

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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



**World Health
Organization**

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TO: Codex Contact Points
Interested International Organizations

FROM: Secretariat,
Codex Alimentarius Commission

SUBJECT: Request for comments and information on: National food control systems, Codex contact points and other national structures for Codex matters including consumer participation in food standards setting; use of Codex standards and related texts at national and regional level; nutritional issues in the Region; and participation in Codex work and in FAO/WHO activities on scientific advice

DEADLINE: 15 November 2010

COMMENTS:

To:

Secretariat,
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With a copy to:

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1. In preparation of the 6th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNEA), updated information since the 5th Session of the Committee is requested on:

- (a) national food control systems, national structures for Codex matters, including consumer participation in food standards setting;
- (b) use of Codex standards and related texts at national and regional level;
- (c) nutritional issues at national and regional level; and
- (d) participation of countries of the Region in Codex work, including participation supported by the FAO/WHO Trust Fund for Enhanced Participation in Codex, and in FAO/WHO activities related to the provision of scientific advice.

2. The information submitted will be compiled in relevant working documents for consideration by the Committee.

3. Codex Members and Observers are invited to submit the relevant information by using the questionnaire attached to this Circular Letter and to provide this information as directed above. Codex Members and Observers are invited to submit this information in a clear and concise way in order to facilitate the translation of comments and their consideration by the Committee.

QUESTIONNAIRE

PART A - NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEM, NATIONAL STRUCTURES FOR CODEX MATTERS, AND CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN FOOD STANDARDS SETTING	
1. STATUS OF THE NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEM	
(i)	Structure and organization of official services responsible for food control
(ii)	Legislation and regulations on food safety and quality
(iii)	Establishment of equivalence and/or other trade facilitation agreements with other governments
(iv)	Activities to increase awareness on food safety and quality among the consumers and other specified groups
(v)	<p>Positive experiences or shortcomings identified for the national food control system:</p> <p>* Are there any positive experiences you would to share with the Region that could serve as an example for other countries?</p> <p>** Are there any shortcomings in the development or implementation of national legislation and/or regulation; structure and/or functioning of inspection, certification, laboratory services, accreditation bodies; etc.?</p>
(vi)	Identified need for capacity building to strengthen the national food control system – Based on the shortcomings identified, what sort of capacity building and/or training is needed to strengthen the national food control system?
2. CODEX CONTACT POINT, NATIONAL CODEX COMMITTEE AND OTHER NATIONAL STRUCTURES FOR CODEX MATTERS	
(i)	Activities of the Codex Contact Point including any information about change of contact details (if not yet notified)
(ii)	Structure, composition and operation of the National Codex Committee (or equivalent or similar structure) or plans for its establishment
(iii)	<p>Positive experiences or shortcomings identified for the Codex Contact Point, the National Codex Committee and/or other national structures for Codex matters:</p> <p>* Are there any positive experiences you would to share with the Region that could serve as an example for other countries?</p> <p>** Are there any shortcomings identified in the structure and/or functioning of these bodies?</p>

(iv)	Identified need for capacity building to strengthen the Codex Contact Point, National Codex Committee, and/or other national structures for Codex matters – Based on the shortcomings identified, what sort of capacity building and/or training is needed to strengthen the structure and/or functioning of these bodies?
3. PARTICIPATION OF CONSUMERS IN FOOD STANDARDS SETTING	
(i)	Consumer participation in Codex related activities at national, regional and/or international level
(ii)	Positive experiences or shortcomings identified for consumer participation in Codex related activities: * Are there any positive experiences you would to share with the Region that could serve as an example for other countries? ** In addition to shortcomings identified in point A.2(iii), are there any specific shortcomings identified in the structure and/or functioning of the Codex Contact Point, National Codex Committee or any other national structures for Codex matters for an effective participation of consumers in Codex standards setting at national, regional and/or international level?
(iii)	Identified need for capacity building to strengthen consumers participation in Codex related activities – Based on the shortcomings identified, what sort of capacity building and/or training is needed to strengthen consumers participation in food standards setting at national, regional and/or international level in addition to those identified in point A.2(iv)?
PART B - USE OF CODEX STANDARDS* AND RELATED TEXTS AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL	
* The Term “Standard” also applies to maximum levels (additives, contaminants, etc.) and maximum residue limits (pesticides, veterinary drugs, etc.) adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.	
(i)	Use of Codex standards and related texts at national and/or regional level – In addition, how do you use or implement Codex standards e.g. total, partial adoption of Codex standards and incorporation into the national legislation, as a basis for building-up national regulations, apply Codex standards only at export level, etc. If possible, provide a list of Codex texts or part of them incorporated into national legislation.
(ii)	Non-use of Codex standards and related texts at national and/or regional level (provide reasons where applicable)
(iii)	Difficulties encountered in the use or application of Codex standards and related texts at national, regional and/or international level (including import/export matters)
(iv)	Difficulties encountered in the non-use or application of Codex standards and related texts at national, regional and/or international level (including import/export matters)

(v)	Relevance of Codex standards and related texts as a basis for harmonization of legislation and regulations, including in the perspective of economic integration
(vi)	Any other health and/or trade problems related to standardization at the national or regional level
(vii)	<p>Identified ways forward to strengthen use of Codex standards and related texts at national, regional and/or international level:</p> <p>* Based on the shortcomings identified, in particular those outlined in points B(iii), (iv) and (vi), have you identified possible ways forward to facilitate the implementation of Codex standards and related texts at national, regional and/or international level, in addition to those identified for points A.1(iv) and A.2(iv) that may be relevant to this question?</p> <p>** Are there any positive experiences you would to share with the Region that could serve as an example for other countries?</p>
PART C – NUTRITIONAL ISSUES AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL	
(i)	Nutritional issues within the country or region such as: obesity, nutritional profiles, and any public health-oriented actions taken including the use of nutritional labelling and claims.
(ii)	<p>Identified need for capacity building to improve the status of nutrition in the country or in the Region:</p> <p>* Based on the issues identified and taking into account any relevant capacity building and/or training activity identified for point A.1(iv), what sort of capacity building and/or training is needed to improve the status of nutritional national or regional level?</p> <p>** Are there any positive experiences you would to share with the Region that could serve as an example for other countries?</p>
PART D - PARTICIPATION IN CODEX WORK AND IN FAO/WHO ACTIVITIES RELATED TO SCIENTIFIC ADVICE	
(i)	Participation in the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies (including participation supported by the FAO/WHO Trust Fund for enhanced participation in Codex)
(ii)	Methodology for preparation to participation in Codex meetings (e.g. prioritization of committees in accordance with the country's needs, selection of participants, preparation and submission of written comments, etc.)
(iii)	Follow-up to participation in Codex meetings (e.g. debriefing, participation in working groups, preparation of next-round comments, etc.)
(iv)	Participation of national experts in, and submission of national data to, FAO/WHO meetings providing scientific advice (e.g. JMPR, JEMRA, JECFA, <i>ad hoc</i> expert consultations, etc.)

(v)	Networks of experts and sources of data on scientific studies related to food safety (relevant to Codex)
(vi)	Positive experiences or shortcomings identified for participation in Codex work and in FAO/WHO activities related to scientific advice: * Are there any positive experiences you would to share with the Region that could serve as an example for other countries? * * Are there any shortcomings identified for an effective participation of the country in the work of Codex and Codex-related matters?
(vii)	Identified need for capacity building to strengthen participation in the work of Codex and Codex-related matters – Taking in account the capacity building and/or training identified in points A.1(iv) and A.2(iv), what sort of additional capacity building and/or training is needed to improve participation of the country in Codex work and Codex-related matters?