

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
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ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 5

ALINORM 04/27/35-App.VI
CX/FFV 05/12/11

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

*Twelfth Session,
Mexico City, Mexico, 16 - 20 May 2005*

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Proposals for Amendments to the Priority List for the Standardization of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Comments from (Colombia, Guatemala, Tonga-Fiji, Australia)

COLOMBIA

PROPOSED DRAFT – CODEX COMMITTEE ON FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Codex Standard for Passion Fruit

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STANDARD

The Standard application scope is the Passion Fruit (*Passiflora ligularis* Juss) which is conditioned and fresh packed for merchandising and human consumption. The objective of the Standard making is the consideration in a document of international covering, of the physical and chemical requirements characteristics of the passion fruit, taking in account the specific characteristics of this fruit, as well as the Codex guidelines for human consumption produces.

OPPORTUNITY AND ACTUALITY

Colombia proposed to include the elaboration of the Passion Fruit Standard according to document 8 from the Session of the *Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* celebrated in Mexico City,

It is necessary to include this topic due to the commercial importance of this produce in Colombia and other countries located in the tropical zone; taking in account their climatic conditions which are suitable for cultivating this fruit. Such as for the *pitahaya* and *uchuva* for which there are Codex Standards –also proposed by Colombia-, the passion fruit is a fruit largely cultivated in the Country and at present it conforms the Colombia's group of export produces.

According to statistics made by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the total farm area has been increased each year and, consequently, the production volume. For that reason, it is schedule to increase the quantity of export produce.

Following is showed the latest data related to the farming and merchandising of this fruit:

The last five years, the total area of passion fruit farming was increased 20% a year. At present, the total area is 23.86 sq. Kilometre (2386 hectare), and the produce volume is 25311 tones each year.

About the export of passion fruit and other varieties, the main destiny is towards Germany, Canada, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Spain, France, Holland, Italy, Panama, United Kingdom, Switzerland and Venezuela, which consume 96% of the exported produce, that in 2003 was of 668 tons.

MAIN QUESTIONS THAT MUST BE TREATED

The objective of making the Standard is:

- To establish the minimum requirements for the Passion Fruit, which must be met independently of the product quality class.
- To define the classes in which the passion fruit may be classify according to the fruit appearance characteristics.
- To consider the classes of size in which the passion fruit may be merchandized considering the equatorial diameter of produce.
- To establish the allowed tolerances of quality and size that passion fruit should have to be packaged.
- To include the arrangements about produce uniformity and used packaging.
- To take in account the information for marking and labelling according to guidelines of the Codex Alimentarius.
- Include the guidelines established by the Codex Alimentarius according to the contaminants affecting the fruit.
- To apply the guidelines Codex regarding to the hygiene requirements for manipulating food produces.

Evaluation concerning criteria to establish work priorities

It is necessary to make the standard about passion fruit with the purpose of removing any impediment to international trade. This is in order to protect customer of fraudulent actions.

Besides the definition of characteristics for passion fruit it is also pretended to protect the consumer health.

OPORTUNITY ACCORDING TO THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE CODEX

The purpose of making a standard for the passion fruit is to promote the total application of the standards taking in account the local regulations of each country in order to facilitate the international trade. In the same way, the adoption of this class of standards allows to reduce risks produced due to the transmission of agents affecting health consumer.

INFORMATION ABOUT RELATION BETWEEN THE CODEX DOCUMENTS PROPOSAL AND THE PRESENT DOCUMENTS

The proposal for making a standard for the passion fruit is included in the Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

Identification of scientific support necessity and availability of this sort of advice.

Information from the Investigation Group working in Colombia in characterizing the tropical fruits has been taken as a reference for doing the Draft Codex Standard. Therefore, in the event of requiring any additional information it is possible to consult this experts group.

Identification of all technical contributions necessities to the standards preceding external Identification organizations in order to schedule theses contributions.

None

Schedule proposed for making new Works including starting date, proposed date to adopt step 5 and the proposed date to the adoption by the Commission.

