

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 5

CX/FICS 08/17/5

July 2008

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION
AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

Seventeenth Session

Cebu, Philippines, 24-28 November 2008

PROPOSED DRAFT GENERIC MODEL HEALTH CERTIFICATE (ANNEX TO THE
GUIDELINES FOR DESIGN, PRODUCTION, ISSUANCE AND USE OF GENERIC OFFICIAL
CERTIFICATES (CAC/GL 38-2001)

(N08-2008)

(At Step 3)

Governments and international organizations in Observer status with the Codex Alimentarius Commission wishing to submit comments on the following subject matter are invited to do so **no later than 17 October 2008** to: Codex Australia, Australian Government Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT, 2601 (fax: 61.2.6272.3103; E-mail: codex.contact@daff.gov.au - *preferably*), with a copy to the Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy (Fax No + 39.06.5705.4593; E-mail: codex@fao.org - *preferably*).

BACKGROUND

1. At its 16th Session, the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) recommended that new work be undertaken on a proposed draft Annex to the adopted *Guidelines for Design, Production, Issuance and Use of Generic Official Certificates (CAC/GL 38-2001)* which would contain a generic model health certificate that may be applicable to all types of commodities. The 31st session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission approved this new work.

2. The Committee's Project Document included the following main aspects to be covered in the proposed new work:

The proposed generic model health certificate will focus on the data elements and their spatial layout in a paper certificate. Explanatory notes will be provided to clarify details on information for each field should the importing country consider it necessary.

3. The Committee furthermore agreed to establish a physical Working Group, led by the European Community (EC), open to all Members and Observers and working in English, French and Spanish, which would prepare a proposed draft Generic Model Health Certificate for circulation at Step 3 and further consideration at Step 4 at its next session. It was also agreed that in order to facilitate the initial work of the Working Group, Codex members and observers be invited to electronically submit elements for the proposed draft document to the EC Delegation.

4. In advance of the Working Group meeting, the EC amended the proposal originally made in Annex I to CX/FICS 07/16/9 in light of the comments provided before and during the 16th session of CCFICS as well as the outcome of the OIE *ad hoc* Group on the Revision of the OIE Model Certificates (January 2008). The amended version was circulated to the members of the Working Group for comments. Comments were received from Australia, Canada, Ecuador, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, The Netherlands, USA, ICGMA and International Aluminium Institute.

5. The working group met in Brussels, Belgium from 8 to 9 July 2008. The meeting was chaired by the delegation of the EC (Dr. Jérôme Lepeintre) and was attended by 62 delegates representing 25 member governments, 1 member organisation and 3 observer organisations. The list of participants is attached to this document as Appendix II.

6. The Chairman made a short presentation on the mandate given by CCFICS to the Working Group, on the purpose of the work and underlined the importance of ensuring to the extent possible consistency with existing Codex documents (i.e. Milk and Milk products certificate and Fish Certificate) and work from other relevant International Organisations in particular the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT).

7. The representative of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) informed the Working Group that the "Model Veterinary Certificate for International Trade in Products of Animal Origin" had been updated and approved at the latest general session of the OIE (May 2008). This was one of the four generic models of certificates updated and approved in that session. It was further explained that in drafting the models, principles on certification, including layout from all the relevant international organisations (i.e. CAC, World Custom Organisation, UN/CEFACT) had been fully considered. Notes for guidance to explain the meaning of each of the fields of the certificate had been appended in order to explain its meaning.

8. The Working Group considered the document originally drafted by the European Community as well as the comments submitted by the members of the Working Group.

9. The Working Group discussions in relation to the scope of the certificate were mainly focused on whether other aspects (i.e. qualitative) should be included in the model in addition to sanitary aspects. It was agreed that in order to fulfil the mandate given to the Working Group by CCFICS, the certificate should focus on sanitary aspects. However, in order to allow for some flexibility other aspects relating to fair trade practices could be included in the certificate if certified by certifying bodies. After some discussion it was also agreed that the model should be suitable for all types of food products.

10. The Working Group considered it appropriate to replace the term "health" by "sanitary" and therefore agreed that the title of the proposed draft should be "Generic Model for an Official Sanitary Certificate".

11. As this model would be annexed to the guidelines it was agreed that references to the parent document should be made in order to avoid unnecessary repetitions in the explanatory notes.

12. The Working Group noted that use of electronic export certificates was an important factor and that the format of the document should be easily amendable to its use electronically.

