

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

Agenda Item 8

CX/LAC 06/15/8
October 2006

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

15th Session

Mar del Plata, Argentina, 13-17 November 2006

PROPOSAL ON GUIDELINES FOR FOOD SAFETY IN TOURIST ZONES

BACKGROUND

1. Food safety in tourist zones has been discussed at various sessions of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. The last session of the Coordinating Committee (November-December 2004) considered proposed *Guidelines for Food Safety in Tourism Zones* prepared by the delegations of Barbados, Brazil, Cuba, Costa Rica and Dominican Republic, with the assistance of INPPAZ. The Committee had an exchange of views on how to proceed with the document i.e. whether to discontinue the work, forward the Guidelines to the Codex Alimentarius Commission for approval as new work or redraft the document and examine it at the Committee's next session¹.
3. The Coordinating Committee was split into those delegations in favour of or against the development of such Guidelines. Several delegations, in particular those from the Caribbean region, supported moving forward with the Guidelines as they were an important tool to build up national legislation and ensure both quality and safety of the food supply and thus protecting consumer's health. Other delegations indicated that food safety should be assured for the entire country and not to discriminate against local residents as to the protection of their health associated with food consumption. These delegations noted that there were already relevant Codex texts that could be applied without the need for a single document in this regard.
4. The Coordinating Committee recognized the importance of giving added value to tourist zones, considering the foreign exchange that this activity provided to many countries of the Region. It therefore agreed that a questionnaire be distributed through a Circular Letter to request comments and information from Member countries in order to evaluate the advisability of proceeding with the elaboration of the Guidelines.
5. To this aim, the Codex Secretariat issued a CL 2005/19-LAC (April 2005) requesting comments and information through a number of questions as directed by the Coordinating Committee. A number of countries submitted their comments as indicated in Annex I to this working document. The Argentinean Coordinator revised the Guidelines based on the comments submitted and the discussion held at the last Committee's session and produced a revised document which is attached as Annex II. The changes introduced are indicated separately in Annex III for ease of reference.

¹ ALINORM 05/28/36, paras. 94-98.

6. The Committee is invited to consider the revised proposal on Guidelines for Food Safety in Tourist Zones with a view to determining the appropriateness to proceed with their development as new work for the Coordinating Committee and whether they should be developed as a regional or international document.

7. In this regard, the Codex Secretariat would like to inform the Committee that proposals for new work should be accompanied with a project document based on the *Proposals to Undertake New Work or to Revise a Standard* (Codex Alimentarius Procedural Manual, Part 2 Critical Review). The new work undertaken shall be approved by the Codex Alimentarius Commission taking into account the outcome of the Critical Review conducted by the Executive Committee.

COUNTRY COMMENTS SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO THE CL 2005/19

The 14th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean agreed that, in order to assess the merit of proceeding with the development of the Guidelines, a separate Circular Letter should be issued requesting comments and information on the following:

- 1) To what extent is elaboration of this document necessary for your country?
- 2) What type of document do you recommend?
- 3) What should be the objective(s), scope and content of the document?
- 4) What, in your view, are the limitations of the document that has been circulated¹ and what recommendations do you suggest in this respect?
- 5) What mandatory or recommended official documents has your country established for this purpose?
- 6) Is there any form of quality certification that includes food safety aspects?
- 7) What is your country's system of food control and surveillance?
- 8) Has your country established sufficient technical training for your inspectors to verify, inspect or audit compliance with the document, once elaborated?
- 9) Provide information on the status of epidemiological surveillance of foodborne diseases, if possible differentiating data for tourist areas.
- 10) Other information and comments.

Comments in response to the above-mentioned CL are reproduced below.

1) To what extent is elaboration of this document necessary for your country?

2) What type of document do you recommend?

Antigua and Barbuda

1) The document on the Guidelines for Food Safety Tourism Zones. The new document is not necessary because there are several documents which address the issue of food safety at the National Level and in tourism zones. We have developed our Food Safety, Animal Health and Plant Health Acts which address all aspects of Food Safety in all areas. The existing Codex Alimentarius Food Hygiene Basic Texts, also addresses food safety issues which are applicable to all areas and sectors. Antigua and Barbuda is of the view that the committee should not continue with any further work on these guidelines.

2) This document is not necessary for Antigua and Barbuda since there is the draft Food Safety Act and Codex is used as a reference point.

Chile

1) The Delegation of Chile has already brought up, within the Codex Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, the fact that it recognizes the existence of a serious problem due to the high occurrence of foodborne diseases in tourists visiting our countries. At the same time, however, it has stated that it is somewhat uncertain to conclude that the growing impact of these diseases is largely associated with the lack of food hygiene standards in Codex. On the contrary, we believe that there is an appropriate standard body providing for the regulatory requirements needed for food safety risk management.

¹ The document that was presented at the 14th Session of the CCLAC (CX/LAC 05/14/9) is annexed to this document to facilitate the analysis of this question.

We believe that the document prepared by Barbados, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba and the Dominican Republic with the INPPAZ, containing an excellent, thorough compilation of Codex standards, highlighting key food hygiene aspects, may not – however – be appropriately focused due to the lack of information on the variables associated with outbreaks of foodborne diseases in tourists.

The information on the percentages of tourists that have diarrhea does not indicate whether the food involved has been prepared and served at the same tourist establishments, on the street, or at the concerned store, so its origin is unclear. The causes and determining factors (contamination, survival and multiplication) are even less clear. Knowledge of these factors is essential to the design of a food safety standard as they help identify the operational procedures that have failed or aspects associated with the sanitary infrastructure or even with the microbiological quality of raw materials. A scenario that should not be ignored is that, as is recognized, although there is a significant degree of knowledge, failure to comply with it is due to unknown factors.

To clarify this issue, it is necessary to know the details of the studies on food poisoning outbreaks from which this information has been taken, in order to know whether this issue is associated with the lack of standards or, rather, with the failure to comply with good manufacturing practices, already established in existing standards.

It would seem that both the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), as can be seen in the paragraphs below, tend to think that the cause of the problem is not exactly the lack of standards. Thus, the very preamble to the concerned standard states, “the World Tourism Organization has always paid great attention to food hygiene and safety in tourist places or areas, and has often promoted, jointly with the World Health Organization, the organization of regional courses and lectures in order to make the relevant authorities and tourism professionals aware of these problems, thus guiding them towards suitable practices”.

Further, the report of the 13th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, paragraph 81, states, “Questions were raised about the status of similar work being undertaken by the World Tourism Organization, and the Coordinating Committee was informed that a meeting of the issue had been held in Madrid in December 2001 and attended by the Codex Secretariat and by WHO. At this meeting, the possibility this organization developing guidelines was considered, but abandoned, due to the availability of sufficient Codex texts that could be used by the tourist sector to improve food safety.”

2) Guidelines containing strategies for HACCP application in tourist establishments in the Region.

Costa Rica

1) Because it is a favorite tourist destination for many tourists from all over the world, Costa Rica requires that quality standards for food consumed in tourist zones be strict and assure national and international tourists of the safety and hygiene of food when eating food.

According to information provided by the Costa Rican Tourism Institute, Costa Rica is a tourist destination visited by over a million people every year. Currency generated by tourism already exceeds that contributed by exports of electronic components and agricultural products. For this reason, the quality of services provided as part of this activity should meet the standards required by a globalized world.

Food industry companies should assume their responsibility for ensuring the provision of safe food for national and international tourists; i.e. they should establish systems to provide food free of contaminants that might affect the health of consumers and therefore prevent the development of foodborne diseases. Tourist places are less developed areas, where people working at small food stores are not necessarily trained in food handling. In these cases, there is a risk for tourist population associated with potential foodborne disease problems due to ignorance of food handling and food safety. The above justifies the development of a document providing guidance to sectors working on activities associated with food preparation, marketing and service.

