

# codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
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OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

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ALINORM 85/15

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION  
Sixteenth Session, 1985

REPORT OF THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE  
CODEX COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR ASIA

Phetchburi, Thailand  
28 February - 5 March 1984

W/M 7163

INTRODUCTION

1. The Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia held its Fourth Session in Phetchburi from 28 February to 5 March 1984 at the kind invitation of the Government of Thailand. The Meeting was chaired by the Coordinator for Asia, Prof. Amara Bhumiratana (Thailand).
2. The Session was attended by Delegates and Observers of 11 countries from the Region and 2 countries outside the Region. The list of participants including officers from FAO and WHO is contained in Appendix I to this Report.

Inaugural Address by the Deputy Minister of Industry of Thailand and Opening of the Session

3. Mr. Manus Sooksmarn, Secretary-General, Thai Industrial Standards Institute, on behalf of the Government of Thailand welcomed the Delegates and Observers to the Meeting, stating that the Government of Thailand was greatly honoured to have had the opportunity of hosting this very important meeting of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia. He invited the Deputy Minister of Industry to formally open the Meeting.
4. The Fourth Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia was formally opened with a speech by His Excellency Dr. Chirayu Israngkun Na Ayuthaya, Deputy Minister of Industry of Thailand.
5. While emphasizing that International Food Standards are elaborated to achieve the two objectives of protecting the health of the consumer and promoting international trade, His Excellency Dr. Chirayu Israngkun Na Ayuthaya drew attention to the fact that they played a significant role in the economy of countries especially in Asia. The text of the keynote address is attached as Appendix II to this Report.
6. Mr. E.F. Kimbrell (USA), Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Dr. R. Quereshi, Regional Food Policy and Nutrition Officer, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok and Dr. W.J. Machann, Acting WHO Programme Coordinator and Representative, Thailand, addressed the participants and drew attention to the important role the Codex Alimentarius Commission was playing in (i) setting food standards and regulating the use of food chemicals to benefit all the countries in the Asian Region; (ii) protecting the consumer and ensuring fair trade practices; and (iii) assisting in the task of achieving the objective of attainment by all the people of the world by the year 2000 of a level of health that would permit them to lead an economically productive life. They extended the thanks and appreciation of the Directors-General of FAO and WHO to the Government of Thailand for kindly hosting the Meeting.

Election of Vice-Chairman

7. The Committee agreed to elect a Vice-Chairman for the Session. The Delegation of the Philippines seconded by the Delegations of Thailand and Malaysia nominated Dr. Roestamsjah (Indonesia) as Vice Chairman. The Committee unanimously concurred with the proposal.

Adoption of the Agenda

8. The Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in Document CX/ASIA 84/1.

Matters of Interest Arising from the Fifteenth Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Codex Committees and Related Activities

9. The Committee had before it Document CX/ASIA 84/2 containing matters of interest to it.

General

10. The Committee was informed of the publication of the Codex Alimentarius, which is a collection of international food standards adopted within the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme and also provisions of an advisory nature in the form

of Codes of practice, guidelines and other recommended measures, intended to assist in achieving the objectives of the Codex Alimentarius. These can be obtained from the Codex Contact Points in each of the Member Countries. The titles of the various Volumes of the Codex Alimentarius were listed in the Document CX/ASIA 84/3.

Matters of Interest Arising from the 15th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

Acceptance of Codex Standards and Codex Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues

11. The Committee deferred to discuss the above to Agenda 4 - Acceptances.

Rule VI.3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

12. The Committee was informed of the proposal of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission to amend Rule VI.3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission in such a way that it would be a matter for the Commission to decide in the first instance whether or not a regional standard should be elaborated. The text of the amendment proposed by the Executive Committee was put before the 15th Session of the Commission in Document ALINORM 83/9-Add.1. The quorum required to amend any of the Rules of Procedure was more than half the number of Member Countries of the Commission. As there were, at the time of the 15th Session of the Commission, 122 Members, the quorum required was 62 countries. Since less than 62 countries were represented at the Session, the Commission decided to postpone consideration of this matter and to put this item on the Agenda of its 16th Session.

13. The Committee agreed with the view of the Chairman of the Commission, Mr. E.F. Kimbrell (USA), who had been asked for his opinion on this subject, that as the topic would come up again for discussion at the 16th Session of the Commission and each country would have an opportunity to record its vote, there appeared to be no need for a lot of discussion on the matter at this time in the Committee. Furthermore, the Secretariat indicated that this was really an information item for the Committee.

Consideration at Step 5 of Draft Guidelines for the Labelling of Non-retail Containers (ALINORM 83/22, APPENDIX VIII)

14. The Committee noted that the Commission had directed the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL) to suspend further work on the guidelines until a real need for such guidelines had been demonstrated. The Committee was informed that the 17th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL) had agreed to review the need for such guidelines only after finalizing the guidelines for labelling of retail containers which it was elaborating.

15. The majority of the participating countries of the Committee expressed a real need for the guidelines for the labelling of bulk containers since that would provide useful information to the manufacturer. The Delegation of India cited the example of vegetable oils used for hydrogenation. Under Indian Regulations, while raw vegetable oils might contain permissible antioxidants, for hydrogenated fats (vanaspati) their use was not permitted. In the above case, only labelling of the bulk container would provide the information whether the material could be used for manufacture of vanaspati.

Confirmation of the Food Labelling Committee's Interpretation of Clause (d) of Its Terms of Reference, Guidelines on Advertising of Foods

16. The Commission, at its 15th Session, had concluded that the advice of FAO and WHO Legal Counsels should be sought on the question whether it was within its remit to advise on advertising matters which went beyond the accompanying material or appeared on the label of the foods; for instance, advertising by electronic and mass media.

17. The Committee noted that a paper which would discuss whether advertising by mass media would be within the scope of the activities of the CAC would be sent out to Governments for comments. The paper along with the comments would be discussed by the next (18th) Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling.

18. The Delegation of India reiterated its view, expressed at the 15th Session of the Commission, that the definition of advertising should include mass media and

electronic systems. The Delegation of Thailand supported the view expressed by the Delegation of India. The Delegation of Malaysia informed the Committee that advertising could be regulated by the Food Act 83 in Malaysia.

#### Consideration of the Draft Standard for Food Grade Salt at Step 8

19. The Committee noted that the Commission had decided to hold the Standard at Step 8 pending receipt of more information on the contaminant content of the product.

20. The Delegations of India and Thailand reiterated their views, expressed at the Commission, that the minimum content of NaCl, as contained in Clause 3.1, should be reduced, the reason put forward being that purification to a level beyond 96% would increase the cost of production considerably. Furthermore, the Delegation of Thailand reiterated its opinion that cadmium content of Food Grade Salt should remain at 0.5 mg/kg. Several of the participating countries informed the Committee that they had made information on the contaminant content of Food Grade Salt available to the CCFA which will reconsider the standard.

#### Guidelines for Establishment of Food Additive Provision in Commodity Standards

21. The Committee was reminded about its comments, at its 2nd Session, concerning the possible use of colours and flavours in foods to mask inferior quality and resultant possible consumer deception. This had led the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) to commence work on the elaboration of guidelines. This work was later suspended by the Committee because it decided that the guidance already contained in the Procedural Manual of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) was adequate. The Commission had agreed with the action of the CCFA.

22. The Committee noted that the various texts in the Procedural Manual of the CAC related to the above subject had now been collated and sent to Member Countries for information by Circular Letter 1984/12.

#### Residue in Food of Chemicals Used in Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Medicine

23. The Committee noted that the Commission, which had been of the opinion that the subject was urgent and timely had recommended that the subject should be first examined by a Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation and that the recommendations of the Consultation might then be considered by it and be acted upon by a newly established Codex Committee, "if appropriate".

24. The Committee was informed that it was likely that the Expert Consultation would be held in Rome in late 1984 (see also paras 78, 79, of this Report).

#### Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for the Processing of Frog Legs

25. The Committee noted that the above code had been adopted by the Commission at Step 8.

#### Amount of Detail in Some Codex Standards and Question of Whether Some Parts of Standards Should be Made Optional

26. The Committee recalled its previous discussions on this subject as set out in the Reports of its Second and Third Sessions. The views of the Committee had been considered by the Codex Committee on General Principles and by the Commission. At its 15th Session, the Commission decided, in the light of a paper which had been prepared by the Delegation of India (ALINORM 83/36), that the subject of whether there was too much detail in some standards, and whether acceptance of the standards by Governments would be facilitated if such detail was made optional, would be considered in depth at its 16th Session. The Commission would have before it a paper to be prepared by the Secretariat, the views of the Executive Committee at its next Session, and the comments of Governments. It was agreed that the paper mentioned above, to be prepared by the Delegation of India, should not affect the health protection provisions of the standards, which should always be mandatory.

27. The Committee was informed, verbally, of the views of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables on this topic at its February 1984 Session. There had been some support in that Committee for the views which had been expressed by the Coordinating Committee and by the Delegation of India in Document

ALINORM 83/36. In response to the wish which had been expressed by the 17th Session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables, the Committee decided to set up a Working Group composed of India, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand, as well as the observer from Australia, to identify sections of the standards for processed fruits and vegetables which might be made optional. The Report of the Working Group is contained in Appendix III to this Report.

