



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

39th Session, FAO Headquarters,

Rome, Italy, 27 June – 1 July 2016

MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMISSION BY CODEX COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

A. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

1. The Commission is invited to note the following information.

Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)

Information documents¹

2. The Committee agreed to make available the recorded details of all NRVs-R as an information document, in accordance with the "Guidance on information documents". The information document will be available on the Codex website (<http://www.codexalimentarius.org/infodoc>).

Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS)

Food integrity / food authentication²

3. The Committee noted that food integrity/food authentication was an important issue and might need to be addressed by CCMAS, but would wait on the outcome of the discussion at CAC39.

Codex Committee on General Principle (CCGP)

Consistency of the Risk Analysis Texts across the Relevant Committees³

4. The Committee agreed to recommend to the Commission that:
 - CCNFSDU should revise the text on nutritional risk analysis and consider how to include JEMNU as a primary source of scientific advice.
 - The Secretariat should address minor numbering issues in the texts for CCCF, CCRVDF and CCPR with the relevant Committees.
5. The Chairperson stated that the Committee had noted the concerns that Delegations had expressed on the Periodic Review and that he did not doubt that the Commission would take note of that.
6. Several Delegations were of the opinion that the task requested of CCGP had been completed and that the item should not be maintained on the agenda of this Committee.
7. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Jamaica, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay expressed their reservation, as they felt the paper did not fulfil the mandate given to the Secretariat by the Commission and that the item should be maintained on the agenda of the Committee.

B. MATTERS FOR ACTION

Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP)

8. The Committee agreed to suspend physical meetings of the Committee and to continue working by correspondence.
9. The Commission is invited to consider this decision.

¹ [REP16/NFSDU](#) para.45 and Appendix VI

² [REP16/MAS](#) paras 9- 11

³ Full account of the discussion is available in the paras 40-58 of [REP16/GP](#)

Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS)*Protein conversion factors*⁴

10. The Committee noted that it was not in a position to reply to the question posed by CAC38 on the appropriate protein conversion factors for soy products as this was in the remit of other Codex Committees; and noted that it might be timely for FAO and WHO to convene an expert panel to review available literature to assess the scientific basis for protein conversion factors.

11. The Commission is **invited to consider** this decision.

Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL)*Organic aquaculture (revision of the Guidelines for the Production, Processing, Labelling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods)*⁵

12. The Committee proposed that CAC39 identify an appropriate forum to continue work on the proposed draft revision of the *Guidelines for the Production, Processing, Labelling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods* (CAC/GL 32-1999): Organic Agriculture or to discontinue this work.

13. The Commission is **invited to consider** this request.

Codex Committee on Milk and Milk products (CCMMP)*Matters from CAC38*⁶

14. Information on the technological justification of the use of preservatives and anticaking agents for surface treatment of mozzarella with high moisture content (Analysis of the replies to CL 2015/26-CAC) is presented in the annex to this document.

15. The Commission is **invited to consider** the recommendations in paragraph 17 of the annex.

⁴ [REP16/MAS](#) paras 12 and 13

⁵ [REP16/FL](#) paras 26 and 27

⁶ [REP15/CAC](#) paras 97-98; [CAC/CX 15/38/8 Corrigendum](#)

**Information on the technological justification of the use of preservatives and anticaking agents for surface treatment of mozzarella with high moisture content
(Analysis of the replies to [CL 2015/26-CAC](#))**

Background

1. At the 38th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC38), the Codex Secretariat informed the Commission that in the table listing the technological functions of food additives in the *Standard for Mozzarella* ([CODEX STAN 262-2006](#)), two entries for the use of preservatives and anticaking agents for surface treatment of mozzarella with high moisture content had been left blank. However, it had not been possible to find a clear record of the CCMMP decision on how these entries should be completed (i.e. whether these two functional classes of food additives were technologically justified).
2. In order to take an informed decision on the course of action to follow, the Commission agreed to:
 - Defer consideration of this matter until its next session.
 - To issue a circular letter to all Members and Observers, asking for information on the technological justification for the use of preservatives and anticaking agents for surface treatment of mozzarella with high moisture content.
 - Take a decision, at CAC39, on the appropriate course of action to follow on the basis of an analysis, prepared by the Secretariat, of the replies to the circular letter.⁷
3. CL 2015/26-CAC requesting information on the justification of the use of preservatives and anticaking agents for surface treatment of Mozzarella with a high moisture content was distributed in September 2015 with a deadline of 29 February 2016.
4. CL 2015/26-CAC specifically requested members and observers to submit information on the use of preservatives and anticaking agents for surface treatment of mozzarella with high moisture content and related technological justification by using specific templates.
5. Comments were received from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, European Union and its Members States, New Zealand, Singapore and Sudan. The comments submitted have been compiled and are available via this link [ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/meetings/CAC/CAC39/Comments in reply to CL2016-26-CAC_Compilation.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/meetings/CAC/CAC39/Comments%20in%20reply%20to%20CL2016-26-CAC_Compilation.pdf)