Request for the prior examination of the Passion Fruit Standard elaboration:: 2005

Date of examination of the review Project: 2006

Adoption of the project at step 5: 2007

Adoption at Step 8 of the Standard Project:2008

PROPOSED DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR PASSION FRUITS

(At Step ____)

1. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This Standard applies to the commercial varieties of passion fruit grown from *Passiflora ligularis* Juss, to be supplied fresh to the consumer, after preparation and packaging.¹

2. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY**2.1 Minimum Requirements**

In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the passion fruits must be:

- whole;
- free of cracks in rind;
- firm in consistency;
- fresh in appearance;
- sound, produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded;
- clean, practically free of any visible foreign matter;
- free of abnormal external moisture, excluding condensation following removal from cold storage;
- free of any foreign smell and/or taste²;
- a pedicel detached at first knot;
- free of pests affecting the general appearance of the produce;
- practically free of damage caused by pests;
- keep the natural wax layer which covers the fruit at harvest.
- free of broken skin/cracks.

2.1.1 The passion fruits must have been carefully picked and have reached an appropriate degree of development and ripeness³ in accordance with criteria proper to the variety and/or commercial variety, and to the area in which they are grow.

The development and condition of the passion fruits must be such as to enable them:

- To withstand transport and handling, and
- To arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination.

2.2 Classification

Passion fruits are classified in three classes defined below:

2.2.1 "Extra" Class

Passion Fruits in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial variety. They must be free defects, with the exception of very slight superficial defects, provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package.

¹ Governments, when indicating the acceptance of the Codex Standard for Passion Fruits, should notify the Commission which provisions of the Standard would be accepted for application at the point of import, and which provisions would be accepted for application at the point of export.

² This provision accepts the smell produced by preservatives used according to corresponding provisions.

³ Maturity of passion fruits shall be defined for its external colouring and confirmed when the total soluble solid contents, acidity and maturity rate be inspected.

2.2.2 Class I

Passion Fruits in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety and/or commercial variety. The following slight defects, however, may be allowed, provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package:

- Slight defects in shape, development, colouring, and scarring. These defects shall not exceed 10% of the total surface area;

The defects must not, in any case, affect the flash of the produce.

2.2.3 Class II

This class includes passion fruits which do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes, but satisfy the minimum requirements specified in Section 2.1 above. The following defects, however, may be allowed provided that the passion fruits retain their essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

- Defects in shape such as protrusion on stalk adjacent zone;
- Defects in shape, skin appearance, lack of wax and superficial scarring. These defects shall not exceed 20% of the total surface area;

The defects must not, in any case, affect the flash of the produce.

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Size is determined by maximum diameter of the equatorial section or by weight of each fruit according to the following table:

Size Code	Diameter (mm)	Weight per fruit per grams
A	≥ 78	140
B	77 – 71	128
C	70 – 66	122
D	65 – 61	106
E	60 – 56	83
F	≤ 55	74

4. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

Tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each package for produce not satisfying the requirements of the class indicated.

4.1 Quality Tolerances

4.1.1 “Extra” Class

Five percent by number or weight of passion fruits not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class I or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

4.1.2 Class I

Ten percent by number or weight of passion fruits not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class II or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

4.1.3 Class II

Ten percent by number or weight of passion fruits satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements, with the exception of produce affected by rotting or any other deterioration rendering it unfit for consumption.

4.2 Size Tolerances

For all classes: 10% by number or weight of passion fruits corresponding to the size immediately above and/or below that indicated on the package.

5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

5.1 Uniformity

The contents of each package must be uniform and contain only passion fruits of the same origin, variety and/or commercial variety, quality, size and colour.

The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of the entire contents.

5.2 Packaging

Passion Fruits must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly.

The materials used inside the package must be new⁴, clean, and of a quality such as to avoid causing any external or internal damage to the produce. The use of materials, particularly of paper or stamps bearing commercial specifications is allowed, provided the printing or labelling has been done with non-toxic ink or glue.