Amendments Proposed by the Third Session of the Asian Coordinating Committee to Certain Codex Standards (ALINORM 83/15, Appendix III)

Amendments to Certain Clauses in the Standards in order to make them Optional

28. The Commission had postponed action pending the outcome of discussions at its next (16th) Session on the subject whether some parts of the standard should be optional.

Amendments to Food Additive Provisions in Certain Standards for Processed Fruits and Vegetables

29. The Committee was reminded of its proposal to delete the provision of colours and flavours from among the food additive provisions of the standards for certain processed fruits. The Commission referred the amendment to the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV) which, at its 17th Session, had expressed the opinion that there was a real need for colours and flavours for good manufacturing practice and thus did not agree with the amendment proposed by this Committee.

Endorsement of Tin Content at Level of 250 mg/kg in Certain Processed Fruits and Vegetables

30. The Commission agreed with the view of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) that the endorsement status for the provision of tin (250 mg/kg) should not be altered from "temporarily endorsed" to "endorsed" as had been requested by this Coordinating Committee.

Canned Fruit Cocktail - Extending the List of Fruits Permitted for Use

31. This Committee had proposed an amendment to the standard for Canned Fruit Cocktail to include certain tropical fruits in Clause 1.1: Product Definition. This amendment had been referred by the Commission to the CCPFV.

32. The Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables did not agree with the suggested amendment, since canned fruit cocktail was a well established product of well-known composition. That Committee, at its 17th Session, however, accommodated the proposal of this Committee by agreeing to extend the list of fruits in Canned Tropical Fruit Salad. Carambola and Water Melon (5% min, 15% max and 5% min, 20% max., respectively) were included in section 2.1.2 of the standard. Also, the CCPFV agreed that canned tropical fruit salad could alternatively be named "Tropical Fruit Cocktail" or "Tropical Fruit Mix". Governments, when notifying their acceptance of the standard, should, however, indicate which name(s) were permitted under their legislation.

Amendments to Certain Standards on Fruits Juices

33. The Committee had proposed an amendment to the tin content in the standard for Canned Apple Juice and also an amendment to the clause on organoleptic properties in the Standards for Pineapple Juice, Apple Juice and Grape Juice, all preserved by physical means.

34. The above amendments would be considered by the Joint UNECE/Codex Alimentarius Group of Experts on Standardization of Fruit Juices at its 16th Session.

Amendment to Standard for Canned Sardines

35. The Commission had agreed that the species *Sardine sardinella* (Sp) should be included in the Product Definition in the Standard for Canned Sardines, when the required information, as outlined in para 111 of ALINORM 79/18, had been provided to it by this Committee. The Delegation of India informed the Committee that it had provided the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products with information on trade in the species *Sardine sardinella*.

Amendments Proposed by India and Iraq to the General Standard for Edible Fats and Oils

36. The amendment proposed by India and Iraq for deletion of food colours and flavours in the food additive provisions in the General Standard for Edible Oils and Fats had been referred by the Commission to the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO) for consideration.

37. The Committee was informed that it was not likely that there would be another Session of the CCFO for some considerable time and the Executive Committee would be considering at its next Session how the work still pending with that Committee should be completed.

Consideration of a Proposal to Amend the Scope Section of Codex Standards for Individual Edible Fats and Oils

38. The Committee noted that the Commission had decided to consider GLC ranges included in Codex Standards for edible fats and oils as non-mandatory. GLC ranges in the standards should, hencefore, be considered as guideline levels. All the existing Codex Standards had been amended accordingly.

Consideration of Draft Standards for (Vanaspati/Vegetable Fat Mixture) and (Mixed Vanaspati/Substitute Ghee)

39. The Committee noted that the Commission advanced both the above standards to Step 6.

Consideration at Step 8 of the Draft Standard for Dates

40. The Committee noted that the problems raised by the Tunisian Delegation at the 15th Session of the Commission had now been resolved and that the standard on Dates had been advanced to Step 8 by the 17th Session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables for adoption.

Consideration of the Proposed Draft Standards for Guava Nectar, Mango Juice and Pulp Mango Nectar at Step 5

41. The Commission advanced the proposed draft standards to Step 6. The Delegation of India, which had reserved its position in regard to the standard for mango juice, made available to the Secretariat at the current Session of the Coordinating Committee, statistics on the extent of the trade in the product containing 50% mango pulp and traded as "mango juice," in order to substantiate its statements made at the last session of this Committee. The standard for mango juice, being elaborated by the Joint UNECE/Codex Alimentarius Group of Experts on Standardization of Fruit Juices, defines the product as one in which the edible pulp was removed by extraction or centrifugation.

Draft Standard for (i) Concentrated Pineapple Juice Preserved Exclusively by Physical Means and (ii) Concentrated Pineapple Juice with Preservatives

42. The Committee noted that both the above standards had been adopted by the Commission at Step 8.

Products Containing Pork Fat (Lard)

43. The Committee noted that Labelling for both pork fat and beef fat if contained in a food as an ingredient is mandatory in the revised version of the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged foods. Currently being developed.

Consideration of Draft Standard for Maize at Step 8

44. The Committee noted that the Commission had expressed the view that the standard was incomplete and returned the standard to Step 6.

Consideration of Draft Standard for Wheat Flour at Step 8

45. The Commission returned the standard to Step 6. The Delegation from India reiterated the remarks that it made at the Commission that Durum wheat, which was a very important variety of wheat grown in India in substantial quantities, was

excluded from the standard. The Delegation also regretted that the standard permitted use of bean and soy flour to improve protein content, since in the delegation's opinion these optional ingredients changed the characteristics of the wheat flour for which the standard is being elaborated.

Need to Elaborate a Codex Standard for Milled Rice as Related to the Programme of Work of the Codex Alimentarius and ISO

46. The Committee was reminded of its decision at its last (3rd) Session that there was no need for the elaboration of a Codex standard for milled rice and that the specification for milled rice being elaborated by ISO could be considered instead, in due course. The Commission, at its 15th Session, recommended that the ISO specification, after finalization, be sent to all Member Countries and Coordinating Committees for comment. The need to elaborate a standard for milled rice would then be considered by the Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes in the light of the comments received. The Delegation of Thailand expressed its views that there was no need to elaborate a Codex Standard for milled rice.

47. The Committee concurred with the procedure decided upon by the Commission. One delegation suggested that it might be better to comment on the ISO specification when it was at its final draft stage, rather than after its finalization. The Committee agreed that it would be open to any interested countries to influence the contents of the ISO specification through their national standard institutions which participated in the work of ISO.

Codex Standard for Pulses

48. The Committee noted that the Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes had commenced work on the elaboration of a Codex Standard for Pulses.

Packaging Materials for Food

49. The Committee noted that a paper on this subject would be prepared by a consultant. The consultant's report would be reviewed by the Commission at its next Session in the light of comments received.

Matters Arising from the 2nd Session of the Coordinating Committee for Asia

Specification for Lacquers

50. The Committee, at its 2nd Session, had expressed a need for specifications for lacquers for use in cans. The Committee was informed by the Secretariat of the existence of US Regulations dealing with lacquers and lacquered containers, which could be found under Title 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 175.300 which might serve the needs of the Committee. Similarly, certain European Countries also had regulations on lacquers. The Committee expressed the opinion that these Regulations on lacquers, referred to by the Secretariat, would provide useful guidance.

Assistance from UNIDO - Tin Plate

51. This Committee, at its 2nd Session, had suggested that UNIDO consider the feasibility of convening a workshop for countries of the Asian Region with a view to developing cooperation among those countries for the manufacture of the right quality of tin plate from indigenous sources and other appropriate and cheaper packaging materials.

52. The Committee was informed that UNIDO had agreed to hold such a workshop in Jamshedpur, India from 2 to 6 April 1984. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss the status of tin plate manufacture in the respective countries, latest technologies for tin plate manufacture and appropriate quality standards, pooling of resources in the manufacture of black plate, tin plate, coating materials and alternative packaging materials available in the Region. FAO would be represented at the workshop, to which participants had been invited by UNIDO from countries of the ESCAP Region.

Acceptance of Codex Standards and Codex Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues by Countries in the Asian Region

53. The Committee had before it Document CX/ASIA 84/3. The Secretariat informed the Committee about the encouraging nature of the on-going inter-secretariat discussions with officials of the Commission of the European Economic Community in Brussels concerning acceptance of Codex Standards. The Committee was also informed that the Secretariat would be having discussions on the same subject with officials of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) in Moscow. In discussions with both bodies, the need for more commitment to the Codex standards and MRLs was and would be stressed by the Secretariat in the interest of facilitating international trade. In particular, the desire which had been expressed by developing countries of this Region to use the Codex Standards and Codex Maximum Limits for pesticide residues for trading purposes had been and would continue to be emphasized by the Secretariat. The Secretariat would also emphasize the point that the developing countries looked to those countries which had been active from the start in Codex Committee work to give a lead in this matter.

54. The Secretariat pointed out that as most countries export some food products and import others, every country was an importing country for some products. The Secretariat referred to the in-depth discussions on this topic which had been held at the First Session of the Group of Developing Countries in Asia concerning Pesticide Residue Problems, held in Phetchburi, from 24 to 27 February 1984. A draft report of which was issued as Conference Room Document 9 (see also ALINORM 85/31). That Group had stressed the importance for importing countries to adopt a favourable stance vis-à-vis the Codex Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues. In Volume XIII of the Codex Alimentarius (Codex Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues) some 80 evaluated pesticides were listed for which maximum limits had been established in many different food commodities. Volume XIII would be issued shortly. It would be timely, therefore, if all Members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission reviewed their stance with regard to the Codex maximum limits, now that Volume XIII was about to be issued. The approach suggested by the Group is set out in detail in the Report of the Group.