Analysis of the replies to CL 2015/26-CAC

Q1: Are the following Functional Classes permitted in your country for surface treatment of mozzarella with a high moisture content

6. Six members replied to Q1 (Argentina did not reply).
7. Replies (see table below) indicated that both preservatives and anticaking agents are permitted for surface treatment of mozzarella with high moisture content. There were two exceptions: Sudan which does not permit the use of both functional classes, and Brazil which does not permit the use of anticaking agents.

Members	Preservatives	Anticaking agents
Argentina	No reply	No reply
Brazil	YES	NO
Canada	YES	YES
EUMS	YES individual food additives, INS 200 sorbic acid, INS 202 potassium sorbate and INS 203 calcium sorbate is permitted for use in unripened cheese in general	YES individual food additives, INS 460(ii) powdered cellulose is permitted for use only in grated and sliced mozzarella
New Zealand	YES	YES
Singapore	YES	YES
Sudan	NO	NO

⁷ [REP15/CAC](#) paras 97-98; [CAC/CX 15/38/8 Corrigendum](#)

Q 2: If permitted, please list the individual food additives from these food additive categories, used as well as the amount(s) typically added in practice

8. All members (except Sudan which does not permit the use of these functional classes), replied to the questions.

9. Replies (see table below) showed that the number and maximum level of use of the food additives vary among countries. The typical amount added varies among countries. All food additives indicated in the replies are listed in [CODEX STAN 262-2006](#) but the amounts used are not consistent with the provisions of the standard.

Preservatives

10. Preservatives are generally used to prolong shelf life and prevent the growth of mould, fungus and other microorganisms (Argentina, Brazil, New Zealand and Singapore).

11. Argentina, Brazil and New Zealand provided information on the manufacturing process (process step), in which form (e.g. dry, dissolved in water) and the typical temperature of the cheese at the time of addition, these additives are added.

Members	INS no.	Food additives	Typical amount added (mg/kg of cheese)	Notes	Technological justification	Manufacturing process
Argentina					To prolong the shelf-life of cheese by protecting against deterioration caused by mould and fungus (antimicrobial agent).	<p>a) <u>Process step</u>: Finished cheese prior to pack, immersion in a hydroalcoholic solution or sprayed on cheese surface.</p> <p>b) <u>Form</u>: Dissolved in a mixture of alcohol and water.</p> <p>c) <u>Typical temperature of the cheese at the time of addition</u>: Temperature range is variable, depending on the manufacturing process, addition of additive could be at high or low or room temperature.</p>
Brazil	235	Natamycin	5mg/kg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For use in surface treatment only. - Equivalent to 1mg/dm² surface application to a maximum depth of 2mm - Only to the surface treatment of cut and sliced cheese. 	Preventing yeast and mould growth.	Natamycin is used in a solution at 5°C in the mozzarella surface
Canada	280	Propionic acid	Max. 2000 mg/kg combined of propionic acid, calcium propionate, sodium propionate			
	282	Calcium propionate				
	281	Sodium propionate				
	200-203	Sorbates	Max 3000 mg/kg (propionates)			