2) A base document is recommended which provides clear guidance on food and takes into account all the specific characteristics of this activity, in promoting health benefits and applying practices that prevent adverse effects and foster the growth of developing countries' economies.

Mexico

1) Mexico has legislation on food health control throughout the country, regardless of whether it is a tourist zone or not, as the health authority is responsible for protecting the health of all consumers. It is therefore considered that there is no reason to develop special guidelines on tourist zones.

It is worth pointing out that there are programs to monitor establishments selling food in restaurants, including tourist zones.

2) A guide.

Panama

1) Although Panama has various legal standards on food safety and we are focused on maximizing our potential as tourist destination and are aware of the importance of foodborne diseases in attracting or discouraging tourists, we are of the view that rather than the development of this document with specific guidelines for food safety in Tourist Zones, which we are sure would contribute to national and international tourist flow, what our country needs is the design of a national food safety policy.

2) One which recommends federal policies to develop a food safety culture addressing not only tourist zones but the whole country, taking Panama's equality principle into consideration. Although the fact tourists may not come back for fear of contracting a foodborne disease is a currency loss for our countries, foodborne diseases contracted by permanent population result in economic damage for our countries as well. The problem needs to be tackled at the roots.

The best strategy for a purely tourist country to continue attracting tourists is to have national safety policies that foster the development of a general food safety culture, which will minimize the chances of a tourist contracting a foodborne disease. In addition, an overall food safety culture will enhance – among those producing, storing, preparing, handling or distributing food – awareness of their importance in not becoming a causal agent of a foodborne disease, thus benefiting the whole population – permanent or temporary.

Further, new forms of tourism are being promoted, such as ecotourism (forests, mountains) and agro-tourism (production farms), which require specific standards for new activities which are often far from production centers.

Paraguay

1) Given that Codex considers safety issues in other approved documents, Paraguay is of the view that it would not be appropriate to prepare a document that puts together already established criteria.

Paraguay also believes that it would not be relevant to have specific criteria for tourists other than the local population.

It is worth pointing out that local regulators, within their areas of competence, are the ones in charge of issuing Health Certification.

2) No comments.

Saint Lucia

1) The National CODEX Committee of Saint Lucia has undertaken a thorough review of CL 2005/19-LAC - Guidelines for Food Safety in Tourist Zones. Having reviewed the document and more specifically the questions posed under section 10, the committee is of the view that there is no need for a separate standard addressing Food Safety in Tourist Zones.

2) No comments.

Venezuela

1) Venezuela has a great tourist potential; it lacks, however, a specific tool to ensure food safety in tourist zones. It is thus appropriate to have Guidelines on this issue.

2) General Guidelines for Food Safety in Tourist Zones.

Kenya

1) We find the guidelines acceptable only if they are supplementing other Food Safety Guidelines within the region. If not, it assumes that Tourists will be restricted to specific areas, while in reality they have freedom of movement within countries and consume foods within the whole food supply chain including food services, catering services, and food distribution points accessed by the general public.

2) We recognize that the ISO/DIS 22000-Draft International Standard Food Safety Management systems due in September 2005, specifies generic requirements applicable to all organizations within the food supply chain including those directly involved in one or more steps, and could also be applied to the management of food Safety in tourist zones.

We would recommend that ISO 22000 be adopted by Latin American countries once approved as an international standard, and that they also adopt the proposed guidelines CL 2005/19-LAC referred to in order to meet the specific needs of the tourism sector.

3) What should be the objective(s), scope and content of the document?**Antigua and Barbuda**

We do not recommend any document.

Chile

A document that encourages, at the level of governments and tourist labor unions, the application of the HACCP system, and standardizing efforts should focus on the design of guidelines for the application of standardized procedures of food processing, cleaning and equipment operation including manuals and other required records. Standardized operational procedures should be a targeted goal prior to the application of the HACCP system.

Costa Rica

The objectives of the document are clearly expressed and may be sufficient. However, additional objectives could be set provided that they enhance the follow-up of the document.

As regards the scope of application set out in the document, it should be expanded to include: catering services, stores, and others where food is served at the premises or at a tourist service mobile unit.

Mexico

In principle, the document should serve as a guide or support to those countries that need guidance on how to apply already existing provisions such as the Code of Hygienic Practices and the HACCP System, and how to implement surveillance programs and, if necessary, certification programs.

Objective:

To specify provisions for the processing of ready-to-eat foods and beverages as well as a compilation of hygiene documents recommending procedures to ensure compliance and certification.

Scope of application: establishments offering ready-to-eat food all over the country, including discoteques, bars, restaurants, etc., establishments where food is prepared and eaten at the same place.

Panama

Besides helping countries with tourist potential to improve sanitary controls in hotels, restaurants and others, the guidelines should provide the basis for strategies fostering a safety culture, and their scope should address food commercial settings not just in zones of tourist attraction but throughout the country.

Saint Lucia

In light of this the committee fully supports the comments made by Chile that “food safety should be assured for the entire country and no distinctions made between tourist and other areas in detriment to the local population”. However should CODEX agree to proceed with the elaboration of such a document the committee wishes to recommend that the standard address the “Management of Food Safety in Tourist Zones with the objective of assuring Food Safety for all”.

Venezuela

- Objectives: (1) To protect tourist health, reducing the risk of foodborne diseases; (2) To lay down general guidelines on hygiene and sanitation in the food preparation, marketing and consumption in tourist establishments, as well as to facilitate implementation of the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Program (HACCP) ensuring food safety.

- Scope: It shall apply to food preparation, marketing and consumption in tourist zones.

- Contents of the document: It is considered to be complete.

Kenya

No comments.

4) What, in your view, are the limitations of the document that has been circulated and what recommendations do you suggest in this respect?

Antigua and Barbuda

Not applicable.

Chile

Most paragraphs in the proposed standard are a compilation of existing texts, as the authors themselves point out, taken from basic food hygiene texts: we believe that the standard, as currently drafted, does not meet the criteria for Codex standard development given that the proposed solution does not meet the identified need.

Costa Rica

The document highlights the aspects that should be covered by establishments in tourist zones; however, given the terms used in this document, less technical terminology might be used which facilitates assimilation by small businesses, so that technical education institutions train them and guide them in implementing basic requirements.

Mexico

As pointed out at the 14th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, the document is, basically, a compilation of Codex texts, such as the Code of Hygienic Practices and the HACCP System (including references to small, less developed companies), which are already applied. Further, as already stated, it is our governments’ responsibility to assure consumer health throughout the country.

It is worth mentioning that a number areas in Mexico are tourist zones, but tourists may visit cities other than those classified as tourist areas.

Panama

We are of the view that the major limitations of the document are the PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES and their SCOPE. In this regard, I believe that the purpose of the guidelines should not be “to protect the health of tourists arriving at the Region from Food Borne Diseases (FBDs)” but to protect the health of the entire population (permanent or temporary).

As currently drafted, the purpose and scope of the guidelines in the concerned document seem to be discriminatory as they favor tourists and temporary population over permanent population.

Paraguay

No comments.

Saint Lucia

The committee notes that there is a need to address food safety concerns in Small Island Developing States and a number of standards and regulations already exist for this purpose. However the capability for implementation and enforcement of current food safety standards and regulations requires strengthening by way of human resource and infrastructural development.

This position is fully supported by the Saint Lucia Ministry of Tourism which has responsibility for overseeing tourism operations.

Venezuela

It is considered to be complete.

Kenya

No comments.

5) What mandatory or recommended official documents has your country established for this purpose?**Antigua and Barbuda**

In our view, the entire country is a tourism zone. Antigua and Barbuda needs further improvement and development of the national food safety system.