55. The Delegation of Thailand indicated that it supported, to a large extent, the views which had been expressed by the Secretariat. The Delegation of Thailand referred to Conference Room Document No.1, which set out the position of Thailand concerning acceptances of Codex standards and Codex Maximum Limits for pesticide residues. To date, Thailand had accepted three Codex Standards (Canned Pineapple, White Sugar and Glucose syrup) and those Maximum limits for Pesticide Residues which had been published several years ago in document CAC/RS 2-1969. Thailand was considering acceptance of another four standards (Cream for direct consumption, Yoghurt and Sweetened Yoghurt, Flavoured Yoghurt and Products Heat Treated after Fermentation). Concerning acceptance of the Codex maximum limits for pesticide residues the Delegation of Thailand stated that they must be suitable for Thai conditions. Thailand supported, in principle, the idea of free distribution of products complying with Codex standards, but the question of consumers' needs and interests had to be taken into account.

56. The Delegation of India stated that India did not feel able to accept some maximum limits for pesticide residues adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, because it felt that the recommendations of the Commission were based largely on data obtained from the developed countries. The Delegation of India stated that India had not yet been able to generate the data required, but recognized that it was important to do so. The idea of "Limited Acceptance" in regard to maximum limits for pesticide residues was not possible under Indian Legislation. For food grain cereal foods which are heavily consumed in India, the Indian Standards are half the Codex MRLs. For other food products, which are not particularly heavily consumed, the Codex maximum limits were used. Concerning the Codex compositional standards for foods, India would wait to see what would be the decision of the Commission on the question of whether some parts of Codex Standards should be made optional.

57. The Delegation of the Philippines indicated that the Philippines was in the process of creating a Coordinating Committee on Food Standards composed of different Government agencies and different sectors of the food industry. It was envisaged that a more effective evaluation of Codex Standards would result from such joint effort between Government and Industry. The Delegation of the Philippines indicated that it had always been the policy of the Government of the Philippines to permit entry of products in conformity with Codex standards, provided they also met the national laws and regulations. Volume VI of the Codex Alimen-



tarius on Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods and on labelling of Food Additives when sold as such could be accepted in principle in the Philippines.

58. The Delegation of Malaysia expressed the view that the developed countries had not made really sufficient efforts to accept the Codex standards and that they should give a lead in this matter, as many of them had participated in the negotiations in the various Codex Committees over quite a number of years. The Delegation referred to the GATT Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade which strongly supported the use of international standards. The Delegation indicated that, in the light of the GATT Code, Malaysia would be giving more attention to the consideration of the question relating to accepting Codex standards.

59. The Delegation of Nepal stated that in Nepal the Codex standards had helped a lot and were looked upon as a tool for the development of the Food Industry. As regards formal acceptance of the Codex standards and Codex Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues, this presented certain problems. The Delegation added that, as regards the use of pesticides, what was needed was increased emphasis on educating the farmers in the safe and efficient use of pesticides in accordance with good agricultural practice.

60. The Delegation of Indonesia stated that for imported foods, Indonesia would probably apply the Codex Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues and that products in conformity with the Codex compositional standards would probably be allowed to enter the country.

61. The Delegation of Japan stated that Japan can accept individual Codex standards depending on its situation. According to the Japanese Regulations, the authorities in Japan cannot prevent distribution of products below the Codex standards. However, the Japanese authorities can make the manufacturers and the importers obey the Codex standards on a persuasive basis, but not a forced basis.

62. The Delegation of the Republic of Korea stated that although the Republic of Korea had a positive attitude to the Codex standards, there were some problems in formally accepting the Codex MRLs.

63. The Delegation of the People's Republic of China stated that in China the question of accepting Codex standards and Codex Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues was being studied.

64. The Observer from Australia stated that Australia had difficulties in notifying formal acceptance of Codex standards because food legislation was the responsibility of State Governments. He added that a comprehensive review was underway to determine how a uniform Australian position could be arrived at.

Strengthening the Infrastructure for National Food Control Systems:  
Information on Existing and Proposed Projects of FAO/WHO and Other  
International bodies on Food Control in the Asian Region

65. The Secretariat, presenting Document CX/ASIA 84/4, explained that it provided information on food control assistance projects in the Asian Region. The document was meant to update the information on technical cooperation projects implemented since the Third Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia.

66. The Committee was briefed on the follow-up to the Regional action programme for strengthening food control, training and assistance recommended by the FAO/UNDP Technical Consultation among Developing Countries of Asia and the Pacific on Food Control Needs and Means, held in Manila in September 1979. The action programme had given the highest priority to training of personnel in different aspects of food control, followed by development of laboratories and transfer of technology among the countries of the Region. The consultation had recommended that FAO, in cooperation with other Agencies as appropriate (WHO, UNEP) and with support of UNDP and donor Agencies should assist in the further development and implementation of the above Regional action programme on food control. Certain activities listed in the document had been carried out as a follow-up to these recommendations during the last two years with the support of UNEP and other Agencies. However, it was unfortunate that due to financial stringency, UNEP would not be able to provide support during 1984-85. In view of this, the only alternative appeared to be to scale down some of the activities and also seek resources from other donors.

67. The attention of the Committee was drawn to selected food control and food contamination monitoring projects particularly those which are of a global or regional nature. One of the collaborative FAO/UNEP projects on international training courses for control of environmental contaminants in food with special reference to mycotoxins, in the USSR, had currently become operational. The first training course would start in April 1984. Another TCDC project on Prevention of Food Losses and Quality Control of Food Grains in Asia would also become operational shortly. The project on Food Contamination Study for Asia and the Far East covering India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka which was in operation since 1980 would be coming to an end in 1984. The project has succeeded in providing some of the basic facilities for carrying out sampling and analysis for selected contaminants in food and generating data on level of contaminants in various foods at national levels to enable the countries to take appropriate preventive and control measures.

68. Special attention of the Committee was also drawn to some of the national food quality control strategy workshops organized with the cooperation of FAO, on its own, or in conjunction with WHO. Information was provided on the workshop held in Indonesia in 1983. It had made recommendations with regard to the development of an integrated food quality control strategy to promote coordination and active cooperation among various Ministries of the Government concerned in this subject area and identified gaps which would call for action to strengthen the system. Food contamination studies had been carried out in the Republic of Korea and one was underway with the support of FAO, in Indonesia.

69. The Committee was also informed of several projects now in the pipeline under various sources of funding, particularly in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Syria and China.

70. FAO and WHO continued to develop several manuals and guidelines which dealt with policy, strategy and technical issues. Reference was invited to two publications - one on quality losses of food grains and the other, "guidelines for can manufacturers and food processors on the prevention of lead and tin contamination of canned foods", the latter being an FAO/WHO publication. Both the publications should become available in 1984. A revised edition of the FAO/WHO Food Inspection Manual would also be issued in 1984 and the FAO/SIDA Laboratory Manual was being similarly revised.

71. The Committee was informed that both the Organizations, namely, FAO and WHO, believed in food control as a development activity rather than a policing function. The subject being of inter-sectorial nature, it was essential that there was good coordination and cooperation among various Ministries and Departments of the Government in the implementation of food control. Support and cooperation from the Industry and consumers was equally necessary. The Committee was informed of a professional profile of the food inspector which was now being prepared by WHO in cooperation with FAO.

72. Several Delegations brought to the attention of the Committee certain specific needs with regard to assistance for strengthening their national food control infrastructure; these being in the nature of provision of consultancy services for specific technical problems, or for training and manpower development (see Conference Room Document No.2 List of projects proposed by Thailand for strengthening the Infrastructure for National Food Control System). Many Delegations referred to the need for development of audio-visual material for training courses and for the provision of standard reference material for analysis. Attention was drawn to the need for consumer education and also for the development of guidelines on quality control for use by small scale Food Industry. A reference was invited to the need for proper evaluation of the projects and to the need for sharing of information on the results of such evaluation.

73. While discussing the mechanisms for receiving technical support and the potential resources available for the purpose, several Delegations pointed out that the matter was not receiving as high a priority from the donors as was necessary. The Committee was informed that in most of the cases, it was the priorities of the national authorities and not those of UN Agencies that determined the flow of external resources to the countries.

74. Realizing the needs of the Region, the Committee recommended that the training of food inspectors should receive the highest priority. It was necessary not only to ensure that the inspector possessed the necessary technical know-how to

deal with problems of quality and safety throughout the food chain, i.e. from production, processing, marketing and distribution, to consumption, but also had a constructive approach so that the food control system indeed became a developmental tool for the protection of the consumer as well as for the development of the food system and the Industry and trade. To achieve the above and give a concrete shape to the matter, in terms of follow-up action, the Committee very strongly recommended that steps be taken to establish a Regional training centre for food inspectors in Asia under the auspices of FAO and WHO. The Centre should promote the concept of TCDC, and UNDP and other donors should be approached both by Governments and the Agencies alike for support for its early establishment.

