

CODEx ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 2

CX/SCH 15/02 CRD/4
Original Language Only

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON SPICES AND CULINARY HERBS

Second Session

Goa, India, 14 – 18 September 2015

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES

Comments of European Union

Part A. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 36TH AND 37TH SESSIONS OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Codex Strategic Plan 2014-2019

**Mixed competence
Member States vote**

Strategic Goal	Objective	Activity	Expected Outcome	Measurable Indicators/Outputs
1: Establish international food standards that address current and emerging food issues.	1.1: Establish new and review existing Codex standards, based on priorities of the CAC	1.1.1: Consistently apply decision-making and priority-setting criteria across Committees to ensure that the standards and work areas of highest priority are progressed in a timely manner.	New or updated standards are developed in a timely manner	- Priority setting criteria are reviewed, revised as required and applied. - # of standards revised and # of new standards developed based on these criteria.
<p>Question to the Committee: Is this activity relevant to the work of the Committee? Yes. Does the Committee use any specific criteria for standards development? No, the Committee applies the priority setting criteria laid down in Procedural Manual, section Criteria for the establishment of work priorities, and the decision-making criteria for the development of standards and guidelines laid down in PM, particularly in the section 'procedures for the elaboration of Codex standards and related texts'. Does the Committee intend to develop such criteria? The 1st session of CCSCCH decided that the Committee does not need specific prioritisation criteria. The EUMS continue to support this decision.</p>				
	1.2: Proactively identify emerging issues and Member needs and, where appropriate, develop relevant food standards.	1.2.1: Develop a systematic approach to promote identification of emerging issues related to food safety, nutrition, and fair practices in the food trade.	Timely Codex response to emerging issues and to the needs of Members.	- Committees implement systematic approaches for identification of emerging issues. - Regular reports on systematic approach and emerging issues made to the CCEXEC through the Codex Secretariat.
<p>Question to the Committee: Is this activity relevant to the work of the Committee? Yes. How does the Committee identify emerging issues and members needs? Is there a systematic approach? Is it necessary to develop such an approach? Emerging issues can be reported by members directly to CCSCCH or by other Committees. This process may then lead to a revision of an existing standard or development of a new standard. The EUMS do not see a need for the development of a systematic approach for the CCSCCH.</p>				

		1.2.2: Develop and revise international and regional standards as needed, in response to needs identified by Members and in response to factors that affect food safety, nutrition and fair practices in the food trade.	Improved ability of Codex to develop standards relevant to the needs of its Members.	- Input from committees identifying and prioritizing needs of Members. - Report to CCEXEC from committees on how standards developed address the needs of the Members as part of critical review process.
Included in question to 1.2.				
2: Ensure the application of risk analysis principles in the development of Codex standards.	2.1: Ensure consistent use of risk analysis principles and scientific advice.	2.1.1: Use the scientific advice of the joint FAO/WHO expert bodies to the fullest extent possible in food safety and nutrition standards development based on the "Working Principles of Risk Analysis for Application in the Framework of the Codex Alimentarius".	Scientific advice consistently taken into account by all relevant committees during the standard setting process.	- # of times the need for scientific advice is: - identified, - requested and, - utilized in a timely manner.
Question to the Committee: Is this activity relevant to the work of the Committee? No. Scientific advice and risk analysis principles are not relevant for CCSC as it is a commodity committee. Does the committee request scientific advice in course of its work, how often does it request such advice? N/A. Does the committee always use the scientific advice, if not, why not? N/A.				
		2.1.2: Encourage engagement of scientific and technical expertise of Members and their representatives in the development of Codex standards.	Increase in scientific and technical experts at the national level contributing to the development of Codex standards.	- # of scientists and technical experts as part of Member delegations. - # of scientists and technical experts providing appropriate input to country positions.
Question to the Committee: Is this activity relevant to the work of the Committee? Yes. Scientific and technical expertise of Members is required to develop standards for spices and herbs. How do members make sure that the necessary scientific input is given into country positions and that the composition of the national delegation allows to adequately present and discuss this position? It is up to each Member to organise and manage the necessary scientific input with a view to present its positions. What guidance could be given by the Committee or FAO and WHO? The EUMS do not see a need for specific guidance on this point.				
		2.1.3: Ensure that all relevant factors are fully considered in exploring risk management options in the context of Codex standard development.	Enhanced identification, and documentation of all relevant factors considered by committees during the development of Codex standards.	- # of committee documents identifying all relevant factors guiding risk management recommendations. - # of committee documents clearly reflecting how those relevant factors were considered in the context of standards development.
Question to the Committee: Is this activity relevant to the work of the Committee? No. Risk analysis principles, including risk management, are not relevant for CCSC as it is a commodity committee. How does the Committee ensure that all relevant factors have been taken into account when developing a standard and how are these documented? N/A.				