Passion Fruits shall be packed in each container in compliance with the Recommended International Code of Practice for Packaging and Transport of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 44-195).

5.2.1 Description of Containers

The container shall meet the quality, hygiene, ventilation and resistance characteristics to ensure suitable handling, shipping and preserving of the passion fruits.

Packages must be free of all foreign matter and smell.

6. PROVISIONS CONCERNING MARKING OR LABELLING

6.1 Consumer Packages

In addition to the requirements of the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991), the following specific provisions apply:

6.1.1 Nature of Produce

If the produce is not visible from the outside, each package shall be labelled as to the name of the produce and, optionally with the name of the variety and/or commercial variety.

6.2 Non-retail Containers

Each package must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legible and indelibly marked and visible from the outside, or in the documents accompanying the shipment.⁵

6.2.1 Identification

Name and address of exporter, packer and/or dispatcher. Identification code (optional).⁶

6.2.2 Nature of Produce

Name of the produce "Passion Fruit" if the contents are not visible from the outside.

6.2.3 Origin of Produce

Country of origin and, optionally, district where grown, or national, regional or local place name..

⁴ For the purposes of this Standard, this includes recycled material of food-grade quality.

⁵ Governments, when indicating their acceptance of this Standard, should notify the Commission as to which provisions of this Section apply.

⁶ The national legislation of a number of countries requires the explicit declaration of the name and address. However, in the case where a code mark is used, the reference "packer and/or dispatcher (or equivalent abbreviations)" has to be indicated in close connection with the code mark.

6.2.4 Commercial Identification

- Class;
- Size; (size code);
- Number of pieces (optional);
- Net weight (optionally).

6.2.5 Official Inspection Mark (optional)**7. CONTAMINANTS****7.1 Heavy Metals**

Passion Fruits shall comply with those maximum levels for heavy metals established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this commodity..

7.2 Pesticides Residues

Passion Fruits shall comply with those maximum pesticide residue limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this commodity.

8. HYGIENE

8.1 It is recommended that the produce covered by the provisions of this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 3-1997), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

The produce should comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997).

PROPOSED DRAFT – CODEX COMMITTEE ON FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**Codex Standard for Tree Tomatoes (Tamarillo)****PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STANDARD APPLICABILITY**

The Standard application scope is for Tree Tomatoes (*Passiflora ligularis* Juss) which are conditioned and fresh packed for merchandising and human consumption. The objective making this Standard is the consideration in a document of international covering, of the physical and chemical requirements characteristics of the tree tomatoes, taking in account the specific characteristics of this fruit, as well as the Codex guidelines for human consumption produces.

OPPORTUNITY AND ACTUALITY

Colombia proposed to include the elaboration of the Tree Tomatoes Standard according to document 8 from the Session of the *Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* celebrated in Mexico City,

It is necessary to include this topic due to the commercial importance of this produce in Colombia and other countries located in the tropical zone; taking in account their climatic conditions which are suitable for cultivating this fruit. Such as for the *pitahaya* and *uchuva* for which there are Codex Standards –also proposed by Colombia-, the tree tomato is a fruit largely cultivated in the Country and at present it conforms the Colombia's group of export produces.

According to statistics made by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the total farm area has been increased each year and, consequently, the production volume. For that reason, it is schedule to increase the quantity of export produce.

Following is showed the latest data related to the farming and merchandising of this fruit:

On the tree tomatoes production it has noted an increase in the farming area as the quantity of produced fruits. The last five years, the total farming area was increased 8% average each year. At present it has became 8513 hectare. On the other hand, the production volume has increased about 12% each year, so that the actual production is 164314 tons of fruit each year.

On the export of tree tomatoes, the main destiny is towards Germany, Canada, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Spain, France, Holland, and Switzerland, which consume 93% of the exported produce, that in 2003 was of 569 tons.