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES WITHIN FAO AND WHO COMPLEMENTARY TO  
THE WORK OF THE CODEX

Report on Joint FAO/WHO Activities

Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) and  
Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA)

75. The Committee had before it document CX/ASIA 84/5. The Committee was informed that both these Expert Bodies had met annually for more than 20 years and that they provided the expert advice to the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) and the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA), respectively.

76. The fact that all Codex standards and MRLs may be considered to be safe was to a large degree the achievement of the work of these two Committees. JECFA, in addition to its work on food additives, had also considered certain food contaminants, such as lead, cadmium, mercury, arsenic, tin and two anabolic agents (Trenbolone acetate and Zeranol).

77. If, on the basis of the data submitted to these Expert Bodies, it could be concluded that there was no appreciable risk to health resulting from the intake of small, unavoidable amounts of pesticide residues or from the consumption of food additives, the Expert Bodies established the so-called "acceptable daily intake" (ADI). These toxicological guideline levels are prior conditions for the establishment of MRLs for pesticide residues, on the basis of good agricultural practice and of maximum levels for food additives, on the basis of good manufacturing practice.

Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Residues in Food of  
Chemicals Used in Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Medicine (Veterinary Drugs)

78. In many meat and poultry producing countries, especially in those where intensive animal raising was practiced, as well as under modern fish farming conditions, the use of growth promoting agents was today common. Also, the application of prophylactic or curative drugs was widely practiced under these conditions in order to maximize meat, poultry and fish production. However, concern had been raised, that these chemical compounds might cause residues of public health significance in the edible tissues derived from these food animals. Several international meetings have already been held, or are planned, to address this problem. For this reason, the Codex Alimentarius Commission, at its 15th Session in July 1983 considered the need for Codex taking action in this field. The Commission was of the opinion that, in view of the complex scientific and technological aspects involved, the issue should first be examined by a Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation and that the recommendations of this Consultation might then be considered by the Commission and acted upon by, if appropriate, a newly established Codex Committee.

79. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the preparations for the expert consultation were well underway and that it was planned to be held in the second part of 1984.

Joint FAO/WHO Food Contamination Monitoring Programme

80. This Programme, initiated in 1976, is one of the major health-related activities of the Global Environmental Monitoring System (GEMS), established by UNEP to implement a recommendation of the UN Conference on the Environment. The Programme has the following objectives:

- (i) To collect data on levels of certain chemicals in individual foods and in total diet samples and to evaluate these data,

review trends and produce and disseminate summaries, thus encouraging appropriate food control and resource management measures;

- (ii) to obtain estimates of the intake via food of specific chemicals with a view to correlating these data with those on intake from other sources, thus enabling the total intake of the contaminant to be estimated;
- (iii) to provide technical cooperation with the Governments of countries wishing to initiate or strengthen food contamination monitoring programmes; and
- (iv) to provide the Codex Alimentarius Commission with information on the level of contaminants in food to support and accelerate the work on international standards for contaminants in foods.

81. The Committee was informed that, at present, laboratories of some 25 Member States were collaborating in this Programme, among them several Asian countries such as China, Japan, India and Thailand. One of the components of the Programme deals with Analytical Quality Assurance to help the laboratories to improve their analytical capabilities.

#### Report on FAO Activities

82. Besides the various activities in food control referred to under Agenda Item 5, FAO is actively involved in the area of prevention and control of mycotoxin. Aflatoxin was receiving the highest priority.

83. Many developing countries are getting alarmed by the moves of several importing countries to prescribe very low limits for aflatoxins in the regulations and these could cause serious non-tariff trade barriers. There was, therefore, an urgent need for collecting world-wide data on levels of aflatoxins found in food/feed, like maize, groundnut, copra, etc., under different environments so that the information could be utilized, at an appropriate time, by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, to make suitable recommendations on the subject.

84. The Joint FAO/WHO Food Contamination Monitoring Programme (see also paras 80, 81 of this Report) was now collecting some data on aflatoxins in selected foods/feeds and the first review of the same would be possible sometime in 1985. However, this data base was necessarily quite small and much more effort would need to be made in this direction in the future. The matter was not quite simple; firstly, because aflatoxins were ubiquitous and secondly, most of the developing countries lacked the facilities and trained personnel to deal with the problem. FAO was cooperating with several Governments to set up monitoring programmes and provide assistance through training and other means. Assistance was also being provided in preventive measures through improvements in post-harvest handling, drying and storage practices, and other means.

#### Standard Reference Materials

85. FAO was maintaining a supply of some standard reference analytical materials for organic chlorine pesticides, heavy metals and aflatoxins which were made available to the national authorities on request.

#### Audio-Visual Training Materials

86. FAO was keeping some audio-visual training materials in the form of films, slides, etc., covering various aspects of food quality control, hygiene, food inspection, etc. This material was given on loan to various projects and national authorities interested in the subject. It would be the endeavour of FAO to expand this library and also to develop other materials which would be suitable to the needs of developing countries.

#### Report on WHO Activities - Elaboration of Guidelines/Publications

87. The Committee was informed that the following guidelines/publications had been, or are in the process of being prepared by WHO:

- (i) Guidelines for drinking water quality;

- (ii) Slaughter techniques and meat hygiene under austere conditions;
- (iii) Paralytic shellfish poisoning;
- (iv) Salmonellosis (prevention and control);
- (v) Inventory of audio-visual aids in food safety;
- (vi) Food virology;
- (vii) Mass catering;
- (viii) Training guidelines on safe food handling in hotels, restaurants and similar establishments;
- (ix) Guidelines for the development of educational material on safe food, environmental and personal hygiene;
- (x) Professional profile for the food importer; and
- (xi) Proceedings on the symposium on the health effects of heavy metals in infant formula and junior food (available from the publishing house, Springel, Berlin/Heidelberg/New York).

#### Surveillance Programme for Control of Foodborne Infections and Intoxications

88. The programme was coordinated by the European Office of WHO and several European countries participated. The objectives of the programme were: (i) to provide infrastructure to serve as a basis for the control of foodborne diseases; (ii) to assist national authorities in identifying priorities for allocation of resources. Under this programme, a Manual on surveillance of foodborne infections and intoxications has been prepared. It was hoped that this European programme could serve as a model for similar programmes in other regions of the world.

#### International Programme on Chemical Safety

89. Several countries of Asia had already signed or were interested in signing memoranda of understanding to actively participate in this Joint ILO/UNEP/WHO Programme. Under this programme, the Environmental Health Criteria Documents are being published, many of which dealt with chemicals of interest in food safety. Other priorities of the programme were the development of methodology in toxicology and manpower development in the field of toxicology.

#### International Digest of Health Legislation

90. This quarterly journal, which was published in English and French, contains national and international legal texts dealing with all aspects of public health, including food safety and nutrition.

#### International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes

91. The Code, in its operational paragraph 4, had requested the CAC to give full consideration to action it might take with regard to the standards for infant foods and to support and promote the implementation of the Code.

92. The Committee was informed that a consultant would, at present, review all relevant Codex standards in the light of the International Code. This review would be discussed at the next session of the Codex Committee on Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCFSDU).

#### Nutritional Value and Safety of Products specifically intended for Infant and Young Child Feeding - Resolution of the World Health Assembly (WHA 34.23)

93. This resolution requested WHO to assess the changes in the quality and nutritional value of products during storage and transport in extreme climatic conditions.

94. The Committee was informed that a WHO Consultant had visited three countries (India, the Philippines and Trinidad and Tobago) to study these problems. The report of the consultant would be discussed at the next session of the CCFSDU.

95. In the discussion of the report on activities within FAO and WHO complementing the work of the CAC, the delegation of Thailand pointed out that Asian Countries had not received a great deal of support from FAO and WHO. The delegation of Malaysia, making reference to a recent outbreak of foodborne shigellosis in the Netherlands, for which the Dutch authorities had held shrimps from south-east Asia responsible requested the inclusion of shigellae in appropriate Codex specifications and the development of analytical methods to identify shigellae in food. The delegation also requested that they be informed about the latest situation with regard to the status of monosodium glutamate. The delegation of India, referring to the Joint FAO/WHO Food Contamination Monitoring Programme, felt that this programme was extremely useful for developing countries in helping to develop a national monitoring programme. For the estimation of contaminant intake via food of specific chemicals, India hoped to receive appropriate assistance from the international agencies.

96. Regarding assistance, the attention of the Committee was drawn to the earlier discussions (see para. 73) where it was pointed out that the national priorities determined to a large extent the flow of resources.

Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC)

97. The Committee did not have any document on the subject. The representative of FAO briefed the Committee on the development of the concept of TCDC within the UN system, its philosophy and the general approaches used so far in implementing it. Unfortunately very often, there were no separate resources allocated for TCDC but the governments are being encouraged to utilize this approach making use of their existing national allocations from external assistance. Within the food control area, the TCDC Workshop on Food Control held in Malaysia in 1979 had been a successful effort and several actions had been taken up as a result of its recommendations. Other similar activities were called for.

98. Several delegations supported the concept of TCDC in the area of food quality control and food safety. Asia consists of a vast region with countries having different levels of development in terms of institutions, manpower, etc, and the TCDC opportunities should be therefore fully utilized to benefit the whole region. Similarly, cooperation and support from the developed countries within the region was called for.

99. As a successful example of TCDC within the ASEAN countries, the Committee was informed of several ongoing activities. Appendix VII provides information on the subject.

