



## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS

Thirty-second Session  
Bali, Indonesia  
October 2012

### MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND/OR OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES TO THE COMMITTEE ON FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS

#### A MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

##### Matters for information

##### *Standards and Related Texts Adopted at Step 8<sup>1</sup>*

##### Standard for Fish Sauce

1. The 34<sup>th</sup> Commission adopted Standard for Fish Sauce with editorial corrections to the INS numbers for Benzoates and Sorbates and noted the reservation expressed by the European Union to the use of Caramel III-ammonia caramel (INS 150c) for safety reasons<sup>2</sup>;

##### Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products (section on smoked fish and relevant definitions)

2. The 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission adopted the section on smoked fish and relevant definitions with editorial amendments<sup>3</sup>;

##### Amendment to Section 3.4.5.1 Water of the Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products

3. The 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission adopted the proposed draft amendment to section 3.4.5.1. The European Union welcomed the amendment and thanked delegations for their openness which allowed an agreement to be reached on the use of higher concentrations of chlorine in water than in potable water for the purpose of decontamination of fish and fishery products. It is the European Union's view that according to this agreement, the competent authority responsible at any step of the food chain, including in the country of consumption, can request that the substances used for decontamination are submitted for their approval<sup>4</sup>;

##### Amendment to the Standard for Quick Frozen Fish Sticks and the Amendment to the Preamble of Section 6, Aquaculture Products of the Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products

4. The 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission adopted these two amendments.

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<sup>1</sup> REP11/CAC, Appendix III

<sup>2</sup> REP11/CAC, para. 67

<sup>3</sup> REP11/CAC, para. 68

<sup>4</sup> REP11/CAC, para. 69

***Draft Standards and Related Texts Adopted at Step 5<sup>5</sup>***

1. The 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission adopted the:
  - Draft Standard for Quick Frozen Scallop Adductor Muscle Meat; and
  - Draft Standard for Fresh/Live and Frozen Abalone.

**Draft Standard for Quick Frozen Scallop Adductor Muscle Meat**

2. The 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission adopted the Proposed Draft Standard at Step 5. The Delegation of the United States of America while not opposed to the adoption of the proposed draft standard at Step 5, proposed that the Commission request the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products to exclude scallops with roe attached from the scope. The Delegation expressed the view that these scallops should best be dealt with in terms of the *Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs* due to the specific risks associated with these products, in particular biotoxins. However, there was no agreement to this proposal as it was clarified that the CCFFP had considered this matter and had concluded that scallop meat with roe attached did not necessarily pose an additional risk from biotoxins. Appropriate measures from the *Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs* could be transferred to the standard for scallop meat for the control of biotoxins. It was further noted that the Executive Committee had recommended that the CCFFP should complete this work as soon as possible and that reopening discussion on the scope could postpone the target date for its completion.

***Revocation of Existing Codex Standards and Related Texts<sup>6</sup>***

3. The 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission agreed to revoke the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Smoked Fish* (CAC/RCP 25-1979).

***New Work<sup>7</sup>***

4. The Commission approved the following new work:
  - Proposed Draft Criteria/Parameters for screening methods for biotoxins in the Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs; and
  - Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products (section on sturgeon caviar)

**Proposed Draft Criteria/Parameters for screening methods for biotoxins in the *Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs***

5. It was noted that in the Project document under section 2 Relevance and Timeliness which explained the rationale for the new work used the mouse bioassay as an example of a method that would not fit the criteria for reference and confirmatory methods, work currently underway in the CCFFP. It was recognized that it was premature to cite methods for both the current work on criteria for reference and confirmatory methods as well as for the proposed new work on criteria for screening methods as the criteria were still under development. It was therefore agreed that the focus of the new work should be on the development of the criteria without pre-empting which methods, for example the mouse bioassay, may or may not meet the criteria for either the reference or screening methods. With this understanding, the Commission removed the reference to the mouse bioassay method and approved the new work<sup>8</sup>.

***Other matters***

6. The 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission adopted the draft and proposed draft food additive provisions as proposed by the CCFA with the following amendment<sup>9</sup>:
  - Deletion of note 16 “For use in glaze, coatings or decorations fruit, vegetables, meat or fish” in the provision for carotenoids in food category 9.1.1 “Fresh Fish”.

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<sup>5</sup> REP11/CAC, paras 118 and Appendix IV

<sup>6</sup> REP11/CAC, Appendix V

<sup>7</sup> REP11/CAC, Appendix VII

<sup>8</sup> REP11/CAC, para. 148

<sup>9</sup> REP11/CAC, para 56 and 58

7. The 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission adopted editorial amendments to replace section 5 of current standards for fish and fishery products and to replace references to revoked commodity specific codes of practice with the Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products and to align with the recommended wording of the Procedural Manual<sup>10</sup>:

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

### **Matters for information**

#### **Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission**

##### ***Critical Review for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts Draft Standards and Related Texts***

8. The 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee noted that due to the timing of the CCFFP, the provisions for additives and methods of analysis in fish sauce had not been endorsed by the relevant committees and recommended that the Commission adopt the standard, with the understanding that endorsement would proceed afterwards and that any change would be brought to the next session of the Commission in 2012<sup>11</sup>.

