



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE
Thirty-second Session
Virtual, 16 – 20 May 2022

FAO AND WHO UPDATES OF REGIONAL INTEREST

Comments by the European Union

*Mixed Competence
Member States vote¹*

The European Union and its Member States (EUMS) welcome the update provided by FAO and WHO on their activities of interest for the European region.

❖ **Global Food Safety Strategies**

The EUMS welcome the development of FAO and WHO Global Food Safety Strategies that should be adopted by respective governing bodies in 2022. The close collaboration between the two organisations and the joint implementation of these strategies is a key element to ensure the food systems and one health approach that is an essential feature of the two strategies.

In the context of this meeting, the EUMS would particular highlight the important contribution that Codex standards, as the joint normative Food Safety Standards Programme for FAO/WHO, will play in the implementation of this strategy. This is notably illustrated by the key role of the FAO/WHO Food control system assessment tool to assist members in the development of their systems since this tool is based on Codex principles and Guidelines for National Food Control Systems as well as other relevant Codex guidance for food control systems.

The EUMS welcome that the two strategies have been developed taking into account the need to transform our food systems. This calls for further reflections within the region and Codex on opportunities to further integrate sustainability considerations in Codex work. The ongoing discussions on new foods and new production methods is an example of such reflections.

In order to enable Codex to pursue its tasks effectively and on the basis of robust risk assessments, the EUMS would like to recall the importance of proper support of the joint scientific advice by the two organizations.

❖ **Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)**

The EUMS express their appreciation to FAO and WHO for their support of CCEURO members on their action against AMR. They call the quadripartite to pursue these actions and to integrate the implementation of the Codex Code of Practice and Guidelines on Monitoring and Surveillance that were adopted at the last CAC.

The EU will provide financial support to the FAO AMR Stakeholders Platform and the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund and invites other CCEURO members to be involved in these mechanisms either as donors or beneficiaries.

The Farm to Fork is providing to the EU a reduction target of 50% in sales of antimicrobials used for farmed animals and in aquaculture by 2030. The EUMS call on other CCEURO members to also adopt ambitious objectives on the reduction of the use of antimicrobials.

¹ This is without prejudice of the substantive competence that the European Union has for individual issues addressed under this agenda item.

❖ One Health

The EUMS welcome the establishment of the Regional One Health Coordination Mechanism (OHCM) for Europe and Central Asia that is now placed under the Quadripartite. The EUMS would welcome any additional information on the planned activities under this Mechanism.

❖ Building capacities in Codex

The EUMS are collectively the main contributor to the Codex Trust Fund. We congratulate Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, North Macedonia and Turkmenistan for being beneficiaries of this fund. We also encourage other potential beneficiaries from the region to apply to the fund with the view to develop their capacities to participate in Codex.

In the framework of the EU Better Training for Safer Food Programme, a virtual Workshop formally hosted by Kazakhstan on supporting effective “Participation in CODEX Activities for CCEURO Countries” took place on 29 November - 3 December 2021. This workshop contributed to Goal 4 “Facilitate the participation of all Codex Members throughout the standard setting process”. It was attended by 37 participants from the following countries: Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, and Serbia.

❖ New or upcoming publications

The EUMS welcome the different publications from FAO as well as the JEMRA risk assessment report on allergens.

The reports “Looking for edible insects from a food safety perspective. Challenges and opportunities for the sector” and the foresight report “Thinking about the future of food safety” should be considered for developing further work in Codex.

The EUMS also welcome the report on food fraud that contributes to addressing this issue that was identified as a priority for the region by CCEURO31.

Finally, the report on “Food safety considerations to achieve best health outcomes under limited food availability situations” is addressing an issue that is unfortunately becoming more prominent. The EUMS welcome that this report highlights the importance of food safety even in situation of restricted food supplies.