100. The delegation of Malaysia informed the Committee that Malaysia is initiating a course on low acid canned foods for retort operators for recognition by officials in developed countries, especially USA. A Workshop on the same topic is being planned for ASEAN countries.

101. The Committee commended the ASEAN countries on their cooperative efforts and strongly felt that similar cooperation needed to be developed and extended on an Asian basis.

Report on Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Safety, Geneva, 30/5 - 6/6/83

102. The Committee had before it document CX/ASIA 84/7. The Secretariat reminded the delegates that, in 1978, the International Conference on Primary Health Care, held in Alma-Ata, USSR, had spelled out the essential elements of Primary Health Care, one of these being the promotion of (safe) food supply and proper nutrition. It was obvious to everybody that food has not only to be available but it has to be safe, which implies that eating it should not give rise to foodborne disease. It was also obvious that improperly stored or prepared foods can cause illness. Less obvious, however, was the degree to which foodborne disease associated with the contamination of the food supply can harm a nation's health and even its economy.

103. The Committee was informed that the Expert Committee on Food Safety in its report observed that in 1980 there were about 1000 million episodes of acute diarrhoea in children aged under five in the developing world (excluding China). Nearly five million children died at a rate of ten diarrhoeal deaths every minute of everyday of every year. A substantial number of these deaths are caused by food, directly by microbiological contamination and indirectly by reducing the nutritional status in marginally nourished children. When one adds to this total such non-diarrheic foodborne diseases as botulism, typhoid and parasitism as well as the acute and chronic effects of chemical contaminations of foods, the number of affected people and the consequent impact on human function and well-being is appalling. Equally important is the effect of such widespread acute and chronic debilitation on the economy and financial condition of the world community.

104. The experts further noted that in the last 40 years many efforts and programmes had been initiated to deal with this issue. Yet foodborne illness continues to be one of the great evils of mankind.

105. From the discussions of the experts, a strategy emerged which laid emphasis on several points. First, the solution to food contamination problems must be based on knowledge of culture and economic practice and on information concerning the incidence and causes of the disease. Second, both national and local interventions were needed. At the national level, well coordinated national legislation and regulation, rigorously enforced by trained, incorruptable officials, was essential; at the local level, food safety must be an integral part of primary health care, and must be based on appropriate education and information of the public in general and of mothers in particular. The experts stressed further the need for development of simple technologies to reduce foodborne diseases and to apply more complex technologies (such as food irradiation) to solve specific food safety problems. Illness and the lack of well-being leading to reduced economic productivity due to contaminated food constitute one of, perhaps the most widespread, health problems in the contemporary world. It was for this reason that the experts called upon governments and international organizations to deal with this issue as a major priority item. In conclusion the Committee was informed that the report of this Expert Committee would be published during 1984 in the Technical Report Series of WHO and would be available upon request.

106. During the discussion in general terms of this topic in the Committee, several delegations pointed out that it was a new and challenging recommendation to have food safety integrated into the primary health care system. To this end, WHO should provide appropriate advice for the guidance of national health agencies on how to achieve this. The paramount importance of education for alleviating the serious health and economic consequences due to contaminated food was stressed. The delegation of Malaysia suggested the theme "food safety" for a World Health Day in the near future to underline the importance of food safety for achieving Health for All by the Year 2000. The delegates agreed to have a special Resolution on food safety (see Appendix V).

#### Food Handling

107. The Committee discussed Document No. CX/ASIA 84/8 on Improvements in Village and Household Level Food Handling. This paper was introduced by the FAO Representative. FAO has defined food handling as the sum of processes and treatments which food is subjected to from its production until its final consumption. The importance of food handling in this context, therefore, will ensure quality, safety and wholesomeness of food, thereby improving the nutritional status of people on the one hand and reducing food losses due to spoilage and losses of nutrients during processing, preservation and storage on the other hand.

108. The objectives of the food handling programme include conservation of food resources, maintenance or enhancement of nutritional value of food and to ensure that handling operations are safe and the food presented for consumption is wholesome. The situation regarding food handling at rural family, household, and community levels is complex and will be affected by cottage enterprises, nature and size of villages, the administrative setup and services, customs, habits and traditions and food uses at household level, economic and social groupings, and socio-economic status. It will also be affected by the ecosystem, water supply and environmental sanitation. The food handling practices will affect the nutritional and health status of the people.

109. The Committee was briefed about the recently held regional workshop on food handling in Chiang Mai, Thailand, which had made several recommendations with regard to improvement in food handling practices, especially at the village and household levels.

110. As far as the maintenance and enhancement of the microbiological and nutritional qualities of food are concerned, the present efforts are mainly directed towards market economy and affect those foods which are brought and/or bought in the national and international markets. The entire subsistence sector, which in developing countries is



significantly large, remains untouched. This is, however, the sector where safe, hygienic and nutritional food is necessary for consumption to minimize malnutrition and combat ill-health. It is extremely important that people be made aware of the benefits of good food handling practices. The Committee, therefore, agreed that efforts are needed to make the masses aware of the usefulness, advantages and dividends of the safe and nutritious foods for consumption through improved food handling practices.

111. In order to achieve the above, the Committee suggested that action oriented programmes should be undertaken in the member countries. It was, however, felt that at present food handling practices in different countries are not well documented and unless that is done first the practice cannot be appreciated and problems cannot be identified. Country workshops should be held to document existing rural food systems and the state of the art explaining the present practices of household level processing, preservation and storage. It was recognized that such studies might bring to light many traditional food products which have been developed through centuries of conventional wisdom to protect human health. In this regard mention was made of Tempeh which is a fermented soy-product and has good nutritional as well as therapeutic properties. The economic and social implications of street foods were discussed and it was agreed that studies should be undertaken to improve the quality of such foods recognizing it as a socio-economic problem. It was pointed out that cooked foods which are available at community level such as in schools and in factory canteens, are very important to be studied in order to make them nutritionally and microbiologically sound.

#### Street Vending of Food - Health Consequences

112. The Secretariat, in introducing working paper CX/ASIA 84/9, drew attention to the fact that this paper had been written by Mr. G.O. Baptist, Director, Food and Drug Administration and Laboratory Service Division, Federal Ministry of Health, Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria. It reflected essentially the situation in Nigeria, which may be applicable to some, if not most countries in Asia.

113. The paper discussed the socio-economic changes which helped to boost street vending of food in a large city like Lagos. It touches on the health problems associated with this trade and its attendant adverse consequences. The paper also attempts to focus attention of health authorities on the importance of providing not only enough but safe food for achieving the social goal of Member States and WHO, namely Health for All by the Year 2000.

114. During the discussion of this topic in the Committee, there was a general consensus that in spite of all the problems caused by street vending of food, this trade provided an essential service to the public and, since it is not possible to prohibit it, gradual improvements have to be introduced in order to reduce the health risks. One of the first measures to be taken was the establishment of school canteens so that school children need not be exposed to the frequently unsafe food offered by street vendors. Some delegates proposed to ban street vendors in the vicinity of schools, so as to remove any temptation to children.

115. As a further measure, education of the public, but especially of school children, should be introduced so that they are aware of the potential health risk associated with contaminated food. This would also help them to distinguish between clean and unclean food, and to patronise only those street vendors who offered better quality food. To this end, the collaboration of consumer associations should be sought. The provision of hygienic facilities (potable water, waste disposal) to street vendors by the authorities was also seen as a necessary step for improvement of food safety which, however, was not always possible. The appropriate authorities should introduce a mandatory registration scheme for street vendors of food which could enable food or health inspectors to exercise some form of control of the facilities available and of the food handling and storage methods. This could also help to identify carriers of foodborne pathogens, should an

outbreak of foodborne disease come to the attention of the authorities. The delegation of Indonesia requested WHO to provide appropriate guidance material to cope with the health problems caused by street food vendors.

Consideration of Need for Developing Codex Standards for Tropical Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

116. The Committee had before it Document CX/ASIA 84/6, which contained an extract from the Report of the Fifteenth Session of the Commission on this subject. The document also drew attention to the fact that the Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe had decided to undertake the development of European standards for certain fresh exotic fruits, taking into account the decision of the Codex Alimentarius Commission not to develop Codex standards for tropical fresh fruits and vegetables at the present time. The document also mentioned that the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Paris, was considering a proposal for a standard for fresh mangoes. The Secretariat, in introducing this topic, outlined the main features of the paper (ALINORM 83/7) which had been prepared by a consultant and presented to the Fifteenth Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

117. The delegation of Japan stated that it would be very difficult to establish worldwide standards for fresh tropical fruits and vegetables as the produce varied from region to region.

118. The delegation of Indonesia had not yet reached any firm decision on this question.

119. The delegation of the Philippines stated that these products were traded on the basis of a buyer and seller relationship, since the requirements of the buyers varied from region to region. Thus, the Philippines did not think there was any need for international standards.

120. The delegation of Thailand stated that data would need to be collected and there would need to be research activity concerning harvesting techniques, grading quality, packaging, storage and transportation, pesticide residues, etc., before starting to develop international standards for these products. Any idea of developing international standards for these products would need to be postponed until the data had been collected and the research completed. The delegation of Thailand considered, however, that the international trade in fresh fruits and vegetables should be on the basis of agreements between buyers and sellers.

121. The delegation of the Republic of Korea stated that its views were the same as those of Thailand.

122. The delegations of India and Nepal considered that the time was not yet ripe for taking a decision on this question.