9. The 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee noted that the Proposed Draft Standard for Quick Frozen Scallop Adductor Muscle Meat had been under consideration since 2001 and encouraged the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products to finalize the standard at its next session in October 2012, which would allow the adoption of the standard in 2013. One member noted that this might not be possible as further issues might arise in the finalization of the standard<sup>12</sup>.

#### ***Monitoring of Standards Development***

##### **Draft Standard for Smoked Fish, Smoke-Flavoured Fish and Smoke-Dried Fish**

10. The 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee noted that most issues had been resolved, the standard being held at Step 7 pending completion of the section on additives. The Committee encouraged the CCFFP to complete this work at its next session.

11. The 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee recalled its earlier recommendations and noted that the Standard was expected to be finalized in October 2012<sup>13</sup>.

##### **Proposed Draft Code of Practice on the Processing of Scallop Meat**

12. As delays had occurred due to several issues to be addressed in the corresponding standard, which was scheduled for adoption at Step 5, the 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee noted that work on the code was expected to progress more rapidly, and encouraged the CCFFP to set a realistic target date for its completion<sup>14</sup>.

##### **Proposed Draft Performance Criteria for Methods for Marine Biotoxins and Proposed Draft Revision of the Procedure for Inclusion of Additional Species**

13. The 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee advised the CCFFP to consider simplifying its decision criteria for the inclusion of new species.

14. The 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee recalled its earlier recommendations and noted that the proposed Draft Performance Criteria for Methods for Marine Biotoxins was expected to be finalized in October 2012 for adoption in 2013 and that the revision of the Procedure for Inclusion of Additional Species would be considered for finalization and alternatively, its discontinuation would be considered<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> REP11/CAC, para 127

<sup>11</sup> REP11/EXEC, para. 9

<sup>12</sup> REP11/EXEC, para. 16

<sup>13</sup> REP12/EXEC12, para. 14

<sup>14</sup> REP11/EXEC, para. 24

### ***Organic Aquaculture***<sup>15</sup>

15. In reply to a question on the responsibility of the Committee on Food Labelling for organically produced foods, including organic aquaculture, it was recalled that this work had been initially allocated to the CCFL because it related to the definition of a claim, and that the Committee should consult with other technical committees when technical issues arise in its work. The Secretariat recalled that specialists of organic agriculture participated in CCFL in their delegations and that technical issues were discussed in detail. In the case of organic aquaculture, it had been agreed to ask the advice of the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products, and the FAO Fisheries Department was involved in the development of the new section.

### **Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH)**

#### Draft Standard for Smoked Fish, Smoke-Flavoured Fish and Smoke-Dried Fish<sup>16</sup>

16. The 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Committee **endorsed** the hygiene provisions in the Draft Standard for Smoked Fish, Smoke-Flavoured Fish and Smoke-Dried Fish as amended by CCFFP.

17. The Committee noted that part of the rationale provided by CCFFP for the retention of the second paragraph of 6.5 *Clostridium botulinum* that no outbreaks had been reported from the consumption of uneviscerated fish was not accurate, since outbreaks had been reported from these products.

### **Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL)**<sup>17</sup>

18. The 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee endorsed the labelling provisions in the Standard for Fish Sauce.

### **Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)**<sup>18</sup>

19. The 44<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee endorsed the food additive provisions of the Standard for Fish Sauce, as amended by the CCFA Working Group on Endorsement, with the exception of the provisions for tartrates, which should have a numeric Maximum Level, since these additives have a numerical ADI.

20. The Delegations of the European Union and Norway expressed a reservation concerning the provisions for caramel III – ammonia caramel (INS 150c) and caramel IV – sulphite ammonia caramel (INS 150d) because they had safety concerns.

21. The Committee encouraged the CCFFP and other commodity committees to cross-reference the GSFA in their standards, wherever possible, and to accompany their proposals for endorsement with technological justifications to facilitate the endorsement and reduce inconsistencies with the GSFA. The Committee encouraged delegations to take an active role in promoting better understanding of the GSFA and a better communication between commodity committee and the CCFA.

### **Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS)**<sup>19</sup>

#### Standard for Fish Sauce (CODEX STAN 302-2011)

22. For **amino acid nitrogen**, the references to both AOAC methods were corrected and the methods used to obtain the result by calculation were **endorsed**. The Committee noted the validation data provided by Thailand for the extension of the scope of the method for fish sauce, as the method was originally designed for fertilisers and encouraged Thailand to publish the data.

23. As regards **pH**, the Committee recalled that AOAC method 981.12 was already endorsed as Type III for processed fruits and vegetables. It was proposed to endorse it as Type IV because no collaborative studies existed for fish sauce and due to the dilution required for pH measurement. The Committee however noted that the dilution has no impact on the use of the method and **endorsed it as Type III**.

