derived from milk preserved via this system.</p> <p>Respond to Codex member countries concerns and advice to the next session of the CCFH.</p>
<p>Activity</p> <p><i>Purpose</i></p> <p><i>Outputs</i></p>	<p>Joint FAO/RIVM/WHO Workshop within the framework of the project to Update the Principles and Methods for the Risk Assessment of Chemicals in Food particularly addressing Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) for Pesticides and Veterinary Drugs. Bilthoven, The Netherlands, 7 – 10 November, 2005</p> <p>Review of scientific principles, requirements and procedures used by JECFA and JMPR in relation to maximum residues limits, reaffirm those that remain valid in view of current scientific knowledge and facilitate the incorporation of new scientific tools, approaches and knowledge in the implementation of risk assessment.</p> <p>Harmonised criteria and guidance, to the extent possible, for JECFA and JMPR recommendations of maximum residue limits pesticides residues and veterinary drug residues in food products.</p> <p>Status: majority of working papers in preparation of workshop prepared, organization and invitation of experts finalized.</p>
<p>Activity</p> <p><i>Purpose</i></p> <p><i>Outputs</i></p>	<p>Joint FAO/WHO technical meeting on <i>Enterobacter sakazakii</i> and Enterobacteriaceae in infant formula. Rome, Italy, 16 – 20 January 2006</p> <p>Considers new data available and discussions held at the 37th session of the CCFH to provide advice on how to minimise risk of <i>E. sakazakii</i> and <i>Salmonella</i> and Enterobacteriaceae in infant formula.</p> <p>Meeting report to be available at http://www.fao.org/es/esn/jemra/links_en.stm.</p>
<p>Activity</p> <p><i>Purpose</i></p> <p><i>Outputs</i></p>	<p>Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on the Development of Practical Risk management Strategies Based on Microbiological Risk Assessment Outputs. Kiel, Germany, 31 January - 4 February 2006</p> <p>Elaborate guidelines for the use of outputs of qualitative and quantitative microbiological risk assessment in developing or determining risk management standards (as defined by Codex) for microbiological hazards in food based in working papers that are under preparation.</p> <p>Guidelines for consideration of Codex system and FAO/WHO member countries.</p>
<p>Activity</p> <p><i>Purpose</i></p> <p><i>Outputs</i></p>	<p>FAO/WHO/AIFST and Food Science Australia Workshop on Microbiological Risk Assessment. Sydney, Australia, 20 February 2006.</p> <p>Raise awareness among policy makers and risk managers on the principles and procedures for microbiological risk assessment in the context of risk management. To initiate an MRA network among participants from the Asia-Pacific region.</p> <p>A meeting report outlining basic recommendations to enhance application of results of MRA in risk management in some countries from Asia</p>

<p>Activity</p> <p>WHO Drafting Group meeting on Critically Important Antimicrobials for Human Health, Canberra, Australia, 15-18 February 2005</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>Outputs</p>	<p>(to follow up a FAO/WHO/OIE consultative process on Non-Human Antimicrobial Usage and Antimicrobial Resistance : 1st Workshop on Scientific Assessment, December 2003 in Geneva, and 2nd Workshop on Management Options, March 2004 in Oslo).</p> <p>Develop criteria for defining critically important antimicrobials for humans by class and /or subgroups, and then to propose a list, taking into account relevant bacteria, both pathogens and commensals (or their genes) that are likely to transfer to people from animals, food products, or the environment.</p> <p>A meeting report including (i) criteria to define critically important antimicrobials for humans (ii) an explanation of the criteria that led to the selection of antimicrobials for this list and (iii) a draft list of critically important antimicrobials for humans. The report is available at: http://www.who.int/foodborne_disease/resistance/amr_feb2005.pdf</p>
<p>Activity</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>Output</p>	<p>Joint Meeting of the FAO Panel of Experts on Pesticides Residues in Food and the Environment and the WHO Core Assessment Group (JMPR). Geneva, Switzerland, 20-29 September 2005</p> <p>To evaluate 21 pesticides, of which 5 were new compounds, and 8 were re-evaluated within the periodic review programme of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR). The Meeting established acceptable daily intakes (ADIs) and acute reference doses (ARfDs) for 15 of these compounds. The Meeting estimated maximum residue levels, which it recommended for use as maximum residue limits (MRLs) by the CCPR. It also estimated supervised trials median residue (STMR) and highest residue (HR) levels as a basis for estimation of the dietary intake of residues of the pesticides reviewed.</p> <p>The summary report is available at: http://www.who.int/ipcs/food/jmpr/en/index.html</p> <p>The full report and toxicological and residue monographs are in preparation.</p>

Other activities related to the provision of scientific advice

Joint FAO/WHO Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants (JECFA)