Chile

Mandatory standards for compliance throughout all food chain stages. Food Sanitary Regulation.

Costa Rica

At the moment, the main legal support for food inspection is provided by the General Health Law, 1973, and its reforms, the Phytosanitary Protection Law, 1977, and the Animal Health Law, 1978, as well as a set of Executive Decrees that rule specific actions within this field. Some standards in force are:

- Law No. 5395. General Health Law. Section III.
- Decree No. 19479-S and reform. Regulation on food services.
- Decree No. 30465-S. General Regulation for Permits by the Health Ministry.
- Decree No. 24798-S. Food handler card.
- Decree No. 30082-S. Regulation on Registration of Health Trainers for Hygienic Food Handling.
- Law N° 8279 National Quality System, 2 May 2002.

Mexico

The General Health Law, the Regulation on Sanitary Control of Products and Services, Mexican Official Standards NOM-120-SSA1-1994. Goods and Services. Sanitation and Hygiene Practices for food processing, non-alcoholic beverages, NOM-093-SSA1-1994. Goods and Services. "Sanitation and Hygiene Practices in the preparation of food served at fixed establishments", all of which are official and mandatory.

Panama

Our country has various legal standards on food, among which we have the following:

Law No. 66, 10 November 1947 (SANITARY CODE)

Decree No. 256 13 June 1962 (*REGULATION FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE REGISTRATION AND CONTROL*)

Decree No 382, 24 August 1964

Town Decree No. 712, 23 September 1991

Resolution No. 036 28 October

Resolution No. 0008 21 September 1995

Executive Decree No. 94 8 April

Executive Decree No. 352 10 October 2001

Resolution No. 090 12 March 2002

Executive Decree No. 8. 31 March 2003

Paraguay

At national level, there is an interagency agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare, the National Institute of Technology, Standardization and Metrology, the Municipality of Asunción and others, coordinated by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare, within the framework of surveillance of foodborne diseases (FBDs).

Saint Lucia

No comments.

Venezuela

There is an official project on “Good Hygienic Practices in the Preparation, Service and/or Sale of Ready-to-Eat Foods”, for application in the national territory.

Kenya

No comments.

6) Is there any form of quality certification that includes food safety aspects?

Antigua and Barbuda

The Antigua and Barbuda Food Safety Act is drafted and now awaiting WTO comments.

Chile

The question is unclear. Naturally, there are sanitary certifications for export products including safety. In products for internal consumption, labels contain information on the origin of the product, the place where it was processed, the establishment of origin, the production lot number, the ingredients and other information which somehow informs the buyer of the real origin and sanitary quality of the product, which unequivocally distinguish them from non-labeled products and could therefore be considered a certification.

Costa Rica

Law No.8279 of the National Quality System, 2 May 2002, creates the Costa Rican Authorization Agency, ECA, a non-state public agency, with legal status and its own assets. The ECA is the organization responsible for granting and issuing authorizations in the country, helping improve the quality and productivity of companies and institutions in their products, goods and services. This helps reach the State’s legitimate objectives.

Mexico

Yes, the Secretariat of Tourism issues hygiene signs, called “*distintivo H*”, based on a voluntary Mexican standard, NMX-F-605-NORMEX-2004. Food – Hygienic Management in the service of food prepared to obtain *Distintivo “H”*.

Panama

The Ministry of Health (MINSA), through the Department of Food Protection (DEPA), is now responsible for monitoring compliance with existing sanitary provisions on sanitary food quality. Certification takes place at the level of food plants; restaurants or other food services are not included. In future, however, the National Authorization Council, attached to the Trade and Industry Ministry will be responsible for anything concerning certification, including food safety.

Venezuela

There is not any.

Paraguay**Saint Lucia****Kenya**

No comments.

7) What is your country’s system of food control and surveillance?**Antigua and Barbuda**

The quality certification is enshrined in the draft Food Safety Act.

Chile

The Ministry of Health is the top governing authority in charge of the design of policies, strategies, plans, programs, and technical and administrative standards. The Undersecretariat of the Ministry coordinates food control and hygiene programs, conducted by 13 Regional Ministerial Health Secretariats (SEREMIS) in the 13 political administrative regions of the country.

Human Resources. The Food Control and Hygiene Program has qualified staff, veterinarians, food engineers, other professionals and non-professional health inspectors totaling 1,600 officials throughout the country in the 13 SEREMIS, a network made up of 21 food laboratories in charge of the food sample analysis.

Design of the Program. Food control and hygiene programs are designed every year on the basis of the situation diagnosis, which includes the classification of food establishments according to the epidemiological risk inherent in the kind of activity they develop and their structural and functional conditions. Consideration is also given to the volume of food production so as to study their importance regarding the health risk factor and the universe of handlers, divided into direct and indirect, according to sex and age, all of which are important variables for foodborne disease control.

Objectives: General and specific objectives and strategies are designed based on selected problems and the prioritized diagnosis, taking account of the seriousness of the damage, according to their magnitude or severity, exposed population and effectiveness of the possible solution to be applied. The program is developed throughout the year by means of inspection focused on the system of production, processing, distribution and sale, and food itself. Health education is addressed to food handlers, high risk population groups and overall population.

Sanitary food quality. The sanitary quality of food itself is determined by means of microbiological, chemical/nutrition, parasitological analysis, based on sampling programs mainly conducted at the stage of sale to the public. Food analysis in laboratories of the national network and quality control of companies themselves are important information sources to prioritize program activities. Chile’s Public Health Institute operates in the national food laboratory network as a reference laboratory.

Costa Rica

The Ministry of Health is responsible for the inspection of food industries, food service for the public, food outlets. It grants operation permits and keeps records on the processed food marketed in the country.

The control on the sale of fresh products in the national market is only performed by means of some MAG programs for pesticide residue control, but monitoring should be enhanced, and application of corrective measures should be ensured.

Along with the Ministry of Health, the MAG conducts sanitary control of establishments working on animal slaughter, production, meat processing, which also require food sanitary authorization to operate (through *Decree 29588-MAG-S*). It is also legally responsible for the formulation, sale and use of agrochemicals. The Ministry of Health grants operation permits for stores that formulate, store or sell these products and technically support their registration.

The MAG is also in charge of inspection activities at places of production and storage of export agricultural products and issues the phytosanitary certificates required to export fresh fruit and vegetable products.

Mexico

Establishments offering the service are monitored, randomly, through the Federal Commission for the Protection against Sanitary Risks – a decentralized cell of the Health Secretariat – by means of national sanitary surveillance, including tourist zones. There are two priority projects, Potentially Hazardous Food and Food Quality, which include – among their activities and objectives – the care for the population exposed to risks coming from these sources. In addition, there are special programs in seasons when consumption is high and food surveillance is thus strengthened, e.g. in Lent.

Panama

According to the law, the Ministry of Health – through the Food Protection Department – is responsible for controlling the food control and surveillance system in the country by means of regulations. In particular, Executive Decree No. 352, 10 October 2001, amended by Executive Decree No. 81, 31 March 2003, regulates the mandatory application of Standardized Procedures of Cleaning and Disinfection Operations, Good Manufacturing Practices and the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Program, of plants and establishments that slaughter animals destined for market, process transform, distribute and sell meat products, milk products, fish products, eggs and various products for human consumption. As regards unprocessed food, the Ministry of Agricultural Development is responsible for its control and surveillance, in coordination with the Ministry of Health.

In addition, checks on quality assurance system in stores and sanitary inspections in establishments are conducted to grant operation permits.

Venezuela

There is a conventional control and surveillance system that is based on the legal and regulatory framework and on technical standards and applied by the various agencies involved in the matter. The system is retrospective, corrective and not very effective for foodborne disease prevention and control.

Paraguay

Saint Lucia

Kenya

No comments.