13. Extensive discussion took place in relation to the fields to be included in the model.

14. Although the Working Group agreed on most of the explanatory notes and fields, consensus could not be reached in relation to the inclusion of a note and the corresponding field for food products in transit or alternatively to the expected border inspection post of entry. Finally, the Working Group agreed to maintain both elements between square brackets. The proposed explanatory notes on the sanitary certificate are attached to this document as Appendix I.

15. The Working Group had a lengthy discussion in relation to the layout of the certificate. It identified six groups of data elements to be incorporated in the certificate as follows: Headings, Provenance of the products, Destination of the products, Transport, Details identifying the products and Attestation. Then discussions were focused on how to integrate the identified groups of data elements within the spatial layout in a paper certificate. It was finally agreed that the certificate should be suitable to accommodate multiple products in a single certificate, that it should not be split in two parts, that tick boxes should not be used, and that the numbering of fields was only used to make the link between the model and the explanatory notes and

could be omitted in the actual certificates to be issued. The agreed model of generic certificate accompanied by the explanatory notes is attached to this document as Appendix I.

16. The Working Group also discussed the possibility to recommend the Committee to consider the need to amend the text of the Guidelines in order to include a reference to the proposed draft Annex. However, the Working Group was of the opinion that this was premature at this stage and this should be further considered when the proposed draft Annex would be more advanced in the Codex Step Procedure.

RECOMMENDATION

17. The Committee is invited to consider the attached proposed draft Annex to the Guidelines for Design, Production, Issuance and Use of Generic Official Certificates (Appendix I) with a view towards its further progression in the Codex Step Procedure.

APPENDIX I**Proposed Draft Generic Model for an Official Sanitary Certificate****(N08-2008)****(at Step 3)**

The following is intended to be an Annex to the Codex *Guidelines for Design, Production, Issuance and Use of Generic Official Certificates* (CAC/GL 38-2001).

Scope of the Annex

This Annex is intended to provide additional guidance to competent authorities based on the principles set out in Section 4 and elaborating on the information provided in Sections 8 and 9.

When model official certificates for specific purposes are otherwise established by Codex Alimentarius, countries should refer to such guidelines.

Although certificates are primarily focused on sanitary aspects, they may also address aspects relating to fair practices in the food trade where these matters are certified by the certifying bodies.

This model of certificate could cover multiple types of products.

Explanatory notes on the sanitary certificate**General:**

The certificate should be completed in a legible manner.

No portion of certificate should be left blank in a manner that would allow it to be amended.

Where mentioned, the ISO codes use the two-letter country code in compliance with the international standard ISO 3166 alpha-2 (Optional).

Original certificates should be identifiable and this status should be displayed appropriately with the mark "ORIGINAL" or if a copy is necessary, this certificate should be marked as "COPY" or terms of this effect. The term "REPLACEMENT" is reserved for use on certificates where, for any good and sufficient reason (such as damage to the certificate in transit), a replacement certificate is issued by the certifying officer.

The model certificate as it appears includes numbers designed to facilitate establishing a link between each section and the corresponding explanatory note. It is not intended that these numbers appear in the actual certificates issued by the certifying body.

Specific

Country: name of the country that issues the certificate possibly accompanied by a logo or a letter head. The objective is to clearly identify the country having the responsibility of issuing the certificate.

1. **Consignor/Exporter:** name and address (street, town and region/province/state, as applicable) of the physical or legal person who sends the consignment.
2. **Certificate number:** this identification number should be unique for each certificate and authorised by the competent authority of the exporting country. For multiple page certificates, see paragraph 38 of document CAC/GL 38-2001.
3. **Certifying Body:** name of the Certifying Body of the country of dispatch responsible for certification.

4. **Competent Authority**: when the Certifying Body is different from the Competent Authority, the latter should be mentioned in this field.
5. **Consignee/Importer**: name and address of the physical or legal person to whom the consignment is shipped in the country of destination, at the time the certificate is issued.

If the consignee is changed afterwards, the importer is responsible to provide the border inspection post of entry with the updated information to the satisfaction of the competent authorities of the importing country. Such change should not result in a request from the importing country for issuance of replacement certificates by the competent authorities of exporting country.

[In certain instances, an importing country may wish to request that a person responsible for the load be designated for products in transit].

6. **Expected border post**: name of the expected border inspection post of entry authorised by the competent authority of the importing country or transit country and, if available, its UN/LOCODE (refer to the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations).]
7. **Country of origin**: name of the country in which the finished products were produced, manufactured or packaged.

ISO Code: as indicated in the relevant regulations (optional).