6. As part of its work, JECFA establishes specifications of identity and purity for food additives. These are electronically available after each JECFA meeting in the **Compendium of Food Additive Specifications** (<http://www.fao.org/es/esn/jecfa/database/cover.htm>) and addenda of the FAO Food and Nutrition Papers (FNP) 52. Currently, FAO is undertaking a review of this compendium in order to consolidate and update all information made available since 1992 including up to Addendum 13. The new Compendium "The Second Edition of FNP 52" will consist of five volumes:

- Volume 1 – Introduction to the Compendium and additive specifications from A through D.
- Volume 2 – Additive specifications from E through O.
- Volume 3 – Additive specifications from P through Z.
- Volume 4 – Analytical methods, test procedures and laboratory solutions used in food additive specifications. References are made to Volume 4 in the specifications. The information contained in this volume consists of revised and updated material from the former FNP 5.
- Volume 5 – All flavouring agent specifications in the same tabular format as is now used in the published FNP 52 Addendums.

The first 4 volumes of the second edition of the Compendium will be available electronically early 2006. Each volume will be available, on request, in hard copy.

Follow up of the 65th meeting of JECFA

7. The Joint FAO/WHO Secretariat, following the recommendation of the JECFA 65th session, has decided to convene a Working Group on dietary exposure assessments for flavouring agents in the context of the procedure for evaluation of these compounds as established by JECFA. This work will address concerns raised at the JECFA 55th meeting, at the FAO/WHO Consultation on Exposure Assessment, Annapolis, May 2005 and in several recent publications, in order to consider further all relevant aspects of the introduction of an additional use-level based screening method to complement the current JECFA procedure for the estimation of intake of flavouring agents. The task of the Group is to elaborate a working paper on the topic to be presented and discussed at the 67th JECFA meeting to be held in Rome from 20 – 29 June 2006 in Rome.

FAO/WHO Expert Meetings on Risk Assessment of microbiological hazards in food (JEMRA)

8. FAO/WHO continue their effort to publish the Microbiological Risk Assessment Series. New publications expected in the coming months are:

- a) Exposure assessment of microbiological hazards in food: Guidelines (in review).
- b) Risk assessment of *Vibrio vulnificus* in raw oysters (available on internet).
- c) Risk assessment of choleraogenic *Vibrio Cholerae* 01 and 0139 in warm-water shrimp in international trade (in review).
- d) Risk assessment of *Campylobacter* in broilers chickens. Interpretative summary (in review).
- e) Risk assessment of *Campylobacter* in broilers chickens. Technical report (in review).
- f) Risk assessment of *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* in seafood (in review).
- g) Risk characterization of microbiological hazards in food (in review).

The Executive Committee is **invited** to note and comment on these developments.

PART III. FAO/WHO ACTIVITIES RELEVANT TO THE WORK OF CODEX

9. In addition to the on-going activities reported by FAO and WHO in ALINORM 05/28/9G and CAC/28 INF/5 (July 2005), a number of initiatives have been taken by FAO and WHO, in collaboration with relevant partner organizations and institutions, to (1) further enhance the respective roles of the agriculture and health sectors in ensuring the quality and safety of the food supply, (2) to strengthen FAO and WHO's role as neutral fora for negotiation and for exchange of information and experiences between the two organizations and with other partners in the field of food safety and quality; (3) to further strengthen cooperation and collaboration between the two organizations and with other partners in the field of food safety and quality; and (4) to upgrade the capacity of developing member countries in food safety and food quality assurance and support their effective participation in Codex work.

Capacity building in food safety and quality

Global and Regional Fora of Food Safety Regulators

10. An electronic discussion forum, addressing the objective, format, themes and timeframe/location of a potential Third FAO/WHO Global Forum of Food Safety Regulators (GF3) was reported in CAC/28 INF/13. A few additional comments were received from interested parties after the completion of 28th Session of the Commission, which have been posted on the e-forum website: www.foodsafetyforum.org/global2/eforum_en.asp. A preliminary meeting to discuss the possible convening of a GF3 has been proposed to be held in Canada in spring 2006.

11. In an effort to facilitate the discussion of practical actions and capacity building recommendations to promote food safety in the countries of Africa, FAO and WHO convened a *Regional Conference on Food Safety for Africa* in Harare, Zimbabwe from 3 to 6 October 2005. The Conference unanimously adopted a

resolution recommending a nine-point Five-year Strategic Plan for Food Safety in Africa for adoption by FAO and WHO governing bodies and the African Union, including numerous recommendations of practical actions to strengthen food safety systems in the region. The final report of the Conference, including the full texts of the recommendation, action plan, all papers presented, and opening speeches, is available from the Conference website: www.foodsafetyforum.org/african/index.asp