8) Has your country established sufficient technical training for your inspectors to verify, inspect or audit compliance with the document, once elaborated?

Antigua and Barbuda

In the country's food safety and surveillance system we gain compliance through:

- Inspection of facilities
- Re-inspection
- Compliance schedules
- Reports and correspondence
- Meetings (with management of establishments)
- Education and training
- Enforcement of legislation

Chile

Yes, the level of training in Chile is sufficient for inspectors to check compliance with standards, including GMP, standardized operating systems and HACCP.

Costa Rica

At the moment, the country has no quality certificates of this kind.

Mexico

Yes, the 31 states and the federal district have sanitary inspectors whose work focuses on the food and beverage sector and who have been trained by means of various courses on inspection of establishments providing food for consumption and are qualified in these matters. Furthermore, there are programs of supervision of the staff by the federation to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of the staff.

Panama

We believe that the country has not provided sufficient technical training to inspectors to verify, inspect or audit compliance with the document or others based on Codex (although training is always needed). However, we believe that the real problem is the lack of a national policy focused on raising awareness of the importance and the country's need to comply with all sanitary measures leading to the production, storage, preparation and distribution of safe, wholesome food rather than the lack of technical training.

It is of little or no help having well trained technicians if high authorities do not support them with the resources needed to fulfill their roles thoroughly. Neither is a private company that is not committed to production, storage, preparation and distribution of safe, wholesome food is of any use.

Venezuela

There is a training program on the surveillance of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and Good Hygienic Practices (GHP), but we believe it is not effective enough. Therefore, it should be strengthened and improved in order to ensure food safety in tourist zones.

Paraguay

Saint Lucia

Kenya

No comments.

9) Provide information on the status of epidemiological surveillance of foodborne diseases, if possible differentiating data for tourist areas.

Antigua and Barbuda

All technical staff have training in food safety however, more HACCP training needed.

Chile

As from 2000, notification of FBD outbreaks is mandatory, in order to know the magnitude, etiology, and tendency of FBD outbreaks; to monitor and assess food safety and identify risk factors; and to plan and assess interventions.

The Department of Statistics and Health (DEIS) of the Ministry of Health keeps a notification system by means of a web page, where SEREMIS make the notification once outbreaks have been studied. Unfortunately, at the moment we have no information available, but historical data do reveal that FBD outbreaks mostly occur in households and food services of big companies of workers. Food services such as restaurants, cafeterias and other places where food is sold make no distinction between establishments for tourists and those for non-tourist population.

Costa Rica

Costa Rica does not have an integrated surveillance system at national level that responds fast and integrates all surveillance areas such as human health, environment, animal and plant health as well as diagnosis laboratories. It does have surveillance programs in some institutions. These surveillance programs are the following:

- Pest surveillance and control, State Phytosanitary Service of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG),
- Surveillance in Diarrhea Diagnosis, National Reference Center (CNR) in Bacteriology of the Costa Rican Institute of Research and Teaching of Nutrition and Health (INCIENSA),
- Surveillance of food micronutrient strengthening, CNR-Micronutrients of INCIENSA,
- Surveillance and control of water for human consumption, Surveillance Department of the Costa Rican Institute of Aqueducts and Sewer Systems.

Mexico

No comments.

Panama

In the country we have no information on Foodborne Diseases (FBDs).

Venezuela

We have epidemiological information of the various states of the country, but it does not include specific references to tourist zones.

Paraguay**Saint Lucia****Kenya**

No comments.

10) Other information and comments.**Antigua and Barbuda**

Information on food borne illnesses is documented; there is a surveillance system in place for food borne disease outbreaks.

Chile

There are not any.

Costa Rica

The preparation and dissemination of this document among Costa Rican tourist entrepreneurs will help improve food quality and certification and the environment where food is prepared for the final destination, i.e. national or international tourists who visit Costa Rica's tourist spots.

The document does not give enough attention to the safety of the food generally taken on tours or excursions to certain tourist zones where lunch and snacks are provided due to the time the tour takes. It only contains a set of aspects associated with the appropriate preservation of the food provided but it includes no details on it. Further, in tourist zones there is a lot of food sold on the street, which entails significant risks and should be considered in this draft.

The document should be made available to countries' tourist associations and boards for them to organize campaigns to inform and protect consumers with appropriate guidance on implementation needs.

The document might serve as a basis for national authorities' work on recommendations applied to each country in order to improve control systems in establishments of the tourist industry in general.

Panama

The amount of money an activity generates should not be what makes us provide greater health protection to tourists than to national inhabitants. Thus, I believe it is important for member countries from the region of Latin America and the Caribbean to have fair policies to protect everybody's health with equally restrictive internal regulations. In the worst scenario, countries' primary obligation should be focused on their own population before foreigners.

Venezuela**Paraguay****Saint Lucia****Kenya**

No comments.

PROPOSAL ON GUIDELINES FOR FOOD SAFETY IN TOURIST ZONES

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the tourist industry has grown dramatically in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean, which brings about the need to promote actions to substantially improve the food services provided to tourists, particularly those associated with the provision of safe food in outlets for tourist, regardless of the provisions applied to the internal market.

There are reports indicating that between 14 and 25 percent of tourists coming to Latin America and the Caribbean suffer from some kind of disorder associated with food consumption in the first days of stay in a tourist centre, which reveals the presence of food safety hazards which may, together with sudden change in tourist diets, affect tourist health.

Considering that tourist demand in the region is constantly growing and constitutes an important share of the revenues of Latin American and Caribbean countries, efforts should be made to prevent risking tourist service purchases by developed countries, taking more actions intended to ensure the provision of safe food in tourist zones, regardless of the behaviour/use that tourists themselves make of these services.

2. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

These guidelines provide general guidelines that should be followed in order to ensure the health protection of tourists entering a country of the region in order to reduce health risks associated with food consumption in tourist zones.

The application of these Guidelines as well as the necessary specific measures needed may facilitate acceptance of the conditions established by tourist operators when promoting certain tourist zones.

These Guidelines are not intended to make a distinction between permanent residents and tourists. However, it is necessary to acknowledge that some countries may require the adoption of additional measures to ensure the provision of safe food for tourism.

3. SCOPE

These Guidelines will be applicable to all food products aimed at food establishments such as hotels, restaurants, bars, coffee-shops, stalls and others, located in places considered of tourist attraction. (These Guidelines supplement the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969)*).

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 Tourist Zones: Areas or places which, due to its natural beauty, geographical location or other specific or social-cultural feature has infrastructure in establishments such as those mentioned above aimed at the service of people who visit such areas on business, for work reasons or for pleasure for periods generally shorter than one year.

4.2 Tourists: individuals visiting, on trips or stays, areas or places different from those where they usually live.

4.3 Tourist industry or business: private management activity facilitating the integration of the local services for the well-being, movement and stay of tourists and the temporary population of the areas visited, for the purposes of providing logistic support and to facilitate the interaction of the interested parties.

4.4 Temporary population: individuals visiting, either transiently or permanently, other places and areas for business, study, medical treatment, scientific research, meeting, or symposium purposes, or reasons other than pleasure or leisure.

4.5 Tourism: activity regulated by countries, with the interaction of individuals and the industry of the sector aimed at ordering and facilitating the movement, stay and access to the services necessary for the well-being of tourists and the transient population.

For the rest of the items arising from these Guidelines, the definitions expressed by the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969)* will be considered.

5. GENERAL ASPECTS

For the purposes of these guidelines, the businesses of movement and stay of tourists and temporary population (airplanes, buses, hotels, hostels, spas, restaurants, indigenous food shops, street stalls, among others) must take care of the health and the physical well-being of tourists and temporary population. The general guidelines for this purpose are those established in the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969)*, and in the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Precooked and Cooked Foods in Mass Catering (CAC/RCP 39-1993)*.

