



## **JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

### **CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING**

#### **Thirty-ninth Session**

**Québec City, Québec, Canada, 9 - 13 May 2011**

### **PROPOSED DRAFT REVISION OF THE GUIDELINES FOR THE PRODUCTION, PROCESSING, LABELLING AND MARKETING OF ORGANICALLY PRODUCED FOODS (GL 32-1999)**

#### **(TO INCLUDE AQUACULTURE ANIMALS AND SEAWEED)**

#### **At Step 3**

Prepared by the European Union

Governments and international organizations in Observer status with the Codex Alimentarius Commission wishing to submit comments on the proposal are invited to do so **no later than 4 April 2011** to:

Codex Contact Point for Canada, Food, Directorate, Health Canada, 250 Sir Frederick Banting Driveway, Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9, Canada, Fax : +1.613.941.3537, E-mail: [codex\\_canada@hg-sc.gc.ca](mailto:codex_canada@hg-sc.gc.ca)

with a copy to the

Secretariat, 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](mailto:codex@fao.org)

#### **A) General changes in Foreword, Section 1 and Section 2:**

- Foreword, Paragraph 6, last phrase: Add "and aquatic" after "soil".
- Section 1.1 – Scope: Reference to aquaculture animals and seaweed to be added (note that not all seaweeds are plants), possibly through a footnote.
- Section 2.1 – Description: add a sentence at the end of the section: "The basis for organic husbandry of aquaculture animals is the harmonious relationship between water, seaweed and aquaculture animals and respect for their characteristic physiological and behavioural needs."
- Section 2.2 – Definitions: clarify that livestock refers to terrestrial animals. Insert a definition of aquaculture: "Aquaculture means the farming of aquatic organisms involving intervention in the rearing process to enhance production and the individual or corporate ownership of the stock being cultivated." (definition of Aquaculture in the FAO Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification, document agreed by the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture in 2010 and approved by FAO Committee on Fisheries February 2011).

#### **B) Changes in Annex I**

##### **Add a section B.1: Aquaculture animals**

###### **General principles**

1. Aquaculture is an important activity that contributes to the supply of fish and other seafood species in a world where fisheries are highly exploited. Seafood is beneficial for human health because it contains

nutrients, particularly 'essential fatty acids' for which fish is an extremely important source, together with protein, trace elements, vitamins and minerals.

2. The operation and management of aquaculture animals and seaweed, whether in containment systems or not, should respect the principles of organic farming. The biodiversity of the aquatic environment and the quality of the surrounding water should be maintained.

3. Aquaculture operators should maintain an Organic Management Plan to guide the operation of the farm to keep the impact on the environment low and setting out monitoring to be done to ensure that this aim is achieved each year.

### **Siting**

4. The nature of the growing area should have characteristics which allow the production of safe products of high quality without unacceptable negative environmental impact. Aquaculture facilities should be located in areas where the risk of contamination is minimized and where sources of pollution can be controlled or mitigated.

5. Water used for aquaculture should be of a quality suitable for the production of food which is safe for human consumption and waste water from domestic or industrial sources should not be used.

6. The certification body or authority must confirm at the outset that the location of the farm is not unsuitable due to potential sources of contamination with prohibited substances or environmental contaminants. It may also set up minimum distances to separate organic and non-organic production units based on factors such as upstream or downstream location and water or tidal flow.

### **Conversion period**

7. Products of aquaculture animals can be sold as organically produced when these Guidelines have been complied with for at least one year. In cases where the water can be drained and the facility cleaned and disinfected a shorter period of six months may apply. In the case of non-enclosed marine locations a period of three months may apply. During the conversion period the stock should not be subject to treatments or exposed to products which are not permitted for the production of organic foods.

### **Origin**

8. It is preferable that locally grown species be used for organic farming where possible. Aquaculture stock can be converted to organic production by farming under organic management for the latter two thirds of their production cycle. Following the conversion period stock should come from organic production units where the parent stock have been under organic management for at least three months before being used for breeding.

### **Husbandry**

9. The farm should provide sufficient space for the animals needs and they should be provided with good quality water with sufficient oxygen and, in the case of filter feeding animals, other nutritional factors for their needs. The temperature and light conditions should be suitable for the species concerned in the particular geographic location of the farming operation.

10. Containment systems, including cages (net pens) should be designed, constructed, located and operated to minimize the risk of escapes and other negative environmental impacts.

11. Closed recirculation systems are prohibited except when used as hatcheries or nurseries or for production of species used as organic feed.

### **Breeding**

12. Breeding conditions should reflect the natural situation as closely as possible using appropriate strains for the type of farming.

Artificial polyploidy, cloning, artificial hybridization and use of single sex strains should be avoided.

13. The maximum stocking density should be lower than that used in conventional farming and competent authorities should develop guide values for maximum densities for the species grown under their authority.

14. Competent authorities should also develop criteria for production systems, with particular reference to type of system, water flow, oxygen saturation and effluent elimination and whether fallowing is necessary.

**Nutrition**

15. Where feed is used, the feed should meet the animal's nutritional requirements at the various stages of its development. Plant material used in feed should always meet the requirements of these guidelines. Carnivorous fish should not be fed a totally plant based diet so as to ensure their physiological needs and to ensure that consumers are not deprived of the essential fatty acids. The aquatic animal based portion of the feed should be made from fish meal and fish oil or ingredients of fish origin derived from the following sources:

- trimmings of organically grown aquatic animals, or
- trimmings of fish caught for human consumption in sustainable fisheries, or
- fish caught in sustainable fisheries.

**Health care**

16. Disease prevention in organic aquaculture shall be based on the principles and practices for health care of livestock (terrestrial animals) in these guidelines and on the following additional points:

- ensuring that the siting and design of the production unit is optimal and that there is regular cleaning and disinfection of premises where appropriate.
- to control ectoparasites such as sealice cleaner-fish should be used rather than parasiticides where possible.

17. Hormonal treatment should not be used. Annex 2, Table 2 of the guidelines to also list substances permitted for aquaculture; products for cleaning and disinfection should distinguish between those permitted in the presence and absence of aquaculture animals.

**Add a section B.2: Seaweeds**

18. Farmed seaweed and wild seaweed collected on the shore can be sold as organically produced when these Guidelines have been complied with. The criteria for siting and conversion of aquaculture animal units in these guidelines should be applied as appropriate to seaweed farming units.

19. Both farming and collection of seaweed should be carried out in areas with very good water quality which are not directly subject to contamination from human, industrial or geological sources. The Organic Management Plan to be used for farming of aquaculture animals should be maintained by all organic seaweed producers.

20. Collection in the wild should be restricted to areas which have been surveyed to determine the baseline biomass present. Subsequent collection levels should allow regeneration and not affect the long term stability of the natural habitat.

21. Farming should be carried out in a sustainable manner at all stages from collection of juvenile seaweed to harvesting. Fertilization should be restricted to pond cultivation. Ropes and other equipment used for growing seaweed should be re-used or re-cycled where possible. Removal of bio-fouling organisms should by preference be by physical means.