123. The delegation of Malaysia indicated that the fruit industry was still being developed in Malaysia and that the time, therefore, was not yet ripe for deciding about the question of international standards.

124. The delegation of the People's Republic of China stated that only small amounts of such products were produced in China.

125. The delegation of Iran stated that it would be very difficult to establish standards. The delegation of Singapore saw no need for international standards.

126. The observer from Australia stated that Australia was not a major exporter of tropical fruits and vegetables. Australia thought that international standards would be beneficial for the trade, and that if work were to be started on this, it might best be done by way of joint working arrangements between Codex and the Economic Commission for Europe, as in the case of the standardization of fruit juices.

127. It was the view, therefore, of the Coordinating Committee for Asia that worldwide standards for tropical fresh fruits and vegetables were not needed.

Report on Proposal to Amend the Codex Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food

128. The Committee had before it Document CX/ASIA 84/15. The Committee was reminded that the Codex Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food had been adopted by the CAC at its 13th Session in 1979. The Code of Ethics contains some provisions which permit the advertising, promotion and the provision of information for breast-milk substitutes, weaning foods and generally all foods for infants and children. On the other hand, the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes had been adopted by the World Health Assembly in May 1981, and contains some provisions which do not permit advertising and promotion of breast-milk substitutes and regulates the provision of information on the contents of these products. To this extent, there is a conflict between these two international codes, which needs to be resolved.

129. Accordingly, the Executive Committee of the CAC requested the Secretariat, at its 29th Session in 1982, to prepare a paper on the question of amendments to the Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food for consideration by the Executive Committee and the CAC at their next sessions in 1983 (see ALINORM 83/3, para. 38). The Secretariat prepared a paper entitled "Proposal to Amend the Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food" (ALINORM 83/38, Part II) which was considered by the Executive Committee at its 30th Session in 1983.

130. During this session the, at that time, Vice-Chairman Mr. Kimbrell, submitted another proposal to amend the Code of Ethics. He proposed the following version for paragraph 5.9 of the Code of Ethics: "5.9: Foods for infants, children and other vulnerable groups should be in accordance with standards elaborated by the CAC". The rest of para. 5.9 should be deleted. As a consequential amendment, para. 5.10(b) of the Code of Ethics should read as follows: "(b) information concerning the nutritional value of food should not mislead the public" and the rest of this sub-para should be deleted.

131. Mr. Kimbrell explained that in his view it was not necessary to repeat in one international code what was already clearly stated in another.

132. The Executive Committee, after thorough discussion, agreed with this view, namely that it was not necessary to repeat in one international code what was already stated in another. However, it felt that there was a need for the addition of a new preambular paragraph which should read as follows: "(g) The International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes sets forth the principles for the protection and promotion of breast feeding, which is an important aspect of primary health care". Finally, the Executive Committee agreed to refer the question to the CAC for consideration in the light of the discussion that took place in the session of the Executive Committee. (For details, see ALINORM 83/4, paras 6-16).

133. During the discussion of this topic by the CAC, at its 15th Session in 1983, several delegations spoke, but there was no unanimous opinion. The delegation of India finally stressed the need for more time to study the new proposal by the Executive Committee. It was for this reason that the Chairman of the CAC proposed to defer the final decision on the amendment of the Code of Ethics to the next (16th) Session of the CAC in asking (i) Governments to submit written statements regarding their position; and (ii) Regional Coordinating Committees to discuss the issue during their forthcoming

sessions. (For details, see ALINORM 83/43, paras 524-527).

134. During the discussion of this topic at the 4th Session of the Codex Regional Coordinating Committee for Asia, the view was expressed by the delegation of India that while it was true that there was no need to repeat in one code what was already clearly stated in another, there was also no harm in such a repetition. In any case, India supported the view of the Executive Committee expressed during its 30th Session and stressed especially the need for an amendment of the preamble, as contained in the Executive Committee's proposal to the CAC. Many delegations referring to the clause 5.9, were of the opinion that any reference to clause 5.9-Advertisement should be deleted from the Code of Ethics. All other delegations agreed with this view and agreed with the Executive Committee that the amendment of the Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food should read as follows:

(i) Preamble:

"(g) The International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes sets forth the principles for the protection of breast feeding, which is an important aspect of primary health care".

(ii) Paragraph 5.9:

"5.9 Foods for infants, children and other vulnerable groups should be in accordance with standards elaborated by the CAC".

(iii) Paragraph 5.10 (b):

"(b) Information concerning the nutritional value of food should not mislead the public".

#### Food Irradiation

135. In introducing Document CX/ASIA 84/10, the Committee was informed that: (i) the CAC, at its 15th Session in 1983, had adopted the Codex General Standard for Irradiated Foods and the Recommended International Code of Practice for Operation of Irradiation Facilities used for the Treatment of Food; and (ii) that the International Committee on Food Microbiology and Hygiene had been asked by FAO and WHO in 1982 for a second opinion regarding the microbiological safety of low dose (< 10 KGy) food irradiation. That Committee concluded its deliberations, after having analysed the scientific knowledge available to date by saying that it was satisfied that there was no cause for concern. Food irradiation was seen as an important addition to the methods of control of foodborne pathogens and did not present any additional hazards from shifts in the microflora or changes in the attributes of micro-organisms (for details, see CX/FH 83/9). The Committee was also informed that the Codex Committee on Food Labelling, at its 17th Session in 1983, had considered the questions and problems connected with the labelling of irradiated food. Agreement was reached regarding the labelling of a food which had been irradiated that it should be labelled as follows: "treated by ionizing energy". However, no agreement was reached regarding labelling of composite foods where one or more of the ingredients had been irradiated and regarding single ingredient products where they were prepared from irradiated raw material.

136. The Committee was further informed that an expert mission to certain RPFII countries (Asian Regional Project on Food Irradiation) had been undertaken. Although the expert mission had visited only Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Bangladesh in June 1983 to evaluate the progress of work, the report reflected the activities of most countries in the Region. The RPFII consisted of Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. The Secretariat drew attention to the overall conclusions and recommendations of the Report.

Attention was also directed to the publication "Food Irradiation for Developing Countries in Asia and the Pacific", published by the International Atomic Energy Agency, in Vienna, in 1982. The Committee was informed that further information concerning the status of food irradiation activities in Asia and elsewhere in the world could be obtained from Dr. Paisan Loaharanu, Food Preservation Section, AGE, International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna, Austria.

137. The Committee was also informed that the Directors-General of FAO, IAEA and WHO, in their Circular Letter D 6.22 Circ. of 21/6/83, had proposed to their Member States the establishment of an International Consultative Group on Food Irradiation. The functions of this Consultative Group would be: (a) to evaluate global developments in the field of food irradiation; (b) to provide a focal point of advice on the application of food irradiation to Member States and the Organizations; (c) to furnish information as required, through the Organizations, to the CAC. (A copy of the Circular Letter with attachment was made available to the delegates of the Coordinating Committee).

138. During the extensive discussions on the topic of food irradiation at the Coordinating Committee, several delegations explained the type of work which was going on in their countries with regard to food irradiation. The Chairman of the CAC, Mr. E. Kimbrell (USA), informed the Committee that the United States Food and Drug Administration had taken steps to legalize the process of food irradiation of certain foods in the USA. While general satisfaction was expressed by the delegations towards this move in the USA, several problems remained which in the opinion of the delegations needed to be resolved:

- (a) how can a buyer know whether a food has been irradiated or not?
- (b) if a food has been irradiated, how can a buyer know whether the permitted dosage has been exceeded or not?
- (c) how could a buyer know whether the irradiation process has been applied under Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP)?
- (d) should it be permissible to use irradiated raw materials for the production of infant foods?

139. Mr. Kimbrell reminded the delegates that the questions raised under (a), (b) and (c) above were not new. For example, buyers of ritually slaughtered meat, also had no way of knowing if their meat had indeed been slaughtered in the way they wanted. This problem could only be solved through a governmental certification scheme. Nevertheless, he thought it appropriate to refer the matter to the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling to find out if an appropriate test method to determine whether a food had been irradiated could be developed which would also detect the dosage that had been applied.

140. The meeting noted that there was a need for registration of food irradiation facilities.

141. Concerning (d) above, the Secretariat indicated that one view might be that there was no need to be concerned about the irradiation process any more than there was a need to be concerned about the pasteurization process.

142. On the question of need for labelling the fact of irradiation in the case of composite foods which contain irradiated components (e.g. spices), there were divergent views amongst the delegations. The Secretariat requested the delegations to make their views known to the Codex Committee on Food Labelling.

143. The Secretariat also requested delegations to reply positively to the Circular Letter proposing the establishment of an international Consultative Group on Food Irradiation. The current discussion at the Coordinating Committee was a further proof of the need for an international forum to discuss matters related to food irradiation.

Activities Regarding Pesticides and Their Residues in Foods

144. The Committee had before it Document CX/ASIA 84/11 and Room Documents 9 and 10 containing the Draft Report and a synopsis of the First Session of the Group of Developing Countries in Asia Concerning Pesticide Residue Problems, held in Petchburi, Thailand, 24-27 February 1984.

145. The Committee was informed that the Group discussed: (i) Codex Maximum Residue Limits for Pesticide Residues - Implications for Developing Countries in the Region of Asia; (ii) Registration of Pesticides with Reference to the Work of FAO and the Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides; and (iii) Recommendations of the Working Group 3 on Pesticide Residue Problems in Developing Countries of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues.

