

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
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Agenda Item 4b)

CX/MAS 01/5-Add.1

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

Twenty-Third Session

Budapest, Hungary, 26 February - 2 March 2001

AMENDMENTS TO THE PROCEDURAL MANUAL OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION RELEVANT TO THE CRITERIA APPROACH

BACKGROUND

A. PRINCIPLES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CODEX METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

1. COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The 11th Session of the Committee (1994) reviewed the sections in the Procedural Manual dealing with Relations between Commodity Committees and General Committees and agreed that the comprehensive statements of Codex policy in section 4. *Instructions to Codex Committees* (selection of methods of analysis, sampling protocols, establishment of microbiological criteria for foods, guidelines on the inclusion of provisions of nutritional quality in standards) belonged more correctly in the Codex Alimentarius itself than in the Procedural Manual. It requested the Committees responsible for the development of these texts to review and rephrase them in a way which would give them general applicability. However, until such time as general statements of policy suitable for inclusion in the Codex Alimentarius were elaborated, the texts should be retained as “*Guidelines for the Inclusion of Specific Provisions in Codex Standards and Related texts*” (ALINORM 95/33, para. 50).

Following these recommendations, the Committees concerned took action to reconsider the statements, reword them and/or convert them into a Codex text. The conclusions of the Committees concerned with the review of these sections were considered by the CCGP (1996), approved by the Commission (1997) and the relevant amendments were included in the Procedural Manual. The provisions in the *Guidelines* concerning methods of analysis and sampling have not yet been reviewed as the question of criteria is still under consideration in CCMAS .

The 14th Session of the Committee (1999) noted that the CCMAS had undertaken work to revise the *Principles for the Establishment or Selection of Codex Methods of Analysis* and the Section of the Procedural Manual dealing with the relations between Codex Commodity Committees and General Subject Committees on the matter of methods of analysis and sampling. It was noted that this work was subsequent to recommendations made by the 11th Session of CCGP to relevant Codex Committees. The Committee agreed that the objective of such revisions was to ensure that the Procedural Manual contained only matters relating to the Commission's procedures; guidelines or other recommendations that were better directed to Member governments should be transferred from the Procedural Manual, revised as appropriate, and after adoption by the Commission, included in the Codex Alimentarius.

The Committee noted that the proposals of the CCMAS in this regard were at a relatively early stage of discussion and expressed the wish to consider them at a later stage after further deliberation by the Committee concerned (ALINORM 99/33, para. 4-5).

2. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The **46th Session of the Committee** (1999) was informed that the CCMAS was initiating a revision of the section of the Procedural Manual dealing with the selection of methods of analysis and sampling and that this “new work” might lead to the development of a Codex Standard, Guidelines or related text. The CCEXEC felt that it was primarily a technical matter and not a procedural matter. It also noted the recommendations of the CCGP on the subject. It recommended that the Commission endorse the proposal to revise the criteria for the selection of methods of analysis and sampling but indicated that the final text should be included in the relevant volume of the Codex Alimentarius as advice to governments and not in the Procedural Manual (ALINORM 99/4, para. 20).

This proposal was not considered by the 23rd Session of the Commission. Revisions of texts included in the Procedural Manual are usually proposed by the committees concerned, forwarded to CCGP for approval and then to the Commission. They are not standards or related texts and do not go through the Step procedure, including approval as new work. In the present case, the amendments proposed by CCMAS concerned principles included in the Procedural Manual and did not require approval as new work. If the Committee decides to undertake new work on Codex texts under the Elaboration Procedure, this will be forwarded for approval to the 24th Session of the Commission.

In the light of these recommendations, the Committee is invited to consider which sections should be developed as Codex texts or retained in the Manual if necessary, insofar as they relate to Codex procedure. In particular, it should consider how the “*Principles*” in the Procedural Manual should be converted into Codex guidelines or related texts and whether the *Terminology* section should be incorporated into a Codex text.

B. RELATIONS BETWEEN COMMODITY COMMITTEES AND GENERAL COMMITTEES

The addition of new text in the section *on Relations between Commodity Committees and General Committees* is a separate issue. There were no specific recommendations concerning this section from the Committee on General Principles, but it may be considered in conjunction with the above recommendations. The Committee is invited to consider this proposal in the light of the comments received (CX/MAS 01/5) and to forward it to the Committee on General Principles for endorsement.