5.1 Water: The tourist industry shall give special attention to obtaining a sufficient supply of clean drinking water in keeping with the national standards which define drinking water, and every effort should be made to use water rationally and to prevent waste.

National water authorities in each country shall ensure the supply of clean drinking water to tourist development centres defined in the relevant National Plans related to the tourist development approved by the countries.

It is necessary to carry out ongoing activities of information and education with specialized technicians on this matter, aimed at tourists in particular, when water safety is not ensured.

In case there is not an appropriate supply of drinking water provided by public utilities, the individuals in charge or responsible for tourist establishments shall provide for the requirements for drinking water coming from a private source – or its own – whose type (artesian well, surface water, etc.), location, treatment, disinfection/purification treatment and water quality sanitary control are in conformity with the legislation in force in each country. The presence of residual chlorine should always be checked, and specialized laboratories should always be requested to conduct adequate microbiological analysis and control recommended by the relevant bodies must be regularly requested from.

The water used for the preparation of edible ice must be potable. The guidelines for drinking and bottled water will be those prescribed by the relevant local legislation, based on the *Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality of the World Health Organization (Volumes 1 and 2)* and the *WHO Guidelines on the Surveillance of Drinking-Water Quality, International Standards for Drinking-water, 3rd ed., 1971* and the Codex texts *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for the Collecting, Processing and Marketing of Natural Mineral Waters (CAC/RCP 33-1985)*, *Code of Hygiene Practice for Bottled/Packaged Drinking Waters other than Natural Mineral Waters (CAC/RCP 48-2001)* and the *General Standard for Bottled/Packaged Drinking Waters (Other than Natural. Mineral Waters) (CODEX STAN 227-2001)*.

Drinking water, for all the purposes it is intended for, shall be in keeping with the recommendations laid down in the *Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality of the World Health Organization (Volumes 1 and 2)*.

5.2 Food offered to tourists and to temporary population: As well as offering regional, national or local food, the collective food establishments in tourist resorts shall consider the need to prepare, and make available to their clients, special diets when conditions justify it.

In places with very cold or hot climate, or in high areas above sea level, the food offered to tourists who are not adapted to these conditions shall help them resist those situations that may alter their diet or their normal life pace.

Food establishments in tourist areas, irrespective of their size or status, must have the necessary supply or the capacity to prepare food for children, at adults, at individuals recovering from surgeries or diseases, except for tourist destinations where consumers can choose another food establishment.

5.3 Reference documents and local legislation: Recommendation is made that all food establishments located in tourist zones have written information through reference documents and local, national and international basic legislation in the field of handling food and food hygiene. These pieces of legislation shall be available to establishment owners, general managers, chefs, chef assistants, waiters, other handlers and support staff in direct contact with food, who should be familiar with such legislation. They shall also serve as a basis for the establishment of internal operational practices and procedures for each establishment.

Recommended international and regional reference documents about this matter are the following:

- (a) Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969).
- (b) Code of Hygienic Practice for Precooked and Cooked Foods in Mass Catering (CAC/RCP 39-1993).
- (c) Code of Hygienic Practice for the Preparation and Sale of Street Foods (Regional Code - Latin America and the Caribbean) (CAC/RCP 43-1995).
- (d) Local legislation on food hygiene and handling.
- (e) Regional legislation, where available, on specific issues, as provided for by national authorities.

6. RECEPTION AND INITIAL INSPECTION OF GOODS

The legally responsible individuals or owners of food establishments in tourist zones may issue written specifications on the aspects to be required from suppliers and establish mechanisms to verify compliance with them provided that a quality assurance system has been implemented. These rules may consist in verification records or forms that are always available to individuals responsible for purchases. Furthermore, these establishments must have a book with pages numbered sequentially to write down all the daily observations and keep them available to the relevant authorities for a period which shall not be shorter than six (6) months.

6.1 Place: A pre-determined area should be used for the reception of goods, which should have adequate lighting and ventilation and be clean and at suitable temperature. This includes the places where the goods are to be stored.

Furthermore, the specific sinks needed should be placed near the reception area and have adequate and sufficient drinking water shall be placed, in order to eliminate the dust and dirt that may come with the raw materials, especially vegetables, fruit and other fresh plants. Food raw materials shall be inspected upon arrival, in order to verify whether they comply with the prescribed specifications, or whether they present evidence of deterioration or the presence of pests that may be transmitted to the establishment.

6.2 Time: The process of purchasing and receiving the goods is recommended to be conducted when activity in the establishments is reduced and, if possible, when there are no customers. It is also appropriate to plan the reception of goods in such a way that suppliers never arrive at the same time. This concept is also related to the need of storing all food and ingredients as quickly as possible.

6.3 Operational control: It is appropriate to establish and comply with certain procedures to control the reception of goods: selection of suppliers, inventory, preservation conditions according to the different products, prevention of biological, chemical and physical contamination, and a “first in, first out” program. Also, records should be kept of the operations to be considered critical for food safety, such as meat, fish and dairy product temperature, aiding to the selection of suppliers, the assessment of products and the continuous improvement of products.

7. PREMISES, EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS

7.1 Kitchen: The kitchens in tourist area food establishments must have specific characteristics that allow them to fulfil their function. These rooms should be designed to prevent cross contamination by microbial hazards. Drinking water and sewage facilities, and the existence and location of cold storages or refrigeration equipment should be considered a top priority. Floors, walls, ceilings, storage rooms, lighting, ventilation, rooms for the staff to change their clothes and circulation corridors shall also be taken into consideration.

All the surfaces should be designed and built in such a way as to make cleaning and sanitation easy.

As regards the design of the kitchen and of the facilities in general, consideration shall be given to the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969)*.

7.2 Health services and waste disposal: Consideration shall be given to health services, drinking water supply and appropriate sewages, areas and elements used for the collection and disposal of rubbish and solid waste.

The establishments must make provisions and carry out the necessary activities to check and ensure that the water consumed complies with the specifications for drinking water established in their national legislation, taking into account WHO recommendations.

Where national standards are more stringent than the international standards, compliance with national standards for drinking (or similar indicator) water will be required. An adequate drinking water supply and pressure should be ensured. The containers where water is stored (tanks) must be sufficiently protected to prevent water from being contaminated by birds, rodents, insects, dust, rain, etc.

The use of non-drinking water needed, for example, for plant cleaning or watering and for steam production, should make it mandatory to take special precautions to prevent accidental use of such water in food preparation, utensil washing, or use as a drink; for this reason, it shall be identified with the international standard colours.

Sewage pipes shall be closed, and the drains and sewers shall have doors/lids in order to control the emission of odours and will be built in such a way as to facilitate the disposal of wastewater outside the establishment.

There shall be sufficient health services for the staff and for the maximum number of customers to be served. They shall have liquid soap and disposable towels. As much as possible, those intended for the staff shall be separate from those offered to clients. Their cleaning and the provision of inputs shall be ensured as many times a day as necessary, based on the usual flow of visitors, as needed to ensure they are in optimal conditions.

7.3 Equipment: The equipment in contact with food must meet all these conditions: it should be easy to clean and disinfect, and be built in non-toxic and resistant material. Where necessary, it shall have devices preventing food contamination or making food contamination difficult. It should enable the monitoring and surveillance of its operation; and refrigeration and cold storage equipment and hot storage equipment (about 65°C) should continuously work correctly and suitably.

8. STAFF

In order to prevent food borne diseases (FBDs) that may be caused by contamination provoked by handling failure, the following needs to be achieved: the staff should comply with standards on good manufacturing practices established nationally taking into account international or regional recommendations, have good health, know and apply hygienic food handling procedures, and be strict about their personal hygiene.

To comply with these requirements, it is recommended that countries take measures and provide for mandatory training on hygienic food handling for all food handlers in tourist zones.

There should always be a manager with certification in food safety and quality issued by an official or officially recognized body in establishments of food preparation and service.

All information related to food handlers' health and hygiene is included in the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969)*.

9. HYGIENE, CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

9.1 Cleaning and disinfection scheme: All food services or establishments in tourist zones should establish (in writing) and comply with a cleaning and disinfection scheme. This scheme must provide clear and accurate information on the importance of cleaning and disinfecting, and their purposes.

The scheme will define the specific procedures, taking into consideration whether an area or piece of equipment should be dry-cleaned or washed. The frequency and time, as well as the procedure to be used in each place, surface, equipment or utensil will be stated. Where necessary, the scheme will provide instructions on the assembly and disassembly of certain pieces of equipment, such as cheese and cold meat cutters. Specification will be made as to who will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting, what tools and utensils will be used, and which cleaning and disinfecting agents will be used, specifying the concentration on the records.

The cleaning and disinfection products used should be biodegradable and guaranteed by ISO 14000 Environmental Standards or similar international rules. In general, the use of products without environmental contraindications or adverse effects on tourists' health should be fostered.

The written and detailed scheme shall be shown in a suitable place, shall be visible or available to users, i.e. the staff responsible for the company's scheme. Where necessary, the records shall be assessed to ensure due compliance with the procedures established.

9.2 Cleaning procedures and application: Cleaning must be dry or wet, as already mentioned. It is necessary to respect the kind of cleaning needed for each room or surface, thus avoiding damage.

9.3 Disinfection: It is necessary to take into account that no disinfectant should be used to replace thorough cleaning of surfaces and utensils.

It is recommended that large establishments seek the services of a food microbiology laboratory to provide advice and to carry out the tests considered appropriate to assess compliance with the scheme.

10. PEST CONTROL

In this field, the best measure to be taken is an Integrated Pest Control Scheme whose purpose is to prevent the entry of harmful animals into the premises, to detect them in time if they do enter the establishment and, in this event, kill them or take them out of the premises immediately. When pests already in the premises need to be eradicated, it is important to take measures for the proper use of chemical substances, protection of food and reduction of direct exposure of customers and workers to pesticides.

The Scheme could be designed and executed by the company itself, in the case of big companies and with sufficient financial, administrative and human resources. Or else, specialized companies approved by local authorities could be entrusted with the development of the scheme.

The Integrated Program for Pest Control shall specify the precautions to be adopted in the construction of the facilities and services of the place, including water supply and sewages or the changes or repairs that are to be made if the premises are already built, to prevent dangerous animals from coming in. These practices include, among others, consideration of the foundations, walls, floors, pipes, windows, doors, ventilation pipes, as well as areas and gardens around the premises. This scheme should also consider the reception of products and raw material as a likely entryway for specific pests, such as cockroaches and "mus" mice.

11. STAFF TRAINING

Training in food hygiene, handling, and food safety and quality should be provided not only to handlers but to all staff working in food establishments in tourist zones.

11.1 Information and knowledge needed for owners, managers and administrators of food establishments in tourist zones: suggestion is made that training for owners, managers and administrators should be conducted by agencies or associations engaged in the operational training and authorization of individuals working in food production and preparation.

The training courses should include, but will not be restricted to, the following issues:

- (a) Knowledge of physical, chemical and biological hazards.
- (b) Basic knowledge on food borne diseases (FBDs).
- (c) Knowledge of cross contamination of food or through surfaces, handling or utensils.
- (d) Understanding of the time/temperature combination to cook and expose food and its impact on food safety and quality.
- (e) Knowledge of procedures for effective food storage.
- (f) Knowledge of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).
- (g) Basic knowledge of HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points), highlighting critical control points for prepared and stored potentially hazardous food.
- (h) Understanding of the need to train, motivate and supervise the handling staff.
- (i) Knowledge of the appropriate time and procedures for appropriate cleaning of the equipment used.
- (j) Awareness of the importance of management programs as an ongoing assessment of activities and services for the continuous improvement of food and service safety and quality.

11.2 Information and knowledge needed for cooks, helpers and food handlers in general: Training of these professionals shall include the physical capacity for the performance of their work. They must be qualified and trained by other professionals, through specialized bodies and associations. Training and skills shall be assessed consistently, for refresher courses or new training courses. The topics they should know include, but will not be restricted to, the following:

- (a) Understanding of the risk of cross contamination and the need for hand washing before starting their tasks, hand washing after touching raw food, and for thorough cleaning of the surfaces of equipment in contact with raw food.
- (b) Understanding of the principles of heat treatment to destroy microorganisms, quick cooling and adequate storage.
- (c) Understanding of the need to inform supervisors when they have symptoms of diseases that may be or cause food borne diseases.
- (d) Theoretical and practical knowledge of the procedures for appropriate cleaning and disinfection of utensils and equipment.
- (e) Understanding of the need and procedures to clean and disinfect clothing, clothes, and cleaning utensils.
- (f) Understanding of the importance of working with operational procedures established by the managers of the establishment.

11.3 Information to customers and tourists in particular: Tourists/customers of the establishments shall be informed on the precautions associated with the consumption of indigenous food of each tourist place, particularly its composition and warnings about the typical/traditional processing conditions and the use of local spices or raw materials, to which tourists may not be accustomed. In the event of food sale for consumption outside processing establishments, this food must be in a appropriate, well covered container; and, when appropriate, information and instructions must be provided, including product identification, preparation or processing date, processor or individual responsible, time and temperature conditions for transport, preservation, management and others needed to maintain food safety and appropriate use by customers.

11.4 Cooperation between the tourism sector and competent food control bodies: Efforts need to be made for the tourism sector and the competent food control bodies cooperate in order to facilitate awareness, training and application of mechanisms and strategies to improve food quality, hygiene and safety in tourist zones.

11.5 Monitoring of food safety and hygiene: Constant monitoring is important to assess food safety in tourist zones. Surveys to users, especially tourists, on the food offered to them are recommended, which may help gather useful information to the private and public sector on tourists' perception of and experience with the issues that are covered in these guidelines and are available in order to improve control and monitoring programmes of food and food services provided in tourist zones.

12. HYGIENE AND PRIMARY PRODUCTION

The following recommendations will apply to all the aspects that are not considered in items 5 to 12 of these Guidelines:

- (a) The hygiene recommendations relating to primary production of fresh meat are included in the *International Recommended Code of Hygiene Practice for Fresh Meat (CAC/RCP 11-1976)*.
- (b) The hygiene recommendations relating to primary production of poultry are included in the *International Recommended Code of Hygiene Practice for Poultry Processing (CAC/RCP 14-1976)*.
- (c) The hygiene recommendations relating to the production of pre-cut fresh fruit and vegetables are included in the *Code of Hygiene Practice for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 53-2003)*.
- (d) The hygiene recommendations relating to the primary production of milk products are included in the *Code of Hygiene Practice for Milk and Milk Products (CAC/RCP 57-2004)*.
- (e) The hygiene recommendations relating to the primary production of fish and fish products are included in the *Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products (CAC/RCP 52-2003)*.

13. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUPPLIERS

In this respect recommendation is made that food service establishments for hotels in tourist zones establish supplier selection programmes and, where necessary according to established quality standards, provide information on the practices required by the processing establishment. If necessary, depending on the size of the establishment, suppliers might be included in the training programs provided to the rest of the staff; or else, agreements with competent authorities or food safety control agencies may be promoted for inclusion in specific training programmes.

Suppliers shall be authorized for this purpose, and, where necessary, the competent authority shall establish a register of those complying with these Guidelines.