Members	INS no.	Food additives	Typical amount added (mg/kg of cheese)	Notes	Technological justification	Manufacturing process
			and sorbates combined)			
	235	Natamycin	20 mg/kg to surface or 10 mg/kg if shredded			
EUMS	200 - 203	Sorbic acid and sorbates	not used			
New Zealand	201	Sodium sorbate	900 mg/kg		Sodium sorbate is used to protect and preserve the surface of the shredded mozzarella from microbial activity, or at least reduce it. The product is stored chilled and may have an extended shelf life.	Applied to the surface of chilled or frozen mozzarella shred
Singapore	200 - 203	Sorbic acid and its sodium, potassium and calcium salts	up to 1000 ppm total		The use of these preservatives in high moisture content mozzarella cheese helps prevent the growth of mould and other undesirable or pathogenic microorganisms, which may thrive due to the high moisture content.	
	234	Nisin	permitted under GMP			
	235	Natamycin	permitted to be applied to the rind of cheese by dipping or spraying, such that the proportion of natamycin from the surface to a depth of <5 mm is not greater than 1 mg/sq dm.	Natamycin should not be detected at a depth of 5 mm or more and should not be used together with sorbic acid.		

Anticaking agents

12. Anticaking agents are generally used to prevent clumping (Canada, New Zealand and Singapore).
13. Canada and New Zealand provided information on the manufacturing process.

Members	INS no.	Food additives	Typical amount added (mg/kg of cheese)	Notes	Technological justification	Manufacturing process
Canada	552	Calcium silicate	20 000 mg/kg (combined of calcium silicate, microcrystalline cellulose, cellulose)	For grated or shredded cheese only	To prevent clumping	After shredding
	460(i)	Microcrystalline cellulose/cellulose				
EUMS	460(ii)	Powdered cellulose	-	Not used		

Members	INS no.	Food additives	Typical amount added (mg/kg of cheese)	Notes	Technological justification	Manufacturing process
New Zealand	460(i)	Microcrystalline cellulose	10 000 mg/kg (i.e. 1%)		To avoid clumping of shredded mozzarella packaged (e.g. in 12 kg cartons) and sold or exported for commercial use. The product is stored frozen and chilled and may have an extended shelf life. Anticaking agents are therefore necessary to avoid severe clumping in the carton.	Applied to the surface of chilled or frozen Mozzarella shred.
Singapore	460(i)	Microcrystalline cellulose (cellulose gel)	GMP	This additive is classified as an emulsifier/stabiliser under the food regulations, but we can allow its use as an anti-caking agent in cheese.	The softness and high moisture content of cubed and/or shredded high moisture mozzarella increases the likelihood of pieces sticking to one another. The use of these additives would serve to reduce this occurrence.	
	460(ii)	Powdered cellulose	GMP	This additive is classified as an emulsifier/stabiliser under the food regulations, but we can allow its use as an anti-caking agent in cheese.		
	551	Silicon dioxide, amorphous	up to 2% on dry basis			
	552	Calcium silicate	up to 2% on dry basis			
	553(i)	Magnesium silicate, synthetic	up to 2% on dry basis			

Q3: Information on trade of mozzarella with a high moisture content, when treated with preservatives

14. Only Brazil, Canada and New Zealand replied to the question. Canada indicated that mozzarella with high moisture content when treated with preservatives is sold only in the country of manufacture, while both Brazil and New Zealand indicated that it is also sold internationally.

Q4: Information on trade of mozzarella with a high moisture content, when treated with anticaking agents

15. Only Canada and New Zealand replied to the question. Canada indicated that mozzarella with high moisture content when treated with anticaking agents is sold only in the country of manufacture, while New Zealand indicated that it is also sold internationally.

Conclusion and Recommendations

16. Replies showed that both preservatives and anticaking agents are permitted in a number of countries for surface treatment of mozzarella with a high moisture content. However, when permitted, the type of food additives and the maximum levels vary among countries. The limited number of replies to questions Q3/Q4, makes it difficult to draw a firm conclusion on the aspects related to the trade. However, it would appear that there is trade, both domestic and international, in mozzarella with a high moisture content and treated with preservatives and/or anticaking agents produced by these countries.

17. The CAC is invited to consider the following options for the course of action on this issue:

Option 1: To request CCMMP to consider this matter and prepare a proposal for amendment of the *Standard for Mozzarella*.

Option 2: To request CCFA to address this matter in the context of its work on alignment of the food additive provisions of commodity standards and relevant provisions of the *General Standard for Food Additives* (GSFA).