

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations**



**World Health
Organization**

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AGENDA ITEM NO. 6(b)

CX/FL 11/39/12-ADD.1

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING

Thirty-ninth Session

Québec City, Canada, May 9 - 13, 2011

**LABELLING OF FOODS AND FOOD INGREDIENTS OBTAINED THROUGH
CERTAIN TECHNIQUES OF GENETIC MODIFICATION/GENETIC
ENGINEERING:**

**PROPOSED DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE LABELLING OF FOODS AND FOOD
INGREDIENTS OBTAINED THROUGH CERTAIN TECHNIQUES OF
GENETIC MODIFICATION/GENETIC ENGINEERING (CL 2010/19-FL)**

COMMENTS AT STEP 3

COMMENTS FROM:

COLOMBIA

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Colombia welcomes the opportunity of presenting the following comments to the following documents: “*Draft Amendment to the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods – Definitions*” and “*Proposed Draft Recommendations for the Labelling of Foods and Food Ingredients Obtained Through Certain Techniques of Genetic Modification/Genetic Engineering*” at Steps 6 and 3 of the procedure, respectively:

From here onward we will use as reference the Spanish version of the document attached to the CL 2010/15-FL.

Colombia, taking in consideration that:

- According to the risk analysis that has been conducted on GMOs, the problem is not one of safety.
- Colombia, in the meeting room document CX/FL 09/37/10 stated that: “We suggest that the definitions should as much as possible correspond to those already established in multilateral agreements or treaties such as the Cartagena Protocol or the FAO glossary on biotechnology” and that, between chapeaus 1 and 2, option 2 is more clear, concise and responds to the purpose of the recommendations (...).
- Between paragraphs 88 and 105 of ALINORM 09/32/22, footnote 12 makes reference to the participation of Colombia, which was summarized in the previous bullet, and that no agreement was reached in that report with the draft proposal being retained at Step 3.
- Colombia, in meeting room document CX/FL 10/38/12, expressed its support for the amended chapeau as suggested by the delegation of the United States as it considered it to be clear and concise as well as responding to the purpose of the Draft Proposal.
- Due to lack of consensus it was agreed to return to Step 6 (it was at Step 7) the draft amendment to the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods regarding the definitions related to “foods and food ingredients obtained through certain techniques of genetic modification/genetic engineering.”
- Paragraph 145 of ALINORM 10/33/22 indicates that there were differences of opinion regarding two sentences which introduce the 2 chapeaus being evaluated for the draft proposal. Specifically the sentence: “It also recognizes that each country can adopt different approaches regarding labelling of foods obtained by GM/GE techniques and that food labelling is the primary means of communications between the seller on the one hand and the purchaser and consumer on the other”, as contained in the Brazilian text was considered as too permissive by allowing various approaches, while the other sentence stating that “This document is not intended to suggest or imply that GM/GE foods are in any way different from other foods simply due to their method of production”, as included in the USA proposal, because some were of the view that there was a difference between foods obtained by GM/GE methods and other foods, as Codex had created a task force that developed a number of guidelines for the risk assessment of such foods.

Colombia agreed to support the text of Chapeau 2 that reads:

[“Chapeau version 2: Acknowledging that different approaches regarding labelling of foods derived from modern biotechnology are available, the purpose of this document is only to recall and assemble in a single document some important elements of guidance from existing Codex texts, which are relevant for the labelling of foods derived from modern biotechnology. This document is not intended to suggest or imply that foods derived from modern biotechnology are necessarily different from other foods simply due to their method of production.]

And not to take a position regarding definitions returned to Step 6, as they are subject to the advance of the proposed draft guidelines (Step 3) because these definitions could form part of the proposed draft and not of the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods.