

# codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

JOINT OFFICE: Via delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel.: 57051 Telex: 625825-625853 FAO I E-mail: Codex@fao.org Facsimile: +39(6)5705.4593

Agenda Item 4

CX/PFV 00/3 Add.1  
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## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### CODEX COMMITTEE ON PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Twentieth Session

Washington, D.C., USA, 11-15 September 2000

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF A PRIORITY LIST FOR THE REVISION AND STANDARDIZATION OF PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Comments from Canada, France, Korea, Mexico, Spain, United States, and the World Processing Tomato Council

## CANADA

### General Comment on List of Priorities:

- ☐ In establishing a priority list of products and/or groups of products, Canada suggests that canned low-acid and acidified low-acid products be addressed first (eg. canned vegetables, pickles, olives, etc...).

### Proposed Draft Revised Codex Standards for: Canned Mangoes; Canned Pineapples; Canned Fruit Cocktails; Canned Tropical Fruit Salad; Canned Chestnuts and Canned Chestnut Puree; Canned Carrots; Canned Mushrooms; Canned Tomatoes:

- ☐ Canada agrees that canned fruit cocktail and canned tropical fruit salad should remain as separate standards. These products are prepared, marketed and used in different fashions.
- ☐ Canada suggests that canned tomatoes and canned mushrooms be excluded separately from a general standard for canned vegetables. These products are packed in distinctive establishment arrangements, promoted and marketed in diverse parts of the retail store, and are employed differently by consumers.

### Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Chutney:

- ☐ Canada supports combining pickles and chutneys as one standard. Similarities exist between market and use of the two products.

## **FRANCE**

The 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the CCPFV initiated the revision of standards included in document 1997/1 – PFV, confident that the simplified standards would ensure consumer safety and protection as well as fair trade practices.

The work initiated by the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee led to both the establishment of general horizontal standards and the combination of several standards into a larger single standard.

In regards to general horizontal standards, further work on *Proposed Draft Guidelines for Packing Media for Canned Fruits* and for *Canned Vegetables* constitute a priority: since these guidelines are applicable to all canned products conditioned with a packing media, operators would benefit from simplified standards through increased convenience. The situation is equally applicable to *Methods of Analysis for Processed Fruits and Vegetables*.

Works pertaining to other canned products such as *Draft Revised Standards for Canned Stone Fruits, Canned Pears* and *Canned Applesauce*, all of which are on the agenda of *the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables*, should be completed by the end of this Session to comply with the schedule defined by the Commission. According to this schedule, all of these standards should be revised by 2002.

### **WORK PRIORITIES**

The French authorities recommend that the following standards for processed fruits and vegetables be included in the Priority List for Revision:

- Proposed Draft Standard for Canned Vegetables: canned asparagus, canned carrots, canned green beans and wax beans, canned peas, canned palm hearts, canned dried soaked pea and canned sweet corn;
- Proposed Draft Standard for Canned Pineapple;
- Proposed Draft Standard for Canned Fruit Cocktail and Canned Tropical Fruit Salad;
- Proposed Draft Standard for Canned Tomatoes and Canned Processed Tomato Concentrates;
- Proposed Draft Standard for Jam, Jellies and Marmalades.

Standards for these products are considered a priority for the following reasons:

- They account for a major international trade volume within a large number of countries. Trade volumes of European imports and exports are reported in Table 1.
- Standardization is readily applicable to these products. Furthermore, such standards are already being used by operators for commercial trading purposes such as product names, types of products and vegetable size or dried extracts of the various processed tomato concentrate categories;

- Standardization of criteria for various product categories would simplify trading operations;
- Standardization proceedings have already been initiated for most of these products. In Europe, the Association of European Fruit and Vegetable Processing Industries (OETFL) has already drafted two documents: one deals with the most prevalent canned vegetables while the other covers canned fruits, including mixed fruits such as fruit cocktails.

The 79/693/CEE guideline provides standardized provisions throughout Europe for jam, jellies, marmalades and canned chestnut puree.

