

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS



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**Agenda Item 9**

**CX/FICS 00/9  
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## **JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

### **CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS**

**Ninth Session**

**Perth, Australia, 11 – 15 December 2000**

**(paper prepared by Morocco)**

#### **DISCUSSION PAPER ON FOOD EXPORT CONTROL SYSTEMS**

1. The 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection Systems (CCFICS) agreed to a request from Morocco to consider a document on the need for guidance on food export control systems<sup>1</sup>. The Committee is invited to consider the following points in reviewing the need to develop guidelines for food export control systems.
2. Prior to examining objective arguments supporting the development of Guidelines for export control systems, Members should be reminded that the Codex Committee chaired by Australia is a “Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems”.
3. Consequently, and as a matter of principle, the Committee will have to address export inspection systems just as it is developing guidelines for import inspection systems.
4. Furthermore, should the Committee only develop an import guideline, all the control operations would be conducted by the importing country:
  - through systematic control at its border
  - through systematic accreditation of exporting businesses.
5. Such an approach would immediately have the following effects:
  - impeding international trade through systematic controls at the border of the importing country, at a time when all trade agreements are aimed at facilitating trade;
  - ignoring authorities in the exporting country, as the importing country would take full responsibility for the quality of the imported products, through systematic border controls and/or accreditation of businesses upstream;

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<sup>1</sup> ALINORM 01/30 para 75

- discriminating against developing countries, as some of their businesses may not implement a self-inspection system (HACCP or other) and therefore not be in a position to be accredited by authorities in the importing country and, as a result, not be able to export their products.
6. The Committee cannot ignore these realities, as it has the great responsibility of providing Members States with tools for easing trade, in accordance with the objectives of reliability, efficiency and facilitation.
  7. The development of Guidelines for export inspection systems would effectively support these objectives by:
    - increasing the accountability of the exporting country through a pre-shipment official control authority operating in businesses and at borders;
    - reducing controls at the border of the importing country, the controls being practically delegated to the competent authority in the exporting country.
  8. The role of the importing country control authorities would necessarily include random controls at its border and systematic accreditation, and reaccreditation, of the competent authority in the exporting country.
  9. In this respect, the amendments to the proposed draft Guidelines for Food Import Control Systems, proposed by Morocco and adopted by the last Session of the Committee, already introduced the idea of collaboration between the exporting and importing countries.
  10. The implementation of such a system would immediately contribute to trade facilitation through shared responsibility between the exporting and importing countries.