12. A *Regional Conference on Food Safety for the Americas and Caribbean* is planned to be held in San José, Costa Rica, from 6 to 9 December 2005. The Conference is being held at the request of member countries to meet their needs for policy guidance and capacity building in food safety. The working documents, conference room documents and all other background information for the Conference are available from the Conference website: www.foodsafetyforum.org/americas/index.asp

Supporting Material for Capacity Building

13. FAO and WHO are currently or have recently been engaged in the development of a number of manuals, guidelines and training materials that should facilitate the capacity building effort. Most of these materials are developed jointly except for a few which are prepared under specific field projects operated either by FAO or WHO. These include the following:

- Improving the Safety and Quality of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Training Manual and Resource Database (final project report and national action plans now available from www.fao.org/es/esn/food/food_fruits_en.stm; database has been updated; Chinese and Arabic versions under finalization; English, Spanish and French versions available from website or as a CD-ROM).
- FAO training resources on Good Hygiene Practices (GHPs) along the coffee chain to reduce the formation of ochratoxin A (now final and available from www.coffee-ota.org).
- Enhancing Participation in the Work of Codex – An FAO/WHO training package (final version now available electronically from www.fao.org/es/esn/food/capacity_codex_en.stm with printed copies available); training sessions using the materials are underway in various regions.
- Evaluation of Capacity Building Needs for Food Control (an FAO publication is undergoing pilot testing).
- Food Safety Risk Analysis - A framework manual and CD-ROM training pack (a joint FAO/WHO publication – peer review of manual to be implemented in December 2005).
- FAO/ICD/WHO Basic Awareness Course on Microbiological Risk Assessment (pilot tested in Slovenia, 27 to 29 September 2005; additional training courses will be implemented in 2006).
- FAO *Biosecurity* (food safety, animal and plant health) Risk Analysis Manual (peer reviewed from 2 to 4 November 2005).
- FAO Guidelines for Implementing *Biosecurity* Frameworks (being finalized; to be peer reviewed and pilot tested in early 2006).
- FAO/WHO Training Package for the Evaluation of Foods Derived from Modern Biotechnology (under preparation, to be further discussed in working session in December 2005).
- FAO/WHO Guidance Document for the Implementation of the Codex Guidelines on Foods Derived from Modern Biotechnology (under preparation, to be further discussed in working session in December 2005).
- FAO/WHO Guidance to Governments on the Application of HACCP in Small and Less Developed Businesses (peer review completed in September 2005; training sessions to be implemented in 2006).

All these materials, once finalized, will be issued in multi-lingual form for wider use by member countries.

Provision of Technical Assistance / Training Courses

14. In addition to those activities reported as part of the development of supporting material for capacity building, a number of technical assistance activities / training courses have been implemented or are planned, including the following:

- FAO Regional Workshop on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (Bangkok, Thailand, 14 – 16 September 2005)
- FAO Parallel Symposium on Food Safety (at the 18th International Nutrition Conference, Durban, South Africa, 22 September 2005)
- FAO Workshops on Improving the Quality and Safety of Fresh fruits and Vegetables: Africa (Arusha, Tanzania, 10 – 14 October 2005) and the Near East (Cairo, Egypt, 13 – 17 November 2005)
- Training Workshop on Food Safety Risk Analysis for North African Countries (Tunis, Tunisia, 25 – 26 November 2005)
- Codex training course (San José, Costa Rica, 4 – 5 December 2005)
- FAO/WHO Pilot Training Course on Implementing Food Standards within a Risk Analysis Framework. Implemented in selected countries in Asia (Bangkok, Thailand, 12 – 16 December 2005)
- FAO has also been involved as invited speakers or as part of the scientific committee of various activities related to food safety and quality that have been organized by other agencies. Many of these activities are reported on in the monthly FAO Food Safety and Quality Update Newsletter (archive available from www.fao.org/es/esn/fsqu_en.stm).

WHO Activities (World Health Assembly)

Expert Consultation on *Enterobacter sakazakii*

15. WHO in collaboration with FAO is acting on the request expressed at the last May World Health Assembly resolution on infant and young child nutrition to develop guidelines for care givers on safe preparation of powdered infant formula. The proposed guidelines will address different target groups in different parts of the world and cover different settings under which powdered infant formula is being prepared and handled.

16. WHO and FAO are further developing the risk assessment on *E.sakazakii* in powdered infant formula as requested by 37th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene². This will include additional modules developed for the mathematical model and an evaluation of the risk assessment by an Expert Consultation. The evaluation will also address proposed sampling plans and criteria for the control of *E.sakazakii* in powdered infant formula.

FAO Activities

Entry into force of the New Revised Text of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC 1997)

17. The new revised text of the IPPC entered into force on 2 October 2005, with the signature of the Convention by the required number of countries. The eighth meeting of the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures will take place in Rome from 3 – 7 April 2006.

² ALINORM 05/28/13, paragraph 52