MAIN QUESTIONS THAT MUST BE TREATED

The objective of making the Standard is:

- To establish the minimum requirements for the Tree Tomatoes, which must be met independently of the product quality class.
- To define the classes in which the Tree Tomatoes may be classify according to the fruit appearance characteristics.
- To consider the classes of size in which the Tree Tomatoes may be merchandized considering the equatorial diameter of produce.
- To establish the allowed tolerances of quality and size that the Tree Tomatoes should have to be packaged.
- To include the arrangements about produce uniformity and used packaging.
- To take in account the information for marking and labelling according to guidelines of the Codex Alimentarius.
- Include the guidelines established by the Codex Alimentarius according to the contaminants affecting the fruit.
- To apply the guidelines Codex regarding to the hygiene requirements for manipulating food produces.

Evaluation concerning criteria to establish work priorities

It is necessary to make the standard about tree tomatoes with the purpose of removing any impediment to international trade. This is in order to protect customer of fraudulent actions.

Besides the definition of characteristics for tree tomatoes it is also pretended to protect the consumer health.

OPPORTUNITY ACCORDING TO THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE CODEX

The purpose of making a standard for the tree tomatoes is to promote the total application of the standards taking in account the local regulations of each country in order to facilitate the international trade. In the same way, the adoption of this class of standards allows to reduce risks produced due to the transmission of agents affecting health consumer.

INFORMATION ABOUT RELATION BETWEEN THE CODEX DOCUMENTS PROPOSAL AND THE PRESENT DOCUMENTS

The proposal for making a standard for the tree tomatoes is included in the Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

Identification of scientific support necessity and availability of this sort of advice.

Information from the Investigation Group working in Colombia in characterizing the tropical fruits has been taken as a reference for doing the Draft Codex Standard. Therefore, in the event of requiring any additional information it is possible to consult this experts group.

Identification of all technical contributions necessities to the standards preceding external Identification organizations in order to schedule theses contributions.

None

Schedule proposed for making new works including starting date, proposed date to adopt step 5 and the proposed date to the adoption by the Commission.

Request for the prior examination of the Tree Tomatoes Standard elaboration: 2005

Date of examination of the review Project: 2006

Adoption of the project at step 5: 2007

Adoption at Step 8 of the Standard Project:2008

PROPOSED DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR TREE TOMATOES (TAMARILLO)

(At Step ____)

1. DEFINITION OF PRODUCE

This Standard applies to commercial varieties of red tree tomatoes grown from *Cyphomandra Betacea* Sent, to be supplied fresh to consumer, after packaging⁷.

2. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALITY

2.1 Minimum Requirements

In all classes, subject to the special provisions for each class and the tolerances allowed, the tree tomatoes must be:

- whole;
- free of cracks in rind;
- firm in consistency;
- Fresh in appearance;
- Sound, produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded;
- Clean, practically free of nay visible foreign matter;
- Free of abnormal external moisture, excluding condensation following removal from cold storage;
- Free of any foreign smell and/or taste⁸;
- a pedicel detached at first knot;;
- practically free of pests affecting the general appearance of the produce;
- practically free of damage caused by pests.

The minimum contents of pulp shall be 56%.

2.1.1 The tree tomatoes must have been carefully picked and have reached and appropriate degree of development and ripeness⁹ in accordance with criteria proper to the variety and/or commercial type and to the area in which they are grown.

The development and condition of the tree tomatoes must be such as to enable them:

- to withstand transport and handling, and
- to arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination.

2.2 Classification

Tomatoes are classified in three classes defined below:

2.2.1 “Extra” Class

Tree tomatoes in this class must be of superior quality. They must be characteristic of the variety. They must be free of defects, with the exception of very slight superficial defects provided, these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package.

⁷ Governments, when indicating the acceptance of the Codex Standard for tree tomatoes, should notify the Commission which provisions of the Standard World be accepted for application at the point of import, and which provisions World be accepted for application at the point of export.

⁸ This provision admits the smell caused for preservatives used according with the corresponding regulation.