		2.1.4: Communicate the risk management recommendations to all interested parties.	Risk management recommendations are effectively communicated and disseminated to all interested parties.	- # of web publication/communications relaying Codex standards. - # of media releases disseminating Codex standards.
<p>Question to the Committee: Is this activity relevant to the work of the Committee? No. Risk analysis principles, including risk communication, are not relevant for CCSCH as it is a commodity committee. When taking a risk management decision, does the committee give guidance to members how to communicate this decision? Would more consideration of this be helpful to members? N/A.</p>				
3: Facilitate the effective participation of all Codex Members.	3.1: Increase the effective participation of developing countries in Codex.	3.1.5: To the extent possible, promote the use of the official languages of the Commission in committees and working groups.	Active participation of Members in committees and working groups.	- Report on number of committees and working groups using the languages of the Commission
<p>Question to the Committee: Is this activity relevant to the work of the Committee? Yes. Is the use of official languages in working groups of the committee sufficient? The EUMS would recommend using as many languages as possible in WGs in order to enhance participation of members. What are the factors determining the choice of languages? This mainly depends on the Member chairing the WG. How could the situation be improved? The EUMS are open to suggestions on how to improve the situation. A suggestion could be to promote co-hosting arrangements by countries with different languages.</p>				
	3.2: Promote capacity development programs that assist countries in creating sustainable national Codex structures.	3.2.3: Where practical, the use of Codex meetings as a forum to effectively conduct educational and technical capacity building activities.	Enhancement of the opportunities to conduct concurrent activities to maximize use of the resources of Codex and Members.	- # of activities hosted on the margins of Codex meetings.
<p>Question to the Committee: Is this activity relevant to the work of the Committee? Yes. Does the Committee organize technical capacity activities or other activities in the margins of Committee sessions? If yes – how many and with which topics have been organized in the past. The EUMS believe that any capacity building activity should be coordinated by the parent organisations in order to avoid inconsistencies and duplication of work. If no – could this be useful and what topics could be addressed? The EUMS are open to any initiative in this area.</p>				
4: Implement effective and efficient work management systems and practices.	4.1: Strive for an effective, efficient, transparent, and consensus based standard setting process.	4.1.4: Ensure timely distribution of all Codex working documents in the working languages of the Committee/Commission.	Codex documents distributed in a more timely manner consistent with timelines in the Procedural Manual.	- Baseline Ratio (%) established for documents distributed at least 2 months prior to versus less than 2 months prior to a scheduled meeting. - Factors that potentially delay the circulation of documents identified and addressed. - An increase in the ratio (%) of documents circulated 2 months or more prior to meetings.

<p>Question to the Committee: Is this activity relevant to the work of the Committee? Yes. Does the Committee have a mechanism in place to ensure timely distribution of documents? What could be done to further improve the situation? The requirement for timely distribution of documents already exists in the Procedural Manual. All members are responsible for ensuring its implementation.</p>				
		4.1.5: Increase the scheduling of Work Group meetings in conjunction with Committee meetings.	Improved efficiency in use of resources by Codex committees and Members	- # of physical working group meetings in conjunction with committee meetings, where appropriate.
<p>Question to the Committee: Is this activity relevant to the work of the Committee? Yes. Does the Committee hold physical working groups independent of Committee sessions? If yes – why is this necessary? No, the Committee does not hold pWG meetings independent of Committee sessions.</p>				
	4.2: Enhance capacity to arrive at consensus in standards setting process.	4.2.1: Improve the understanding of Codex Members and delegates of the importance of and approach to consensus building of Codex work.	Members and delegates awareness of the importance of consensus in the Codex standard setting process improved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training material on guidance to achieve consensus developed and made available in the languages of the Commission to delegates. - Regular dissemination of existing material to Members through Codex Contact Points. - Delegate training programs held in association with Codex meetings. - Impediments to consensus being achieved in Codex identified and analyzed and additional guidance developed to address such impediments, if necessary.
<p>Question to the Committee: Is this activity relevant to the work of the Committee? Yes. Are there problems with finding consensus in the Committee? If yes – what are the impediments to consensus? What has been attempted and what more could be done? Problems may arise in this Committee like in any other Committee. It is the role of the chair to explore all possible means to reach consensus. Efforts are also required from Members to achieve consensus.</p>				

Part B. MATTERS ARISING FROM OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES AS RELATED TO THE WORK OF CCSCH

70th Session of the Executive Committee (CCEXEC)

Member States competence Member States vote

The Member States of the European Union do not see a need to develop an approach for the management of the work of CCSCH similar to that used by CCFH.

47th Session of the Committee on Food Additives (CCFA47)

European Union competence European Union vote

There is no technological need for the use of antioxidants in herbs. There may be a technological need for anticaking agents in certain herbs in a dried powdered form.