Consideration of the Recommendations of the Group of Developing Countries in Asia Concerning Pesticide Residue Problems

146. The Committee agreed with the recommendations of the Group directed to: (i) Generation of Residue Data from Supervised Trials; (ii) Technical Assistance from Industry; (iii) Strengthening the Infrastructure in the Developing Countries for Enforcing Codex MRLs in Developing Countries as contained in Conference Room Document 10 and reproduced in Appendix IV. The Committee took note of the Group's recommendation that a regional pesticide laboratory be established in Thailand.

147. To a question raised by the delegation of Singapore, the Secretariat informed the Committee that good agricultural practices followed in different countries are reviewed periodically by the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues. Countries wishing to have more information on the subject should write to the Chief, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, Rome, Italy.

148. The delegation of Indonesia stated that there was an urgent need for the elaboration of guidelines for treatment of waste water from pesticide plants. The delegation of Indonesia was requested to raise this question with the International Programme on Chemical Safety, WHO, Geneva, Switzerland.

149. The observer of the People's Republic of China raised the question of tolerance for residues of organochlorine pesticides in meat. In order to improve the rationale in formulating the tolerance for residues of organochlorine pesticides in meat, the observer suggested that if the fat content of meat is less than 10%, the residue of organochlorine pesticide should be calculated on the basis of total weight rather than on fat basis. The tolerance of residues should, however, be the same as that calculated on the fat basis. The Committee was informed that the matter raised by the People's Republic of China would be referred to the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues.

150. The delegation of Iran informed the Committee of the need in Iran for trained personnel in pesticide residue analysis, contaminants, aflatoxin and additives and welcomed the idea of setting up of a regional pesticide laboratory in the Region, which could among other activities train personnel in pesticide analysis.

151. The delegation of Singapore, taking as an example pesticides the use of which might be banned in some countries inquired whether there were any international arrangements in existence or contemplated under which an exporting country would be required to indicate on the label of a food commodity, the name of the pesticide used on the commodity. The delegation added that there appeared to be no way of knowing what pesticide was applied,

if the pesticide was not named on the label of the food product. In response, one suggestion was that perhaps some sort of certification arrangements in the exporting country could be envisaged which would be acceptable to the importing country. The Secretariat referred to the Codex Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food, which had been sent to all Governments for implementation and which offered some protection through the obligations applicable to food exporters.

152. The delegation of India thought that as some countries had felt strongly that food products which had been irradiated should have the fact of irradiation declared on the label, then it appeared to be at least as desirable that the name of the pesticide applied to a food should appear on the label.

153. The delegation of Malaysia expressed the view that where an importing country did not have appropriate regulations, the exporting country should not take advantage of this but should ensure that the exported product was in conformity with the requirements of the exporting country. In this connection, reference was made to the Codex Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food.

#### Problems Concerning Acceptance of the Codex Standards for Infant Formula

154. The Committee had before it Document CX/ASIA 84/12 and also Room Document 4 containing the Statement of Thailand on the subject. The Committee at its 3rd Session had been informed that it was difficult for many countries in Asia to accept the Codex standard, because the cost of an infant formula which met the requirement of the Codex standards would be too high in relation to incomes in many parts of the Region.

155. The Committee noted that the Codex Committee on Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCFSDU) had elaborated 3 standards:

(i) Infant Formula which applied to products in liquid or powder form intended for use when necessary as a substitute to human milk to meet the normal nutritional requirements for humans. The product could be based on milk of cows or other animals and/or on other edible constituents of animal including fish or plant origin, which have been proved to be suitable for infant feeding.

(ii) Canned Baby Foods which covered a wide range of foods intended primarily for use during the infant's weaning period and for the progressive adaptation of infants and children to ordinary food.

(iii) Processed Cereal Based Foods for Infants and Children intended to supplement the diet of infants and children.

156. The delegation of Thailand, which had led the discussions on this subject at the 3rd Session of this Committee outlined the problems which the Asian Countries faced as regards acceptance of the Codex Standard for Infant Formula. These were: (i) The content of some of the nutrients, for example iron, and protein in relation to requirements is rather high; (ii) The cost of the infant formula satisfying the standard would be high in relation to the income of the people in the Region; and (iii) The technology requirements are rather complex and not within the reach of many countries in the Region.

157. The application of appropriate technology affordable by most developing countries, the use of locally available raw materials, and technical and economic cooperation between the developed and developing countries were suggested as measures by Thailand to overcome the difficulties.

158. The Committee was informed by the Secretariat that the Codex standard represented a standard containing minimum nutritional requirement and that scientific and medical principles of infant nutrition had to be taken into account when considering any significant changes in the composition of the product. The Committee was also informed that a clear distinction should be made between infant formula and other foods like weaning and

supplementary foods. The requirements of infant formula had to be much more stringent and this might involve more complex technology and hence higher cost. The situation with regard to other foods was somewhat different. Some delegations suggested the use of blends of cereal flours, legume flours fortified adequately with essential nutrients as a substitute for infant formula and that such blends would be considerably less costly. It was noted, however, that such blends could not replace infant formula and could only be used as weaning foods.

159. The ASEAN\* countries were of the opinion that they were facing difficulties, both technical and financial in manufacturing infant formula which would meet the requirement of the Codex standard. These requirements were an obstacle to accepting the Codex standard. The importation of infant formula by ASEAN countries would be rather expensive and not within their reach.

160. The Committee expressed the opinion that nutrient levels of the infant formula as contained in the Codex standard are satisfactory. The delegation of Malaysia stressed that the lowering of the nutrient levels in the standard would be most undesirable since that would affect the nutrition of the growing infant and increase child mortality and morbidity. The delegation of Thailand, however, expressed the need for specifying the maximum content of iron in the standard, since, in its opinion, high amounts of iron may prove harmful to the infant. Also in its opinion, the maximum level of 4% for protein for which provision was made in the standard, may also be harmful to the infant and suggested that this may be investigated.

161. The Committee noted that it was mainly the techno-economic problems facing the countries in the Asian Region which were standing in the way of their accepting the Codex standard. The Committee suggested, therefore, that, as a first step, a consultant be recruited to visit some countries in the Region and to study the current situation and capabilities of the countries for the manufacture of infant formula and weaning foods. The consultant should then make suggestions regarding the development of infant formula and other foods based on locally available raw materials which would satisfy both relevant Codex standards and be economically feasible, and also provide advice and indicate possible sources of technical assistance. This could be followed by Technical and Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries or among Developed and Developing Countries.

162. The observer from Australia informed the Committee that his country appreciated the problems faced by countries in the Asian Region caused by the high cost of infant formulae manufactured to meet the Codex standards. The Australian Dairy Corporation was willing to consider requests for technical assistance to develop infant foods suitable for developing countries in the region. It had recently agreed to work with the Malaysian Government on a similar project to develop appropriate foods. The funding of any Australian initiative on infant foods would most likely come from the Australian Development Assistance Bureau (ADAB) which sponsored a similar successful project in Thailand in 1973/74.

#### Imitation Milk - Decision No. 6

163. The Committee had before it Document CX/ASIA 84/13. The Committee at its 3rd Session had discussed whether there was a need to develop international standards for imitation milk. At that session the Committee expressed the opinion that there was no such need, since there was no substantial international trade in the commodity. There was only a limited market for the commodity in certain countries of the Region. The Committee had expressed the hope that Decision No. 6, which would constitute useful guidance in the preparation of imitation milk, would be adopted by the Milk Committee. The Committee did not favour the use of the word "Imitation" for describing the product "Filled Milk".

\* Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.



164. The Joint FAO/WHO Committee of Government Experts on the Code of Principles concerning Milk and Milk Products discussed Decision No. 6 on Imitation Milk at its 20th Session. The Committee confirmed the need for such a decision, especially in view of the importance of imitation milk in the diet of the population of certain developing countries. Decision No. 6 was adopted by the Milk Committee at that session.

165. Decision No. 6 defines Imitation Milk as a substitute for milk or for a milk product which, in general composition, appearance, characteristics and intended use is similar to milk and in which the milk solids constituents are partly replaced with non-milk ingredients.

166. The Decision No. 6, in summary, stated that imitation milk: (i) must meet the essential compositional requirement of milk; (ii) can contain harmless additives technologically necessary for the replacement of milk fat and optional additional nutrients as appropriate; (iii) must be produced under hygienic conditions; (iv) must conform to the hygienic quality standards and maximum level of contaminants present in the corresponding milk product; and (v) must be properly labelled.

167. The complete text of Decision No. 6, which is given in Para. 5 of CX/ASIA 84/13, will be included in the Codex Alimentarius, Vol. XVI, relating to standards for milk products.

168. While the Committee noted that Decision No. 6 might prove useful to such of the countries in the Region which are interested in the production of Imitation Milk, none of the countries represented at the session was in a position to accept the Decision at the present time.

169. The delegation of Thailand was not in a position to accept the Decision No.6, since provision 5 of that Decision, pertaining to labelling, was not relevant in the case of Thailand (Room Document No. 5). Thailand was of the opinion that the Decision No. 6 should not be included in the Code of Principles concerning Milk and Milk Products.

170. The Philippines had been producing Imitation (Filled) Milk since 1960, by replacing butter fat in milk by coconut fat, and the essential composition and quality characteristics of their product was being safeguarded by government regulations. Filled Milk had been traded nationally for the past 20 years under that name, and hence the Philippines was not in a position to accept the name "Imitation Milk" for "Filled Milk".

