



## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES

#### Fifty-second Session

### STATUS AND ANALYSIS OF THE GSFA ONLINE SYSTEM IN RELATION TO THE APPROACH OF NOT LISTING RELEVANT COMMODITY STANDARDS

Prepared by the Codex Secretariat

#### Background

1. The 50<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Food Additives (CCFA50)<sup>1</sup> endorsed a revised approach to listing corresponding commodity standards in Table 3 of the GSFA as follows<sup>2</sup>:

- Only commodity standards that permit specific Table 3 additives should be listed in column 5 of Table 3 of the GSFA. Commodity standards that either permit all Table 3 additives or all Table 3 additives of a particular functional class should not be listed in the fifth column of Table 3;
- The heading for column 5 of Table 3 should be changed to “Specific allowance in the following commodity standards”;
- A footnote should be added to the heading of column 5 of Table 3 that reads: “This column only lists commodity standards that allow specific Table 3 additives. If a commodity standard allows Table 3 additives on a general basis or based on functional class, that information is contained in the “References to Commodity Standards for GSFA Table 3 Additives” section of Table 3;
- Column 5 of Table 3 of the GSFA should be revised to remove commodity standards that permit all Table 3 additives or all Table 3 additives of a particular functional class;
- When the suggestions in the proposal, above, are carried out, additional explanatory text for the new approach will be included directly below the revised Table 3.

2. CCFA50 agreed that the implementation of the revised approach be effected as soon as the technology issues associated with the GSFA online version were resolved.

3. CCFA51<sup>3</sup> further agreed with the procedural change i.e. when technologically feasible, provided the additive has an INS name, number, and functional class, a proposed draft Table 3 provision at step 3 would be included in Agenda Item 3(a) MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM FAO/WHO AND FROM THE MEETING OF THE JOINT FAO/WHO EXPERT COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES (JECFA) document when JECFA publishes an ADI of “not specified” and provides full specifications for the additive” will be included. This change will allow for the acceleration of endorsement for Table 3 food-additive provisions.

4. CCFA51 reconsidered this matter and agreed to postpone implementation of CCFA50 decisions and a decision on the future of the GSFA online until CCFA52 in an attempt to find a solution allowing for both the PDF and the searchable online version of the GSFA to be maintained.

#### Analysis of the problems

5. Currently, GSFA is presented in PDF and GSFA online (i.e. index) and both are produced from the GSFA database. CCFA has only proposed the changes to the GSFA in PDF version while how these changes can be reflected in GSFA online version also requires examination.

6. Taking acetic acid glacial (INS 260) as an example, currently Table 3 of the GSFA PDF version and online version are presented respectively as follows:

<sup>1</sup> REP18/FA paras 41, 42, 60 and 61.

<sup>2</sup> CX/FA 18/50/6 Appendix V

<sup>3</sup> REP19/FA paras 129-135

PDF version:

INS No	Additive	Functional Class	Year Adopted	Acceptable, including foods conforming to the following commodity standards
260	Acetic acid, glacial	Acidity regulator, Preservative	1999	CS 117-1981, CS 309R-2011, CS 70-1981, CS 94-1981, CS 119-1981, CS 291-2010, CS 302-2011, CS 319-2015, CS 249-2006

Online version:

**GSFA Table 3 Provisions**

Acetic acid glacial is a food additive that is included in Table 3, and as such may be used in the following foods under the conditions of good manufacturing practices (GMP) as outlined in the Preamble of the Codex GSFA. Although not listed below, Acetic acid glacial could also be used in heat-treated butter milk of food category 01.1.1 and spices of food category 12.2.1. Note that food categories listed in the Annex to Table 3 were excluded accordingly. Acetic acid is acceptable in foods conforming to the following commodity standards: CS 70-1981 CS 291-2010 CS 117-1981 CS 302-2011 CS 319-2015 CS 119-1981 CS 249-2006 CS 94-1981 CS 309R-2011

Number	Food Category
01.1.4	Flavoured fluid milk drinks
01.3	Condensed milk and analogues (plain)
01.4.3	Clotted cream (plain)
01.4.4	Cream analogues

7. According to the new approach, CS 117-1981, CS309R-2011, CS 291-2010 and CS 319-2015 will no longer be listed in the column entitled “Acceptable including foods conforming to commodity standard column” as these commodity standards contain a reference to Table 3 of the GSFA on either a general basis or for specific functional classes. Table 3 of the GSFA PDF version for acetic acid glacial (INS 260) will be presented as follows:

INS No	Additive	Functional Class	Year Adopted	Specific allowance in the following commodity standards <sup>1</sup>
260	Acetic acid, glacial	Acidity regulator, Preservative	1999	CS 70-1981, CS 94-1981, CS 119-1981, CS 302-2011, CS 249-2006

8. Considering the requirements of CCFA for the GSFA online database, a feasibility study has been carried out by the Codex Secretariat in consultation with the FAO Information Technology Division (CIO) to try to amend the online version as follows:

Number	Food Category
01.1.4	Flavoured fluid milk drinks
01.3	Condensed milk and analogues (plain)
01.4.3	Clotted cream (plain)
01.4.4	Cream analogues

**Discussion with the FAO Information Technology Division (CIO)**

9. Currently Food Additives data is stored locally in a Microsoft Access Database. Reports from the database produce the tables published in the Report in PDF Format. Access also provides the data so the GFSA can be published online.
10. Table 3 of the Report (PDF Format) will be changed to remove references to certain standards as described earlier in this paper. The same changes are required for the web version of the food additives on the Codex website
11. CIO expects to implement the required changes to the Report in PDF Format by 28 February 2020 and the online changes shortly after.
12. CIO will subsequently work on upgrading the database solution currently deployed and on redesigning the web interface of the CCFA online to align with the visual identity of the overall website and to improve readability and the search function.

**Recommendations**

13. CCFA52 is invited to:
  - i. note the planned changes in the pdf and online versions of the GSFA, and
  - ii. implement the decision taken at CCFA51 (i.e. to include a proposed draft Table 3 provision at step 3 in the Agenda Item 3(a) MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM FAO/WHO AND FROM THE MEETING OF THE JOINT FAO/WHO EXPERT COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES (JECFA) document when JECFA publishes an ADI of “not specified’ and provides full specifications for the additive”).