14. TRANSPORT

In addition to the recommendations in the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969)* and the Codes cited in Section 13, competent authorities shall adopt measures for:

- (a) Verification and confirmation that transport is suitable for the food transported (for example, cold store or freezer) and easy to clean, and that no contamination exists.
- (b) Verification and assessment of the physical condition of the transport.
- (c) Verification of the cleanliness of the transport as well as odours (there cannot be strange odours other than the smell of the transported product).
- (d) Verification and certification that the products transported are placed in such a way that there cannot be cross contamination.
- (e) Surveillance of the procedure and conditions of food unload.

15. STORAGE

When the food, ingredients and other products reach the establishment, no time shall be wasted in storing them in accordance with their nature. Frozen products shall keep that condition by placing them in stores or in sections designed for frozen products, avoiding interruptions in the cold chain.

The places where fresh, processed or semi-processed products shall comply with the following recommendations:

- (a) The places shall be built with materials that enable easy and through cleaning.
- (b) Provisions should be made for storage to be, at least, 15 cm (6 inches) form the ground.
- (c) Chilling rooms cannot be filled beyond its capacity.
- (d) Records should be kept of the temperatures of the cooling equipment at regular intervals.
- (e) Cold store doors cannot be left open for long periods. Entry to cold stores must be restricted.
- (f) Entered products must be rotated on a FCFS (first come, first-served) basis with the FIFO (first in, first out) methodology.
- (g) Food, in general, shall not be stored: in toilets, toilets or cloakrooms for the staff, in rooms where litter baskets or bags are placed, boiler rooms, mechanic workshops, in the open, places where cleaning products or pesticides are kept, under pipelines, under staircases and, in general, wherever microbial, chemical or physical contamination may occur.
- (h) Neither meat nor meat products can be piled up.

PROPOSAL ON GUIDELINES FOR FOOD SAFETY IN TOURIST ZONES

The document shows the changes introduced due to the revision of the document based on the comments submitted in response to CL 2005/19-LAC and the discussion held at the 14th Session of CCLAC. Deletions are crossed out and additions are bolded and underlined.

1. ~~PREAMBLE~~

~~The 12th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC) accepted the offer of the delegation of Costa Rica to prepare, jointly with Dominican Republic, a draft document to be analyzed at the 13th Session of the CCLAC. The possibility was opened for other interested countries to take part in the preparation of the said document.~~

~~This document has been initially prepared by Costa Rica, Brazil, and Dominican Republic.~~

~~The Guidelines have been prepared by taking into account that the Region has significantly developed the tourism industry in the last few years, and therefore, the health of tourists must be protected.~~

~~Some reports indicate that 14-25% of the tourists visiting Latin America and the Caribbean suffered from a diarrheic event in the initial 12 hours after arrival. This puts at stake the purchase of tourist services by the developed countries. Therefore, it is necessary to regulate the production of food, at all stages, in order to protect the health of transient populations.~~

~~Furthermore, the World Tourism Organization has always paid great attention to food hygiene and safety in tourist places or areas, and has often promoted, jointly with the World Health Organization, the organization of regional courses and lectures in order to make the relevant authorities and tourism professionals aware of these problems, thus guiding them towards suitable practices.~~

~~Finally, the Guidelines were considered by the 13th Session of the CCLAC¹. On that occasion, the Committee noted the request by the Regional Inter-ministerial Summit for Health and Agriculture (RIMSA) to make progress on this matter, and requested the delegations of Barbados, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba and Dominican Republic, with the assistance of INPPAZ, to prepare a new proposal for consideration at the next Session of the Coordinating Committee.~~

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the tourist industry has grown dramatically in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean, which brings about the need to promote actions to substantially improve the food services provided to tourists, particularly those associated with the provision of safe food in outlets for tourist, regardless of the provisions applied to the internal market.

There are reports indicating that between 14 and 25 percent of tourists coming to Latin America and the Caribbean suffer from some kind of disorder associated with food consumption in the first days of stay in a tourist centre, which reveals the presence of food safety hazards which may, together with sudden change in tourist diets, affect tourist health.

Considering that tourist demand in the region is constantly growing and constitutes an important share of the revenues of Latin American and Caribbean countries, efforts should be made to prevent risking tourist service purchases by developed countries, taking more actions intended to ensure the provision of safe food in tourist zones, regardless of the behaviour/use that tourists themselves make of these services.

2. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

These guidelines provide general guidelines that should be followed in order to ensure the health protection of tourists entering a country of the region in order to reduce health risks associated with food consumption in tourist zones.

The application of these Guidelines as well as the necessary specific measures needed may facilitate acceptance of the conditions established by tourist operators when promoting certain tourist zones.

These Guidelines are not intended to make a distinction between permanent residents and tourists. However, it is necessary to acknowledge that some countries may require the adoption of additional measures to ensure the provision of safe food for tourism.

- (a) — to protect the health of tourists arriving at the Region from Food Borne Diseases (FBDs).
- (b) — to make the basic safety requirements consistent for the production, collection, transport, storage, marketing and handling of food sold in tourist areas.
- (c) — to establish basic guidelines on food safety, handling, hygiene, and quality, as well as on the principles and systems used to ensure the existence of these qualities.
- (d) — to establish the general necessary guidelines to decrease the hazards to health associated to the consumption of food in tourist zones.

These Guidelines are a first step toward the regional harmonization of the requirements for food products aimed at temporary populations located in tourist zones.

The Guidelines are considered:

- (a) — to expose the problem in a language appropriate for non specialists in the field in order to facilitate the adoption of operational programs and procedures for the preparation of food in tourist zones and to be a basis for control equivalence between the Latin American and Caribbean countries.
- (b) — to be a useful tool to help countries to develop national food safety programs in tourist zones in the Latin American and Caribbean Region.
- (c) — to be improved taking into account the experience gathered by each of the products.
- (d) — to act as a basis for the preparation of internal regulations for the countries, even more restrictive, in order to protect the tourists' health.

4. DEFINITIONS

Tourism:

For the rest of the items arising from these Guidelines, the definitions expressed by the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003)*, and by the *Quality Tourism for the Caribbean Standard (QTC Standard), Food Safety and Sanitation (2001)*, prepared by CAREC and CAST will be considered.

5. GENERAL ASPECTS

5.1 Water:

The water used for the preparation of edible ice must be potable. The guidelines for drinking and bottled water will be those prescribed by the relevant local legislation, based on the latest edition of the *Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality of the World Health Organization (Volumes 1 and 2)* and the Codex texts *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for the Collecting, Processing and Marketing of Natural Mineral Waters (CAC/RCP 33-1985)* **WHO Guidelines on the Surveillance of Drinking-Water Quality, International Standards for Drinking-water, 3rd ed., 1971** and the *Code of Hygiene Practice for Bottled/Packaged Drinking Waters other than Natural Mineral Waters (CAC/RCP 48-2001)* **General Standard for Bottled/Packaged Drinking Waters (Other than Natural Mineral Waters) (CODEX STAN 227-2001)**.