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<sup>15</sup> REP11/EXEC, para 27

<sup>16</sup> REP12/FH, para.10

<sup>17</sup> REP11/FL, para. 21

<sup>18</sup> REP11/FA, paras 41-43

<sup>19</sup> ALINORM 10/33/23, para. 58

24. For **sodium chloride**, the reference to the 1981 FAO Technical Paper 219 was not endorsed as it was not readily available. Although AOAC 937.09 was currently a Type II method, it was **endorsed as Type IV** as there were no collaborative studies for fish sauce. A consequential amendment was made to the status of this method for Boiled Dried Salted Anchovies. **AOAC 976.18 was endorsed as Type II**. As **AOAC 976.19** is a proprietary method., it was **not endorsed** and the decision was deferred until the general use of the proprietary methods had been address.

25. The method for the **determination of histamine**, which was already endorsed for fish and fishery products, was **confirmed as Type II**, and the reference to “**other scientifically equivalent validated methods**” was **deleted** as it was not consistent with the current approach to method endorsement.

#### **Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS**

##### Proposed Amendment of the Generic Model Official Certificate)<sup>20</sup>

26. The 31<sup>st</sup> Session of CCFFP had prepared a proposal to review the *Generic Model Official Certificate* to include specific text related to fish and fishery products.

27. The 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems noted that the certificates developed by the Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP) and the CCFFP were unique in Codex and that the inclusion of a specific commodity attestation in the *Generic Model Official Certificate* might lead to the proliferation of such attestations for other products and dilute the objective of a “generic” certificate.

28. The Committee concluded that it was premature to consider the inclusion of the CCFFP proposal. The Committee further noted that a holistic approach to attestations was the subject of a discussion paper at the session.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF)**<sup>22</sup>

29. The 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee agreed to the development of a discussion paper on the review of the guideline level for methylmercury in fish and predatory fish through an electronic Working Group led by Norway and co-chaired by Japan for consideration and discussion at the next session with the view of identification of possible actions or new work on this issue.

#### **Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF)**<sup>23</sup>

30. The 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee considered Proposed Draft Sampling Plans for Residue Control for Aquatic Animal Products and Derived Edible Products of Aquatic Origin (Table C, Annex B of the *Guidelines for the Design and Implementation of National Regulatory Food Safety Assurance Programmes Associated with the Use of Veterinary Drugs in Food Producing Animals* (CAC/GL 71-2009).

31. The Committee agreed to circulate the Proposed Draft Table C for comments at Step 3, review by an electronic working group for further circulation and comments, if time allowed, and consideration by its next session.

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<sup>20</sup> REP 12/FICS, paras 9 - 11

<sup>21</sup> See REP12/FICS, paras 47 – 51 for discussion and conclusion on attestations.

<sup>22</sup> REP12/CF, para. 174

<sup>23</sup> REP12/RVDF, paras. 133 – 140 for full discussion and Appendix VII for the proposed draft Table C

## **Matters for action**

### **Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH)<sup>24</sup>**

#### Criteria for *Salmonella* in the Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs (CODEX STAN 292-2008)<sup>25</sup>

32. The 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Committee on Food Hygiene agreed to recommend to CCFFP to remove the criterion for *Salmonella* (section I-6/5 from the Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs (CODEX STAN 292-2008) and to include in the *Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products* (CAC/RCP 52-2003), Section 7.2.2.2, the following: “When appropriate, taking into account the epidemiological situation as indicated by the results of environmental monitoring and/or other surveillance, the competent authority may decide to implement a criterion for *Salmonella*.”

33. The Committee is **invited** to consider the recommendation of CCFH to remove the criterion for *Salmonella* (section I-6.5) from the *Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs*.

### **Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)<sup>18</sup>**

#### Standard for Fish Sauce (CODEX STAN 302-2011)

34. The 44<sup>th</sup> Session of the CCFA did not endorse the provisions for tartrates which should have a Maximum Level, since these additives have a numerical ADI.

35. The Committee recommended that the CCFFP consider a ML of 200mg/kg (as tartaric acid), which was under consideration for food category 12.6.4 “Clear sauce (e.g., fish sauce)” of the *General Standard for Food Additives* (GSFA).

36. The Committee is **invited** to consider the above recommendation of CCFA.

#### Proposed Draft Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Viruses in Food<sup>26</sup>

37. The 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Committee advanced the proposed draft Guidelines to Step 5/8 for adoption by the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission. The proposed draft Guidelines include an annex on Control of Hepatitis A virus (HAV) and Norovirus (NoV) in bivalve molluscs.

38. The 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission adopted the proposed Draft Guidelines with some editorial amendments as proposed in CX/CAC 12/35/4 and further agreed to forward the Guidelines to the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products for their information and/or comment.<sup>27</sup>

39. The Committee is **invited** to note the adoption of the Guidelines and to provide comments, if any.

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<sup>24</sup> REP11/FH, paras 9 – 10 and Appendix II

<sup>25</sup> REP12/FH, paras 7 - 8

<sup>26</sup> REP12/FH, 39 – 46 (for discussion on the Annex I – Control of Hepatitis A virus (HAV) and Norovirus (NoV) in bivalve molluscs)

<sup>27</sup> REP12/CAC, para. 35