

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 5

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON FATS AND OILS
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Comments from Libya

The delegation of Libya would like to offer the following comments on the proposed changes to Section 3.1: Designations and definitions calling for the Removal of **Ordinary Olive Oil** Category.

Libya requests a reconsideration for the recommendation to remove the category of Ordinary Virgin Olive Oil.

Although, it is acknowledged that such removal was agreed to at the plenary session of CCFO26, Libya along with several countries from the Near East and the South / East Mediterranean region, have expressed and continue to express their concerns as to the significant negative impact that such removal would create on farmers, small producers and retailers of our countries. This concern was expressed to the eWG tasked to review the standard and shared with the eWG Chair.

We continue to contend that the justifications offered for such removal are inconsistent with Codex principles, in particular, when several national standards of olive oil of the Near East region, including those of Libya, refer to this Codex standard and encompass this category of olive oil.

At the very least, options should be available to countries referring to the Codex standard, with an adaptation period to enable their producers to accommodate such removal.

In the spirit of compromise and if the consensus is still evolving towards such removal, Libya **strongly recommends deferring such change** with the identification of this part of the standard **in square brackets** reading:

[Ordinary virgin olive oil: virgin olive oil with a free acidity, expressed as oleic acid, of not more than 3.3 grams per 100 grams and whose other characteristics correspond to those laid down for this category¹]

And with the footnote 1: This product may only be sold direct to the consumer if permitted in the country of retail sale]

This sentence would be retained in square brackets for a period of at least 3 years and could be re-examined during CCFO 29.

Such period would allow impacted countries and their sectors to improve their systems and processing procedures in order to address this change in the quality of the oil produced.