

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 2

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Forty-fifth Session

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Agenda Item 2: Report by the Chairperson on the 82nd and 83rd Sessions of the Executive Committee (REP22EXEC2)

(Submitted by Singapore)

Singapore thanks the CCEXEC Sub-committee on New Food Sources and Production Systems (NFPS) for its efforts to support Codex Members and Observers to share views on the issue of NFPS and for its consideration of documents CX/EXEC 22/82/4, CCEXEC 83 REP22/EXEC1 and EXEC 82/CRD 2.

As a country that imports most of its food supply, Singapore is keenly aware of the challenges faced by the global food system, such as extreme weather, geopolitical shifts, supply chain disruptions, and resource scarcities. These affect the availability of safe food for people not just in Singapore but also in many other parts of the world.

We understand that given the limited resources available to Codex, new work done should usually be prioritised based on availability of the food and prevalence in trade as determined in the Codex Procedural Manual.

However, Singapore views that the current challenges faced by the global food system mean that the world is in extraordinary circumstances. Countries would need to be open to look at possible solutions offered by NFPS in a proactive manner, so that the impact of the global food supply challenges can be mitigated expediently, while ensuring food safety, to alleviate the pressing problem of food insecurity around the world. In this regard, Singapore has moved to make investments through the Singapore Food Story (SFS) R&D Programme since 2019 to find technologies and potential solutions in productive, climate resilient, innovative, and sustainable agriculture and aquaculture, new bio-based food and ingredients, underpinned by a robust future-ready food safety system. A second phase of the SFS R&D Programme was launched in Oct 2022, bringing the total investments to over S\$300 million.

At the same time, Singapore is contributing to efforts internationally to trigger discussions on food from NFPS. Singapore, together with other countries, is collaborating with the FAO to look into the food safety aspects of cell-based cultured meat. Under this collaboration, Singapore has contributed our learnings and experiences in regulating cultured meat as an example of food from NFPS and hosted the FAO Expert Consultation Meeting on food safety aspects of cell-based food. Singapore also engages our regulatory counterparts from other countries on food from NFPS regularly on platforms such as the Singapore Food Agency (SFA) Roundtable for Novel Food Regulations.

Singapore's efforts internationally is aligned with Codex's dual mandate of protecting consumer health and promoting fair food trade practices. Therefore, we agree that it is important for relevant and comprehensive Codex provisions to be established to minimise barriers to the trade of food from NFPS, so that they can contribute to a supply of safe food around the world. Singapore supports an inclusive approach as Codex charts its way forward to work on NFPS and stands ready to contribute to this work.

Singapore shares the views from some Codex Members and a Codex Observer that moving forward, it would be preferable for CAC to establish an ad hoc intergovernmental task force with a specific mandate to work on these emerging topics. Some of the topics surrounding NFPS which could be worked on include the evaluation of data on the NFPS (e.g. toxicity, allergenicity, chemical, microbiological), its production process (e.g. implementation of preventative approaches) and the inputs involved (e.g. substances which have not previously been used in food production).

Singapore is of the view that at the moment, existing/active subsidiary bodies are not sufficient to work on NFPS in an agile manner, due to the varied nature of food from NFPS and its susceptibility to rapid

developments. However, as the industry matures, consolidated provisions and/or recommendations can be managed by the Codex subsidiary bodies.