

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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World Health
Organization

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COMMENTS ON REPORT ON ITEMS OF GENERAL CONSIDERATION BY THE 2018 JMPR

(Submitted by Kenya)

In response to Item 2.9: Recommendation for (Sub) group Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) for fruiting vegetables, other than cucurbits revisited.

Okra (Abelmoschus esculentus)

In Kenya, okra is an export crop although also consumed locally, and is generally classified as an Asian vegetable. It is preferred locally by the coastal people, although has gained popularity with urban consumers.

The production of Okra has been on the increase. For example from 2015 to 2016 area under production of Okra increased by 24 percent, (from 417 hectares in 2015 to 517 hectares in 2016). In 2014, okra was cultivated on an area of 657 hectares with a total production of 8,757 Metric tonnes valued at 2.78 million USD. The area percent increased by 37, production increased by 43 percent and value increased by 49 percent compared to 2013. The coastal counties of Kilifi and Mombasa led in national production of okra, accounting for 83 percent. The details as shown in the tables below:

Table 1: Performance of Okra in selected counties for the years 2015-2016

Kenyan County	Year 2015			Year 2016			%of Total Value
	Area (Ha)	Volume (MT)	Value (USD)	Area (Ha)	Volume (MT)	Value (USD)	
Taita Taveta	46	684	205,140	80	1,177	727,120	43.15
Kilifi	149	4,921	318,575.93	219	1,315	396,160.57	23.51
Kwale	159	992	311,950	129	840	281,500	16.71
Mombasa	2	39	19,500	35	162	83,000	4.93
Makueni	23	160	82,000	21	153	73,354.20	4.35
Siaya	5	30	15,000	5	70	35,000	2.08
Machakos	18	180	108,000	5	50	30,000	1.78
Turkana	-	-	-	5	27	26,500	1.57
Kajiado	9	113	21,600	10	110	19,850	1.18
Meru	4	28	8,811.40	5	30	10,346	0.61
Kitui	2	8	760	2	6	1,932	0.11
Vihiga	-	-	-	1	1	240	0.01
Total	417	7,155	1093337.33	517	3,941	1,685,002.77	100.0

Table 2: Performance of Okra in selected counties for the years 2015-2016

Kenyan County	2012			2013			2014		
	Area (Ha)	Volume (MT)	Value (Million USD)	Area (Ha)	Volume (MT)	Value (Million USD)	Area (Ha)	Volume (MT)	Value (Million USD)
Kilifi	170	2,731	0.992	273	3,397	0.963	455	6,209	1.80
Mombasa	-	-	-	33	706	0.292	54	1,032	0.516
Makueni	64	442	0.150	64	512	0.262	59	477	0.239
Others	66	579	0.19	111	1,503	0.35	89	1,039	0.22
Total	300	3,752	1.33	481	6,119	1.87	657	8,757	2.78

Concerns on elaboration of MRLs

The commodity lacks the necessary tools for the management of various pests and diseases that attack and affect its productivity. Although the volume of production in the years of consideration was affected by the low rainfall, the lack of adequate plant protection product for protection to use for the commodity have also affected the productivity of okra.

As a significant specialty export crop (as Asian vegetable), Kenya is concerned that the exclusion of okra from consideration of the extrapolation of the MRLs from peppers to okra. We implore the committee to consider finding a lasting solution so that the commodity can be included in the subgroup peppers of the Fruiting vegetables other than cucurbits. This could include considering a more suitable representative commodity whose MRLs could be extrapolated to okra; and any other interventions.

We look forward to the Committee's consideration of this matter.