



## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING

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### PROPOSAL TO REVISE THE GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR USE OF THE TERM 'HALAL'(CAC/GL24-1997)

PROJECT DOCUMENT

(Prepared by Egypt)

#### 1. PURPOSE AND THE SCOPE OF THE NEW WORK

The purpose of this new work is to review and revise *General Guidelines for the Use of the term 'Halal'* (CAC/GL 24-1997). The existing guidelines do not cover all the requirements of Halal according to Islamic Sharia and do not provide adequate guidance to countries. uniform, transparent and harmonized guidelines will ensure consumers' protection from fraud and achieve fair practices in the food trade.

The scope of the work will address gaps between the existing guidelines with the requirements for Halal foods based on Islamic Sharia.

#### 2. RELEVANCE AND TIMELINESS

Halal food market in the world is estimated at about USD 2.3 trillions, which represents more than 20 per cent of the total food market in the world. : Trade in Halal products will continue to grow at more than 4.8 per cent annually to reach about 6.4 trillion in 2020.

There is an urgent need to review and clarify the existing text in Codex general guidelines for the use of term "Halal" to ensure it provides a clear set of international definitions guidelines on use of the term "Halal" to prevent fraud and facilitate international food trade. It is the right of consumers not to be misled by food which are labelled as "Halal" but are not complying with the Islamic Sharia. Globalization and increase in consumer awareness have given rise to the need to revise the guidelines.

#### 3. MAIN ASPECTS TO BE COVERED

There are gaps in the existing guidelines and the revision will address these gaps such as follows:

- i. To include other relevant definitions to according to Islamic Sharia
- ii. To review Section 2.2.1 for clarification on the need to ensure separation of halal food from non-halal food according to Islamic Sharia.
- iii. To include in Section 2.2.2, the number of times allowed for using facilities or equipment which have been previously used for non-halal food that are properly cleaned according to Islamic requirements, for preparation, processing, transport and storing halal food.
- iv. To revise Section 3: Criteria for use of the term "Halal" to provide clarity such as on the description of unlawful foods, the status of stunning in Islamic Sharia, all requirements for halal slaughtering as prescribed by the Islamic Sharia and conditions for preparation, processing, packaging, transportation and storage to fulfill Islamic Sharia for Halal food.
- v. To include provision on traceability of halal food.
- vi. To include provision on halal packaging material.

#### 4. ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE CRITERIA FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WORK PRIORITIES

##### General criterion

Consumer protection from the point of view of health, food safety, ensuring fair practices in the food trade and taking into account the specific needs of developing countries.

Ensuring fair practices in halal food trade and protecting consumers from misleading product labelling.

##### Criteria applicable for general subjects

(a) Diversification of national legislations and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade:

This new work will help to facilitate international trade of halal foods through further strengthening of the existing *General Guidelines for Use of the Term "Halal"* with a view to enhance understanding of halal concept based on Islamic Sharia.

(b) Scope of work and establishment of priorities between the various sections of the work

It is proposed that a review of the guidelines focuses on Section 1 on Scope, Section 2 on Definition and Section 3 on Criteria for use of the term "Halal".

(c) Work already undertaken by other international organizations in this field and/or suggested by the relevant international intergovernmental body(ies).

At the moment, there is a standard developed by Standard and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC) on General Guidelines on Halal Food. However the membership of SMIIC is only limited to several countries who are members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

(d) Amenability of the subject of the proposal to standardization.

Countries worldwide are looking to Codex for clear and unambiguous guidance on use of the term "Halal". The purpose of the new work proposal is to review and clarify the existing text to ensure it provides a clear set of international guidelines on use of the term "Halal".

(e) Consideration of the global magnitude of the problem or the source.

The 36<sup>th</sup> session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission recognised the importance of halal foods worldwide and requested Egypt to re-scope the project document in line with the recommendation of the Executive Committee (CCEXEC) i.e. to identify gaps with existing relevant Codex texts, and to seek the advice CCFL to assist the CCEXEC and the Commission to take a decision.

#### 5. RELEVANCE TO THE CODEX STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The new work proposal is in line with the Codex strategic objectives (2014-2019) to promote the maximum application of Codex standard by countries in their national legislation and to facilitate international trade.

It contributes in advancing Goal 1: Establish international food standards that address current and emerging food issues. Further strengthening of the existing general guidelines on halal food will assist in the worldwide harmonization regarding the use of the term "Halal".

#### 6. RELATION BETWEEN THE PROPOSAL AND OTHER EXISTING CODEX DOCUMENTS

*General Guidelines for Use of the Term 'Halal'* (CAC/GL 24–1997) will be reviewed and revised.

Other relevant Codex documents are as follows:

*General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods* (CODEX STAN 1-1985)

*General Guidelines on Claims* (CAC/GL 1-1979)

*General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CAC/RCP 1-1969)

*Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat* (CAC/RCP 58-2005)

*Code of Practice on Good Animal Feeding* (CAC/RCP 54-2004)

#### 7. REQUIREMENT FOR AND AVAILABILITY OF EXPERT SCIENTIFIC ADVICE

Not required

**8. NEED FOR TECHNICAL INPUT TO THE STANDARD FROM EXTERNAL BODIES**

None

**9. PROPOSED TIME-LINE**

- CCFL42 (2014): Endorsement of new work proposal by CCFL
- CAC 38 (2015): Approval of new work by CAC and electronic working group to develop draft revised guidelines at Step 2 and circulation of the proposal at Step 3
- CCFL43 (2016): Consideration of the revised draft at Step 4 by CCFL and advancement to Step 5
- CAC 39 (2016): Adoption of draft guidelines at Step 5 and circulate at Step 6 for comments
- CCFL44 (2017): Discussion of Draft guidelines at Step 7 and advancement to Step 8
- CAC 41 (2018): Adoption by CAC at Step 8