⁹ Maturity of tree tomatoes may be measured visually according to the external colouring and confirmed exploring the contents of flash, as well as the iodine test.

2.2.2 Class I

Tree tomatoes in this class must be of good quality. They must be characteristic of the variety. The following slight defects, however, may be allowed, provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package:

- slight skin defects not exceeding 10% of the total surface area, such as curved stalk;
- slight rind defects not exceeding 10% of the total surface, such as scars and stains;

defects must not, in any case, affect the flesh of the produce.

2.2.3 Class II

This class includes tree tomatoes which do not qualify for inclusion in the higher classes, but satisfy the minimum requirements specified in Section 2.1 above. The following defects, however, may be allowed, provided the tree tomatoes retain their essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation:

- defects in shape and iota elongation or flattening;
- defects in colouring, blemishes, scrapings scars which not cover more than 20% of the total area;

The defects must not, in any case, affect the flesh of the produce.

3. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING

Size is determined by the number of fruits per kilogram. There are two forms of presentation: in single fruit and in bunches; the size specification is as follows:

Size Code	Diameter (mm)	Weight per Fruit (gram)
A	≥ 61	129
B	60 – 55	118
C	54 - 51	99
D	50 – 46	83
E	≤ 45	66

4. PROVISIONS CONCERNING TOLERANCES

Tolerances in respect of quality and size shall be allowed in each package for produce not satisfying the requirements of the class indicated.

4.1 Quality Tolerances

4.1.1 “Extra” Class

Five percent by number or weight of tree tomatoes not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class I or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

4.1.2 Class I

Ten percent by number or weight of tree tomatoes not satisfying the requirements of the class, but meeting those of Class II or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that class.

4.1.3 Class II

Ten percent by number or weight of tree tomatoes satisfying neither the requirements of the class nor the minimum requirements, with the exception of produce affected by rotting or any other deterioration rendering it unfit for consumption.

4.2 Size Tolerances

For all classes, ten percent by number or weight of tree tomatoes corresponding the size immediately above and/or below that indicated on the package.

5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PRESENTATION

5.1 Uniformity

The content of each package must be uniform and contain only tree tomatoes of the same origin, variety and/or commercial type, quality, size and colour. The visible part of the contents of the package must be representative of the entire contents.

5.2 Packaging

Tree tomatoes must be packed in such a way as to protect the produce properly.

The materials used inside the package must be new¹⁰, clean, and of a quality such as to avoid causing any external or internal damage to the produce. The use of materials, particularly of paper or stamps bearing trade specifications is allowed, provided the printing or labelling has been done with non-toxic ink or glue.

Tree tomatoes shall be packed in each container in compliance with the Recommended International Code of Practice for Packaging and Transport of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 44-1995).

5.2.1 Description of Containers

The container shall meet the quality, hygiene, ventilation and resistance characteristics to ensure suitable handling, shipping and proper preserving of the tree tomatoes. Packages must be free of all foreign matter and smell.

6. MARKING OR LABELLING

6.1 Consumer packages

In addition to the requirements of the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991), the following specific provision apply:

6.1.1 Nature of Produce

If the produce is not visible from the outside, each package shall be labelled as to the name of the produce and optionally may be labelled as to name of the variety and/or commercial type.

6.2 Non-Retail Containers

Each package must bear the following particulars, in letters grouped on the same side, legible and indelibly marked, and visible from the outside, or in the documents accompanying the shipment¹¹.

6.2.1 Identification

Name and address of exporter, packer and/or dispatcher. Identification code (optional)¹².

6.2.2 Nature of Produce

Name of produce if contents are not visible from the outside.

6.2.3 Origin of Produce

Country of origin and, optionally, district where grown, or national, regional or local place name..

¹⁰ For the purpose of this Standard, this includes recycled material of food-grade quality.

¹¹ Governments, when indicating their acceptance of this Standard, should notify the Commission as to which provisions of this Section apply.

¹² The national legislation of a number of countries requires the explicit declaration of the name and address. However, in the case where a code mark is used, the reference "packer and/or dispatcher (or equivalent abbreviations)" has to be indicated in close connection with the code mark.

6.2.4 Commercial Identification

- Class;
- Size (size code);
- Number of pieces (optional);
- Peso neto (facultativo).

6.2.5 Official Inspection Mark (optional)**7. CONTAMINANTS****7.1 Heavy Metals**

Tree tomatoes shall comply with the maximum levels for heavy metals established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for this product.

7.2 Pesticide Residues

Tree tomatoes shall comply with those maximum pesticide residue limits established by the Codex Alimentarius.

8. HYGIENE

8.1 It is recommended that the produce covered by the provisions of this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 3-1997), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

The produce should comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997).

GUATEMALA

Guatemala offers the following comments on the proposals for the amendment to the priority list for the standardization of fresh fruits and vegetables (ALINORM 04/27/35, Appendix VI)

VI Appendix

1. Priority determined for standardization of fresh fruits and vegetables is described on the following:

FRUITS:

Avocado (revision)

Pineapple

Strawberry

Pears

Kiwi

Passion Fruit

Durian

Guatemala suggests including fruit Maracuyà between standardization priorities, as a variety of Granadilla.

VEGETABLES:

Garlic

Onion

Pepper

Yam

Chilli Pepper

Chanterelle

2. Suggestion about the names of fruits and vegetables

It is suggested that moreover the common name of fruits and vegetables, this name should come with its scientific or technical name. All for the facilitation to comprehend which product it is.

TONGA AND FIJI

PROJECT DOCUMENTATION

Proposal to Revise the Codex Standard for Sweet Cassava

1. The Purposes and Scope of the Standard:

The purpose of this request is to revise the definition for “sweet cassava” and the size specifications.

2. Its Relevance and Timeliness:

(i) Hydrogen Cyanide Level that Defines Sweet Cassava for Direct Consumption

Fijians and Tongans have been consuming cassava varieties cultivated in their respective islands for many years as one of their staple foods. These cassava varieties undergo minimal preparation, normally boiling or baking. The levels of hydrogen cyanide in these cassava varieties range from 10 – 220 mg/kg of fresh cassava (refer to Table 1 in Annex 1). No adverse health effects have been recorded in both islands associated with the consumption of these cassava varieties.

With the increasing migration of Fijians and Tongans to mainly New Zealand, Australia and the United States, export of peeled raw frozen cassava has increased over the past 30 years, making cassava a major export commodity. Although the export quantity and value (refer to Table 2 in Annex 1) may not be significant compared to foods exported by developed countries, the amounts exported supplement the food supply of Fijians and Tongans living overseas and the foreign earnings contribute significantly to the local island economies and more so generate income to small farm holders.

The Codex Standard for Sweet Cassava was adopted in 2003¹³. Subsequently, the Food Standard Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) adopted in May 2004 a new standard for cassava in accordance with the Codex standard. The FSANZ standard classified cassava varieties other than sweet cassava under their “*Prohibited and Restricted Plants and Fungi, Schedule 1*”. Plants in Schedule 1 must not be intentionally added to food or offered for sale as food. Should Australia and New Zealand enforce their new standard for cassava, the export of cassava from Fiji and Tonga may be jeopardized.

It is noted that due to lack of quantitative toxicological and epidemiological information, a safe level of intake of cyanogenic glycosides could not be established by JECFA¹⁴. However, in the interest of differentiating between “*sweet*” and “*bitter*” varieties and in addressing concerns related to the potential excessive intake of cyanogenic glycoside from both varieties, the CCFFV decided to add a footnote to define the term “*sweet*” cassava varieties as those that contain less than 50 mg/kg hydrogen cyanide (fresh weight basis)¹⁵. It is also noted that the level was only proposed to differentiate between cassava varieties as opposed to establishing a maximum level and the CCFFV was of the opinion that the level was not subject to endorsement *per se*¹⁶.

