



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES

Forty-fourth Session

Hangzhou, China 12-16 March 2012

MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM FAO AND WHO AND FROM THE 74TH MEETING OF THE JOINT FAO/WHO EXPERT COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES (JECFA)

1. This document provides information on FAO and WHO activities in the area of provision of scientific advice to Codex and Member countries, as well as other activities, which are of interest for CCFA.

Matters for information from the 74rd meeting of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA)

2. The results of the 74th meeting of JECFA on food additives are now available¹. The meeting report (WHO Technical Report Series No 966, 2011) is accessible through the WHO JECFA publications website: <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/chem/jecfa/publications/en/index.html>. The toxicological monographs (WHO FAS 65, 2012) will become available in due course. The specifications monographs (FAO JECFA Monographs 11, 2011) is available at the FAO JECFA website at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/i2358e/i2358e00.pdf>. All specifications monographs for food additives and flavouring agents are available in the updated on-line editions of the respective databases at the FAO JECFA website: <http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/jecfa-additives/search.html> and <http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/jecfa-flav/search.html>. The Committee noted that although the specifications for potassium bromate prepared at the forty-fourth meeting and published in FAO Food and Nutrition Paper No. 52, Addendum 3, were not republished and included in the Combined Compendium of Food Additives Specifications, they were never formally withdrawn. As bromates are genotoxic carcinogens, the Committee reiterated the general principle that bromates should not be present in food as consumed and withdrew the specifications for potassium bromate.

Publications and Other Provision of Scientific Advice from FAO and WHO

3. Results of relevant JECFA evaluations on food additives are included in the following publications:

- Report of the 73rd JECFA - Evaluation of certain food additives and contaminants. WHO TRS 960, 2011.
- Report of the 74th JECFA - Evaluation of certain food additives and contaminants. WHO TRS 966, 2011.
- Monographs of the 73rd JECFA - Safety evaluation of certain food additives and contaminants. WHO Food Additives Series No. 64, 2011.
- Compendium of Food Additive Specifications, 74th JECFA meeting. FAO JECFA Monographs 11, 2011.

4. The 75th meeting of JECFA was held 7-17 November 2011 in Rome, Italy and was dedicated to residues of veterinary drugs in foods. The summary report is available at http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/agns/pdf/jecfa/JECFA_75_summary_report.pdf and <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/chem/jecfa/summaries/Summary75.pdf>

¹ See the Report of the 74th Meeting of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives can be found at: http://whqlibdoc.who.int/trs/WHO_TRS_966_eng.pdf.

5. A joint FAO/WHO ad hoc expert meeting on dietary exposure assessment for veterinary drug residues in food was held in November 2011 in conjunction with the 75th JECFA meeting. The call for data was published at http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/jecfa/JECFA_Call_for_data_food_consumption.pdf. The draft report is currently being reviewed by participants at the 75th JECFA meeting and after finalization will become available for public comment.

Global Initiative for Food-related Scientific Advice (GIFSA)

6. GIFSA is a mechanism established by FAO and WHO to facilitate the provision of extra-budgetary resources for scientific advice activities. For additional information and advice on the procedure for making a donation/contribution, contact Ms Dominique Di Biase, Resource Mobilization and Operations Support Service (Dominique.DiBiase@fao.org; Tel: + 39 06 57055391) at FAO; and Dr Angelika Tritscher, Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses, WHO (tritschera@who.int; Tel: + 41 22 7913569). In addition, FAO has developed a Strategy for the Provision of Scientific Advice for Food Safety (2010-2013) which provides donors with an overview of how resources provided through GIFSA would boost scientific advice activities. For more information, contact: Marisa.Caipo@fao.org.

FAO/WHO Guidance for application of Risk Analysis during food safety emergencies

7. As part of the joint FAO/WHO publications series of tools (framework or guidance) during an emergency on food safety, FAO and WHO member states have expressed the need to generate guidance for application of risk analysis during food safety emergencies. Even though the elements for conducting a risk analysis have been documented by Codex, the process of applying the risk analysis concept operationally during an emergency has not been sufficiently addressed. Guidance is particularly needed to take management decisions, in communicating risk in the face of time constraints, lack of data and even knowledge gaps and establishing the necessary risk analysis procedures within the framework of a country's food safety emergency response plan. This guidance has been developed by a joint FAO/WHO Workshop (Rome, 21-25 March 2011) and is now available at: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/ba0092e/ba0092e00.pdf>

Requests for providing scientific advice

8. Both organizations continue to jointly prioritise the requests for scientific advice taking into consideration the criteria proposed by Codex as well as the requests for advice from Member Countries and the availability of resources. A description of the current requests for scientific advice posed to FAO and WHO directly by Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies as well as meetings being planned by FAO and WHO in response to requests from member countries is available in the report on FAO and WHO matters to the forthcoming session of the CCEXEC ([CX/EXEC/12/66/7](http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/cxexec12667/cxexec12667.pdf)) and a further update will be presented at the next CAC. In prioritizing the requests for scientific advice to be addressed, FAO and WHO continue considering the set of criteria for the prioritization proposed by Codex (ALINORM 05/28/3, para. 75) as well as the requests of advice from Member Countries and the availability of resources.

9. FAO and WHO would like to emphasize the severe financial problems faced by the Organizations for the scientific advice program. The current financial situation does not allow anymore responding to all requests for scientific advice, including requests brought forth by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. It has to be emphasized that this scientific advice forms the basis for the respective Codex Standards. Efforts need to be undertaken by Members to provide support for scientific advice activities in order to be able to support the work of Codex.