\* \* \*

French authorities have not established any specific priorities concerning the revision of other standards. For the time being, they do not make any specific representation regarding new standardization works.

As a matter of fact, the revision of standards for processed fruits and vegetables and the subsequent revision of quick frozen food standards represents a major undertaking that will not be easily completed within the schedule established by the Commission.

## **KOREA**

Taking this opportunity, Korean government would propose the Codex standardization of Korea Insam products.

“Korea Insam”(original name of best ginseng) products, generally known as ginseng products, has long been consumed in Asia as various forms of tea, soup, dried granules or other processed products. It is our observation that consumer demand and global scale of Korea Insam products has risen to a significant height and the trading nations are tallied at 66. As the relevant standard does not currently exist, the inspection criteria for Insam products varies greatly in application among countries and could consequently result in adverse effect on international trade of those products.

## **MEXICO**

We suggest:

- a) In relation to section 6, to consider the revision of the Standard for Quick Frozen Broccoli Florets. Mexico exports this product to the United States of America, Japan and Europe.
- b) Section 8, Canned Peaches, Canned Mangos, Canned Pineapple, Canned Mushrooms and Canned Peas, we request that more information be sent and to include it in Appendix II.
- c) Jams, jellies and marmalades. The same case as point b), since Mexico processes and consumes strawberry, pineapple, orange and peach marmalades.

Appendix I

The Standards that are of interest to Mexico and that are at Step 3 are Canned Mangos, Pineapple and Mushrooms, Tomato Concentrates, Raisins, Shredded Coconut and Unshelled Pistachios.

- d) Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Stone Fruits: Canned peaches are included in this horizontal standard and are of interest to Mexico. We are in agreement with the document.
- e) Proposed Draft Standard for Jams, Jellies and Marmalades. This is of interest to Mexico. It should be noted that if these three terms are used, marmalades refer to citrus marmalades (like orange, mandarin orange and even pineapple). On the other hand, when referring to jams, this is what we refer to here as “Marmalades”, which are made from temperate climate fruits, such as strawberry, apple, peach, etc. Jellies are based in the juices of the same fruits. We support the updating of this Standard, which is at Step 2.
- f) Proposed Draft Standard for Dried Figs (Step 1). The document that Africa proposes is not in our possession. If it refers to the % of moisture and water activity as quality requirements, then it is a dehydrated product, but if it has a % of soluble solids (°Bx) and water activity, then it is a medium-moisture product and would correspond to what is referred to here as Crystallized Figs. In any case, it is important to have this Draft Standard.

## **SPAIN**

We propose the following priorities list:

- Table olives.
- Canned tomatoes.
- Tomato concentrates.
- Canned vegetables.
- Canned stone fruits.
- Canned pears.

We believe that canned tomatoes should not be included in a general standard for vegetable products, since they possess unique characteristics and the volume of their sales is sufficiently large for them to constitute a group in and of themselves.

In terms of canned vegetables, we consider asparagus, green beans, peas and corn to be very different, and for this reason they should be treated individually.

## **UNITED STATES**

The United States recognizes the large volume of work entrusted to the CCPFV, including the revision/simplification of the 37 existing Codex standards for processed fruits and vegetables, revision of the existing Codex standards for quick frozen fruits and vegetables, further elaboration of various draft standards developed by regional Codex committees, and consideration of elaboration of new standards.

With this volume of work in mind, the United States believes it is clear that the CCPFV should agree upon a scheme for determining the priority of the various work projects the CCPFV is involved with as well as developing a priority list for revising existing standards for processed fruits and vegetables. These efforts to prioritize will help ensure the most effective use of the finite time and resources of the committee. For this reason, we are pleased that the Codex Secretariat has included "Establishment of a Priority List for the Revision and Standardization of Processed Fruits and Vegetables" for discussion as Agenda Item 4 for the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the CCPFV.