Thus, setting a level of no more than 50 mg/kg of hydrogen cyanide to differentiate “*sweet*” and “*bitter*” are empirical judgments that are not based on science hence should be revised.

(ii) Sizing of Cassava

The normal length of cassava which Fiji and Tonga use for boiling ranges from 10-20 cm and could be longer for baking. The export of cassava is targeted for direct consumption of Fijians and Tongans overseas. The most commonly used method of cooking overseas is boiling, hence the length of the products is such that the consumer puts it directly into the pot. In order to reflect the products currently traded in the international markets, the length of the cassava should not be less than 10 cm instead of 20 cm.

(iii) Request for Review

Given that cassava is one of the staple foods and one of the major export commodities of Fiji and Tonga, to ensure that the standard would be applicable at both the domestic and international level, Fiji and Tonga therefore request the following:

¹³ ALINORM 03/41, para. 58, Appendix V

¹⁴ ALINORM 03/35, para.19

¹⁵ ALINORM 03/35, para. 20

¹⁶ ALINORM 03/35, para. 21 & 22

- 1a. to remove the use of the hydrogen cyanide level as a criteria to differentiate “sweet” and “bitter” cassava varieties;

and

- 1b. to review the exiting Codex standard in terms of a hydrogen cyanide level for all cassava varieties that is safe for human consumption;

and

2. to amend the provision for the size of cassava to be “not less than 10 cm” instead of “not less than 20 cm”.

3. The Main Aspects to be Covered:

If the CCFFV recommends and the Commission approves this work, the sections of the Standard to be reviewed include:

Section 1: Definition of Produce

Section 3: Provision concerning sizing

4. An Assessment Against the *Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities*:

With the increasing migration overseas of Fijians and Tongans, export of peeled raw frozen cassava to New Zealand, Australia and the United States has increased in the past 30 years to ensure that their staple food is readily available in their new country of residence. Hence, cassava has become one of the major export commodities and foreign exchange earnings for the two islands.

Since no adverse health effects have been reported in Fiji or Tonga associated with the consumption of their cassava varieties, there is a potential that the production and export of these particular commodities would be jeopardized. Therefore, the proposal for the revision of the Codex Standard for sweet cassava is consistent with the *Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities*, in particular the criterion:

- i. Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries; and
- ii. International and regional market potential.

5. Relevance to the Codex Strategic Objectives:

The proposed revision meets the criteria outlined in Objectives 2 and 6 of the Codex Strategic Objectives, which are:

Objective 2: to promote widest and consistent application of scientific principles and risk analysis, including promoting the collection of data from developing countries and from all regions of the world so that the risk analysis is based on global conditions and requirements; and

Objective 6: to promote maximum application of Codex standard for domestic regulation and international trade.

6. Information on the Relation Between the Proposal and Other Existing Codex Documents:

This proposal is related to the existing Codex Standard for Sweet Cassava.

7. Identification of Any Requirement for and Availability of Expert Scientific Advice:

Given that the hydrogen cyanide levels of the commonly consumed cassava varieties in Fiji and Tonga for many years exceeds the level specified in the Codex standard for sweet cassava and the fact that no adverse effects of these levels have been reported in the two islands to be associated with their consumption, scientific advice is required on the following:

- i. Confirmation of the hydrogen contents of cassava varieties grown in Fiji and Tonga in the raw and cooked form.
- ii. Epidemiological evidence indicating that levels of HCN well above the existing Codex standard do not cause health problems.
- iii. Toxicological evaluation, if necessary.

8. Identification of Any Need for Technical Input to the Standard From External Bodies so That This Can Be Planned For:

Technical assistance by JECFA, WHO and FAO to substantiate scientific advice in Section 7 above, as appropriate.