5.2 Food offered to tourists and to temporary population:

~~Food handlers in~~ food establishments in tourist areas, irrespective of their size or status, must have the necessary supply or the capacity to prepare food for children, at adults, at individuals recovering from surgeries or diseases, **except for tourist destinations where consumers can choose another food establishment**. ~~Taking into consideration that these groups of individuals are especially vulnerable to foodborne diseases (FBDs); for this reason, special care must be taken in the clean and safe preparation and suitable preservation of the food served to them.~~

5.3 Reference documents and local legislation:

Recommended international and regional reference documents about this matter are the following:

- (a) Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969).
- (b) Code of Hygienic Practice for Precooked and Cooked Foods in Mass Catering (CAC/RCP 39-1993).
- (c) Code of Hygienic Practice for the Preparation and Sale of Street Foods (Regional Code - Latin America and the Caribbean) (CAC/RCP 43-1995).
- (d) ~~GMC Resolution 80/96 of MERCOSUR.~~
- (e) ~~Quality Tourism for the Caribbean Standard (QTC Standard), Food Safety and Sanitation (2001), a guide developed particularly for the Caribbean.~~
- (d) Local legislation on food hygiene and handling
- (e) **Regional legislation, where available, on specific issues, as provided for by national authorities.**

6. RECEPTION AND INITIAL INSPECTION OF GOODS

The legally responsible individuals or owners of food establishments in tourist zones may issue written specifications on the aspects to be required from suppliers and ~~may verify them at each of the purchase events of food or raw materials regarding food safety~~ **establish mechanisms to verify compliance with them provided that a quality assurance system has been implemented**. These rules may consist in verification records or forms that are always available to individuals responsible for purchases. Furthermore, these establishments must have a book with pages numbered sequentially to write down all the daily observations and keep them available to the relevant authorities for a period which shall not be shorter than six (6) months.

7. PREMISES, EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS

~~7.2 Dining rooms and banquet rooms: These areas must meet the requirements to maintain the quality and hygiene of food, and the materials these areas are built must allow for adequate cleaning. For the purposes of avoiding the accumulation of humidity, adequate ventilation is necessary and, if necessary, the installation of air conditioning devices adequately distributed and maintained in suitable condition. Also, good lighting is essential; lack of good lighting may promote the contamination of the food offered, since food handling failures may be favoured.~~

7.3 Health services and waste disposal:

The establishments must make provisions and carry out the necessary activities to check and ensure that the water consumed complies with the ~~international standards for drinking water~~ **specifications for drinking water established in their national legislation, taking into account WHO recommendations**.

There shall be sufficient health services for the staff and for the maximum number of customers to be served. They shall have liquid soap and disposable towels. As much as possible, those intended for the staff shall be separate from those offered to clients. **Their cleaning and the provision of inputs shall be ensured as many times a day as necessary, based on the usual flow of visitors, as needed to ensure they are in optimal conditions.**

8. STAFF

In order to prevent food borne diseases (FBDs) that may be caused by contamination provoked by handling failure, the following needs to be achieved: the staff should comply with standards on good manufacturing practices **established nationally taking into account international or regional recommendations**, have good health, know and apply hygienic food handling procedures, and be strict about their personal hygiene.

11. STAFF TRAINING

11.1 Information and knowledge needed for owners, managers and administrators of food establishments in tourist zones:

The training courses should include, but will not be restricted to, the following issues:

- (a) Knowledge of physical, chemical and biological hazards.
- (b) Basic knowledge on food borne diseases (FBDs).
- (c) Knowledge of cross contamination of food or through surfaces, handling or utensils.
- (d) Understanding of the time/temperature combination to cook and expose food and its impact on food safety and quality.
- (e) Knowledge of procedures for effective food storage.
- (f) Knowledge of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).
- (g) Basic knowledge of HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points), **highlighting critical control points for prepared and stored potentially hazardous food**.

11.3 Information to customers and tourists in particular: Tourists/customers of the establishments shall be informed on the precautions associated with the consumption of indigenous food of each tourist place, **particularly its composition and warnings about the typical/traditional processing conditions and the use of local spices or raw materials, to which tourists may not be accustomed**. Furthermore, in the event of carrying food **sale for consumption outside processing establishments** to be consumed in hotel rooms, sightseeing and excursions, this food must be in a appropriate, well covered container; and, **when appropriate**, information and instructions must be provided, including product identification, preparation or processing date, processor or individual responsible, time and temperature conditions for transport, preservation, management and others needed to maintain food safety and appropriate use by customers.

11.4 Cooperation between the tourism sector and competent food control bodies: Efforts need to be made for the tourism sector and the **competent food control** bodies responsible for food control to in order to work in mutual cooperation and harmony, to enable training, awareness and application of all the mechanisms and strategies **cooperate in order to facilitate awareness, training and application of mechanisms and strategies** to improve food quality, hygiene and safety in tourist zones.

11.5 Monitoring of food safety and hygiene: Constant monitoring is important to assess food safety in tourist zones. Surveys to users, especially tourists, on ~~the safety and quality of the food offered to them~~ are recommended, which may provide **help gather** useful information to the private and public sector **on tourists' perception of and experience with the issues that are covered in these guidelines and are available** in order to improve control and monitoring programmes **of food and food services provided in tourist zones** of food for tourists and transient population.

13. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUPPLIERS

In this respect recommendation is made that food service establishments for hotels in tourist zones establish supplier selection programmes and, where necessary **according to established quality standards**, to carry out some educational and informational task to suppliers, and consider the detainment of the services of a company or association to provide training **provide information on the practices required by the processing establishment. If necessary, depending on the size of the establishment, suppliers might be included in the training programs provided to the rest of the staff; or else, agreements with competent authorities or food safety control agencies may be promoted for inclusion in specific training programmes.**

Suppliers shall be ~~registered with the relevant governmental services~~ **authorized for this purpose, and, where necessary, the competent authority shall establish a register of those complying with these Guidelines** and be chosen out of those meeting the requirements of the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003)*.

~~Application is recommended of the Guideline Procedures for the Visual Inspection of Lots of Canned Foods for Unacceptable Defects (CAC/GL 17-1993) whenever suppliers provide canned food.~~

15. STORAGE

When the food, ingredients and other products reach the establishment, no time shall be wasted in storing them in accordance with their nature. Frozen products shall keep that condition by placing them in stores or in sections designed for frozen products, **avoiding interruptions in the cold chain**.

The places where fresh, processed or semi-processed products shall comply with the following recommendations:

- (a) The places shall be built with materials that enable easy and through cleaning.
- (b) ~~Food must be stored at~~ **Provisions should be made for storage to be**, at least, 15 cm (6 inches) from the ground.
- (c) Chilling rooms cannot be filled beyond its capacity.
- (d) ~~Reading must be made of the temperatures of the freezing equipment at regular intervals, and Records should be kept of these temperatures~~ **the temperatures of the cooling equipment at regular intervals**.
- (e) ~~Entry to cold chambers must be restricted.~~ **Cold store doors** ~~Døers~~ cannot be left open for long periods. **Entry to cold stores must be restricted**

16. ~~BIBLIOGRAPHY~~

- ~~Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme. Codex Alimentarius Commission. Volume 1A. General Requirements. Second Edition (Revised 1999).~~
- ~~Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme. Codex Alimentarius Commission. Volume 1B. General Requirements (Food Hygiene). Second Edition (Revised 2001).~~
- ~~Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme. Codex Alimentarius Commission. Volume 10. Meat and Meat Products, including Soups and Broths. Second Edition (1993).~~
- ~~Draft Code of Hygiene Practice for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables – Annex 1 – on Pre-Cut Fruit and Vegetables Ready for Consumption (ALINORM 03/13, Appendix II, Report of the 34th Meeting of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene, Bangkok, Thailand, October 8-13, 2001).~~
- ~~Proposed draft Code of Hygiene Practice for Milk and Milk Products (ALINORM 03/13, paras. 111-150, Report of the 35th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene, Orlando, U.S.A., January 27 to February 1, 2003).~~
- ~~Draft Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products (ALINORM 03/18, Appendix II, Report of the 25th Session of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products, Alessund, Norway, June 3-7, 2002).~~
- ~~Handbook of Food Quality, Hygiene and Safety in the Tourism Industry, published by the World Tourism Organization (WTO). April 2001.~~
- ~~Quality Tourism for the Caribbean Standard (QTC Standard). Food Safety and Sanitation. (2001).~~
- ~~Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality of the World Health Organization (1996/97 Edition).~~