The United States believes that the work of the CCPFV should be guided by the *Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities* as presented in the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the Codex Alimentarius Commission Procedural Manual. The most germane of these are the eight items listed as "Criteria applicable to commodities." Among these eight, the United States believes that the CCPFV should establish a work priority list which considers protection of consumer health foremost. Next, the factors of volume of international trade and the existence of, or potential for, trade issues should be considered. These three criteria are responsive to the aim of Codex food standards which, as stated in the Procedural Manual, is "...protecting consumer's health and ensuring fair trade practices in the food trade."

In addition to these criteria, the United States believes that applicable recommendations of the Codex Commission should be followed, including the guidance established by the Codex Commission and noted by the Executive Committee during its 45<sup>th</sup> session that Codex Committees should give preference to standards which are inclusive of all products traded within commodity groups rather than highly specific standards, in order to avoid problems of achieving consensus at the time of adopting these standards.

Another factor which should be considered with respect to prioritization is the stage that the work is in (i.e., is it near completion and therefore potentially close to being a final, adopted, document with need for relatively little additional resources, or is it in the early stages of development, likely farther from completion, and therefore potentially likely to require more resources to complete).

In addition, the United States believes that emphasis should be placed on reliance on the expertise and applicability of the work of Codex's horizontal committees, when possible. This will help ensure improved standardization and lessen the potential for duplication of efforts.

### **Specific Comments**

In the following comments, we have created three levels of priority for categorizing work on various standards. Items in the "First Tier" are the highest priority items. Items in the "Third Tier" are lowest priority items. We believe this approach can assist the CCPFV in developing a work priority listing. As additional information on trade volume and other relevant areas becomes available, it may be appropriate to adjust the placement of standards within the three-tier matrix. In addition, it may be appropriate to expedite CCPFV work on individual standards or new work if a basis for urgency is identified by the Commission or involved subsidiary body. Consideration should also be given to commodity standards work by the United Nations/Economic Commission for Europe as applicable.

#### First Tier (Highest) Priority

- Draft Revised Codex Standard for Canned Applesauce, Draft Revised Codex Standard for Canned Pears.

- Codex standards for low acid canned foods. These should be prioritized based on consumer health protection, volume of trade, and degree of, or potential for, trade issues. (Canned mushrooms should be considered as a separate standard.)

#### Second Tier Priority

- Proposed draft documents which logically and efficiently combine two or more products (e.g., Canned Stone Fruits).
- Codex standards for items with a high volume of international trade.
- Codex standards covering products not described in the First Tier or Third Tier.

#### Third Tier Priority

- Codex standards for products that are predominantly traded in a regional manner.
- New draft standards or guidelines, documents at step 1, 2, or 3, or draft documents which are exclusive or have narrow application.

## **WPTC**

The World Processing Tomato Council, representing more than 90% of the world 's processors, formally requests that distinct specific norms should continue to be applied to tomato paste and preserved tomato products.

According to the FAOSTAT statistics provided under annex II in the CX/PFV 00/3 document, these two categories of products account for the largest volume on the international market, even more so when the figures are translated into a corresponding volume of fresh tomatoes. Tomato paste is the product that accounts for the highest export volume, with almost 1.5 million tonnes. Given that 6kg of tomatoes are used to make 1kg of paste, it can be said that the equivalence of almost 9 million tonnes of fresh tomatoes are shipped on the international market. Exports of preserved tomato products account for nearly 900 000 tonnes. Approximately 1.2 kg of fresh tomatoes is required to make 1 kg of tomato product, which means that almost 1.2 million tonnes of fresh tomatoes are shipped, for this category, on the international market.

Tomato paste is becoming an industrial commodity which will soon be the object of real futures markets beside the existing bilateral commercial contracts . It is therefore very urgent that the norm regulating this product be revised with the quality criteria being integrated into the main body of text and not relegated to an appendix.

For over a year, members of the World Council have been carefully studying the proposals for revising the norms that were made available during the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the Codex Committee for Processing Fruit and Vegetables (CCPFV) and they have gathered a worldwide consensus on many of the amendments, which we already passed on to the secretarial office of the Codex Committee in Rome in April 2000.