9. The Proposed Time-line for Completion the New Work, Including the Start Date, the Proposed Date for Adoption at Step 5, and the Proposed Date for Adoption by the Commission”

Start Date:	2006
Proposed Date for Adoption at Step 5:	2008
Proposed Date for Adoption by the Commission:	2010

Annex I

TABLE 1: HYDROGEN CYANIDE CONTENTS OF CONSUMABLE CASSAVA VARIETIES IN TONGA AND FIJI

Variety	TONGA¹ Hydrogen Cyanide Content (mg/kg)	FIJI² Hydrogen Cyanide Content (mg/kg)
Tano'a (Hahake)	211	-
Tano'a (Hihifo)	153	-
Lepa (Hihifo)	164	-
Silika (Hahake)	110	-
Silika (Hihifo)	159	-
Mataki'eua (Hahake)	91	-
Mataki'eua (Hihifo)	128	-
Engeenga nonou (Hahake)	81	-
Engeenga nonou (Hihifo)	111	-
Engeena loloa (Hahake)	126	-
Fisi (Sokobaru – Hihifo)	150	-
Kasaleka	-	62
Aikavitu	-	42
Manioke	-	19
Yabia Damu	-	101
Yabia Valu	-	93
Sokobale	-	36
Vulatolu	-	70
Coci	-	55
Merelesita 2	-	90
Merelesita	-	14
Vula tolu 2	-	21
Noumea	-	107
Navolau	-	107
Beqa	-	121
New Guinea	-	80

¹ - CRD 4, 8th Session of CCNASWP

² - CRD 3, 8th Session of CCNASWP

TABLE 2: EXPORT OF CASSAVA 1999 – 2003 FROM TONGA¹ AND FIJI²

Year	Tonga: Quantity³ (mt)	Tonga: Value (US\$m)	Fiji: Quantity⁴ (mt)	Fiji: Value (US\$m)
1999	965	0.20	817	0.61
2000	533	0.11	754	0.49
2001	305	0.06	937	1.89
2002	459	0.11	1,120	1.18
2003	639	0.19	1,623	1.39

¹ - Source: Tonga Foreign Trade Reports

² - Source: CRD 3 of the 8th Session of CCNASWP

³ - 70% to NZ; 26% to US; and 4% to Australia on average for the 5 years of Tonga's exports of cassava, which is approx. 1.36% of the total exports (food and other products)

⁴ - 38% to NZ; 3% to US; and 59% to Australia on average for the 5 years of Fiji's exports of cassava

AUSTRALIA

Please find below comments from Australia in response to Codex Circular Letter CL 2003/35-FFV on the proposals for amendments to the priority list for the standardization of fresh fruits and vegetables. Australia would like to thank the Codex Secretariat for this opportunity to comment.

At the 10th Session of the Codex Committee for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (CCFFV) debate occurred on the heavy workload of this Committee and the significant number of standards in the priority list awaiting commencement or review. Some fresh fruit and vegetable commodities have been on the priority list for a number of years.

Given these issues, Australia believes that CCFFV should undertake to review the priority list in accordance with the criteria applicable to commodities in the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities in the Codex Procedural Manual.

These criteria are:

- a) Consumer protection from the point of view of health and fraudulent practices.
- b) Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries.
- c) Diversification of national legislations and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade.
- d) International or regional market potential.
- e) Amenability of the commodity to standardization.
- f) Coverage of the main consumer protection and trade issues by existing or proposed general standards.
- g) Number of commodities which would need separate standards indicating whether raw, semi processed or processed.
- h) Work already undertaken by other international organizations in this field.

Key amongst these criteria is the protection of public health followed by facilitation of free trade (criterion a.).

As Codex commodity standards are used as benchmarks for international trade Australia believes it is important that a review take into account any market access or trade difficulties that have been encountered by member countries (criterion c), and the volume of trade of that commodity (criterion b).

Priority should be given to those commodities that have or continue to impact on consumer health, those that encounter trade difficulties or are in dispute, and are traded in significant quantity.

Australia believes those commodities that are low in these criteria should be removed from the list. Australia believes that in this way the relevance and efficiency of the work of CCFFV will be improved.