8. **Country of destination**: name of the country of destination of the products.

If the products are in transit, name of the country of destination. The country of destination and name of the importer may change during transport. Importing countries may accept provision of supplementary information in such cases.

9. **Place of loading**: name of a seaport, airport, freight terminal, rail station or other place at which goods are loaded onto the means of transport being used for their carriage.
10. **Means of transport**: details on the means of transport at the time the certificate is issued.

The type of transport: air, ship, rail, road, other.

Identification of the means of transport if available: by air, the flight number; by ship, the name of the ship; by rail, the number of the train and the rail car and by road the number plate of the road vehicle and the number of the trailer if applicable. If the means of transport is changed after the certificate has been issued, the importer becomes responsible to provide the border inspection post of entry with the updated information to the satisfaction of the competent authorities of the importing country. Such change should not result in a request from importing country for issuance of replacement certificates by the competent authorities of the exporting country.

Documentary reference: optional: number of the airway bill, bill of lading, or the commercial number of the train or road vehicle.

11. **Identification of container(s)/Seal number(s)**: identify the containers and seal numbers where required.
12. **Conditions for transport**: appropriate temperature category (ambient, chilled, frozen) or other requirements (e.g. humidity) for transport of the product.
13. **For transit**: for products destined to be in transit or for inward processing: name and ISO code (optional) of the country of destination].
14. **Identification of food products**: give the requirements specific to the types of products. The information required, which is listed below, is set out in each specific certificate.

Where appropriate: nature of the food (or description of the commodity), commodity code (HS code), species, intended purpose, producer/manufacturer, approval number of establishments (slaughterhouse, production plant, store (cold store or not)), region or compartment of origin, name of the product, lot identifier type of packaging, number of packages, net weight.

- **Nature of the food (or description of goods)**: sanitary description of the goods. The description must be precise enough to allow the goods to be classified in the World Customs Organisation's Harmonised System.
- **Commodity code (HS code)**: heading (4 digits) or subheading (6 digits) of the Harmonised system set up by the World Customs Organisation.
- **Intended purpose (or Food products certified for)**: the end use of the product should be specified in the certificate (e.g. direct human consumption, further processing, and trade samples).

Where a certificate for trade samples is required, a consignment consisting of a food sample intended for evaluation, testing or research, in the importing country may be described using a term such as "trade samples". It should be clearly indicated on the certificate or the package that the sample is not intended for retail sale and has no commercial value.

- **Region or compartments of origin**: if applicable: This is only for products affected by regionalisation measures or by the setting up of approved zones or compartments.
- **Type of packaging**: identify the type of packaging of products as defined in Recommendation No. 21 of UN/CEFACT (United Nation Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business).

15. Total number of packages: total number of packages for all products in the consignment.

16. Total quantity: total net weight in kg of the whole consignment.

17. Sanitary information: information in compliance with the relevant regulation(s) of the importing or exporting countries in accordance with the recommendations, as appropriate, of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

Attestations should be the minimum required for the products certified to ensure food safety and fair practices in the food trade.

Attestations should be applicable to the food products certified.

Non-applicable attestations should be excluded or deleted.

There may be other attestations covering different issues (cf. paragraph 7 of document CAC/GL 38-2001).

18. Certifying officer responsible for signature: name, official position, official stamp, date of signature and signature.

Certificates should be issued in accordance with section 9 of document CAC/GL 38-2001.

HEADING/LOGO
OFFICIAL SANITARY CERTIFICATE FOR ...

COUNTRY:**ORIGINAL CERTIFICATE**

1. Consignor/Exporter:		2. Certificate number:			
		3. Certifying body:			
		4. Competent authority:			
5. Consignee/Importer:		[6. Expected border post :]			
7. Country of origin:		ISO Code*:	8. Country of destination :		ISO Code*:
9. Place of loading:					
10. Means of transport: Identification: Documentary references*:			11. Identification of container(s)**/Seal number(s)**:		
12. Conditions for transport:					
[13. For transit:]					
14. Identification of the food products:					
No.	Nature of the food	Commodity code (HS code)	Species**		Intended purpose
No.	Producer/Manufacturer	Approval number of establishments**		Region or compartments of origin**	
No.	Name of the product	Lot Identifier	Type of packaging	Number of packages	Net weight
				15. Total number of packages	16. Total quantity
17. Sanitary information***:					
18. Certifying officer responsible for signature:					
Name:			Official position:		
Date:			Signature:		
Stamp:					

* Optional

** If required

*** Specific sanitary requirements to be completed

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