171. The People's Republic of China had no production of Imitation Milk, where milk solids are partly replaced by non-milk solids, and hence were not affected by Decision No. 6. The People's Republic of China produced milk entirely of vegetable origin, for example, Soya Milk, in appreciable quantities.

172. The delegation of India informed the Committee that mixtures of milks of vegetable origin and animal origin are being produced in the country on an experimental basis.

173. The Committee noted that the countries in the Region are not in a position, at this stage, to indicate the country's position as regards acceptance of Decision No. 6 - Imitation Milk.

#### Nomination of Coordinator

174. The delegation of the Philippines proposed that Dr. Roestamsjah (Indonesia), Vice-Chairman of the current session of the Committee, be nominated for appointment by the Sixteenth Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Geneva, July 1985), as the new Codex Coordinator for Asia, to take up office when the present Coordinator, Prof. A. Bhumiratana (Thailand) completes his term of Office at the end of the Sixteenth Session of the Commission. This proposal was unanimously endorsed by the Committee. Dr. Roestamsjah indicated that he accepted the nomination subject to the approval of the Government of Indonesia.

#### Other Business

175. Thailand, which is a big fish exporting country, is facing problems regarding acceptance of certain standards elaborated by the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP), and regarding certain codes of practice elaborated by the Committee. The delegation of Thailand suggested some amendments which the CCFFP should consider at its next session.

1. Standards for Frozen Blocks of Whole, Headless and Guttled Fish

176. The standard is too specific and is applicable only for Frozen Blocks of Fish. Thailand is of the opinion that the standard should also be applicable to the individual fish; this could be achieved if the word "Blocks" is deleted from the title of the standard.

2. Harmonization of Defect Tables in the Codex Standards for Quick Frozen Fish Fillet and Quick Frozen Blocks of Fish Fillet Minced Fish Flesh and Mixtures of Fillet and Minced Fish Flesh

177. The defect tables cover various frozen fish products. Thailand has in its possession limited information and would like to have the views of other countries.

3. Draft Standard for Dried Salted Fish (Klipp Fish) of the Gadoid Fish Family

178. The scope of the standard covers only fish belonging to the Gadoid fish family. Since the population in Asia consume fairly large amounts of salted fish, which do not belong to the Gadoid family, Thailand would propose that the scope of the standard be expanded to cover other fish species.

#### Histamine Poisoning

179. Thailand would propose a maximum permissible limit of not more than 100 ppm for histamine in fish and fishery products. Thailand would like to have a standard method for determination of histamine content.

#### Code of Practice for Food Grade Fish Protein Concentrate (FPC)

180. Thailand and other developing countries in the Asian Region receive large amounts of FPC through Food Aid Programmes. Hence there appears to be a need in the Asian Region for guidelines for determining the suitability of the product for human consumption which should be elaborated by CCFFP.

#### Microbiological Specifications for Pre-Cooked Frozen Shrimp and Prawn

181. Guidelines for the above are urgently needed by Thailand and other countries in the Region. The CCFFP should give priority to this activity.

#### Microbiological Criteria for Crab Meat

182. Thailand was of the opinion that microbiological criteria for crab meat should be similar to those for pre-cooked shrimps or a little less stringent.

#### Remarks of the Committee concerning the Proposals of Thailand

183. The Committee agreed that the problems raised by Thailand were also experienced by other countries in the Region and expressed their wish that these problems be brought to the immediate attention of the CCFFP. The delegation of Thailand was requested to forward its proposals, in precise terms, to the Chairman of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products without delay, as the next session of the Committee would be held from 7 to 11 May 1984. (Bergen, Norway).

Proposed Draft International Code of Practice for Ante-Mortem and Post-Mortem Judgement of Slaughter Animals ("Judgement Code")

184. Thailand would like to reconfirm its proposal made at the 5th Session of the Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene, London, 11-15 October 1982. (ALINORM 83/41, Part X, para. 3.4.1, referring to Virus Conditions and Foot and Mouth Diseases; ALINORM 83/32, Appendix III and para. 118).

185. In response, the Secretariat referred to paragraph 413 of the Report of the 15th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and indicated that Step 6 comments of Thailand would be included in the comments to be placed before the next session of the Executive Committee.

Code of Practice for the Storage, Handling and Transport of Edible Oils in Bulk

186. The delegation of Malaysia stated that at the last session of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils, Malaysia had indicated that there was a need for an international code of practice for the storage, handling and transport of edible oils in bulk. As it now appeared that there might not be another session of that Committee for some considerable time to come, the delegation of Malaysia now proposed that the elaboration of the proposed code be supported and given impetus by the Coordinating Committee for Asia. The delegation of Malaysia also informed that Malaysia had prepared a first draft of the code. The proposal of Malaysia was supported by the Committee.

187. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Executive Committee would be considering, at its next session in June 1984, how best to arrange for the remaining work of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils to be completed. The Committee agreed with the Secretariat to place the proposal of Malaysia, which the Committee supported, before the Executive Committee for consideration at its next session, following which the views of the Executive Committee would be conveyed to Malaysia through the Coordinator.

Analysis of Mixtures of Fats and Oils

188. The delegation of India expressed the need for the development and publication of a well defined methodology for the qualitative and quantitative determination of individual fats and oils in a mixture of fats and oils (for. e.g., mixtures of two or more vegetable fats or oils or two or more animal fats) and even when they are present in small quantities. There was also such need for determination of the same fat obtained from different sources, for example, sheep tallow and beef tallow.

189. The problem raised by the delegation of India would be brought to the attention of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling.

Date and Place of the Next Session

190. The Secretariat indicated that sessions of the Coordinating Committee for Asia were held every two years. In the normal course, the next session could, therefore, be envisaged to be held during the first three months of 1986. As regards the location of the session this would be made known in good time.

Statement by the Delegation of the People's Republic of China

191. The delegation of the People's Republic of China, attending a session of the Coordinating Committee for Asia for the first time, in an observer capacity made a statement expressing appreciation of the work of FAO, WHO, the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia, in consumer protection and in facilitation of international trade. The delegation also expressed its appreciation of the work done by the Coordinator for Asia, Prof. A. Bhumiratana (Thailand) and of the hospitality of the host government. The statement, which is reproduced in Appendix VI to this Report,

also described activities and developments in the People's Republic of China in food safety and related fields.

Response by the Codex Coordinator for Asia

192. The Coordinator for Asia, Prof. A. Bhumiratana (Thailand) thanked the delegation of the People's Republic of China for their remarks. The Coordinator pointed out that the active participation of China in the work of the Coordinating Committee would give Asia a stronger voice in the Codex Alimentarius Commission, bearing in mind Asia had a population in the region of 2,000 million people. He stressed the importance of helping to improve the nutritional and economic status of the population of Asia and the quality of their life generally. Asia was in need of much help. He stressed the hope that an observer from the ASEAN group of countries would attend the next Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

Valediction

193. Dr. D.S. Chadha (India) expressed, on behalf of the Committee, appreciation of the excellent guidance and work of Prof. Bhumiratana during his period as Codex Coordinator for Asia. He expressed the hope, on behalf of the Committee, that Prof. Bhumiratana's advice would be available to the Asian Region in the future as well. The meeting gave Prof. Bhumiratana a standing ovation.

Vote of Thanks to the Government of Thailand

194. The Committee wished to place on record and to express to the Government of Thailand its sincere appreciation of the Government's generosity in having kindly provided host facilities for the session. The Committee also wished to express its appreciation of the excellent arrangements for the session and for the very generous hospitality extended to delegates during the course of the session.

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APPENDIX I

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APPENDIX II

Speech by

His Excellency Dr. Chirayu Israngkun Na Ayuthaya

OPENING CEREMONY

CODEX COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR ASIA

Fourth Session

Phetchburi, Thailand, 28 February - 5 March 1984

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It gives me great honour and pleasure to welcome you on my behalf as well as on behalf of the Royal Government of Thailand. We are extremely pleased to have you here, though for a short period and we sincerely hope and will make every effort to make your stay in Thailand as pleasant as we can.

In 1975, the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Regional Conference for Asia was held in Bangkok with the purpose to establish a Codex Co-ordinating Committee for Asia and a Model Food Law. Now, the Codex Co-ordinating Committee for Asia has been firmly set up and this session is the fourth of its kind. Thailand is honoured and privileged to host the session once again.

So, we are here once more time from various countries to deliberate on problems of mutual interest concerning food. This session of the Codex Co-ordinating Committee for Asia is convened under the aegis of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme whose aim is to protect the health of consumer, ensure fair practices in the food trade and to promote co-ordination of all food standards work.

I am sure that international food standards have great economic implications for Asian countries, and standards are the best compromise between the exigencies of consumer quality and the cost of production. In elaborating standards we have to consider both safety and trade, due to the two objectives, namely to export and to protect the health of the consumer. The two objectives can be reached by having appropriate food standards. One laid down only to protect health may become a technical barrier itself if the specification is too high to be complied with. Thus, the regional standardization should look at the inclusion of Codex criteria in national legislation. One means is to consider

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data from developing countries including Asian countries. It is only through the co-operation of the manufacturer, the consumer and the government that quality consciousness can be developed.

Besides the two above-mentioned objectives, we should also consider the data supplied to various technical committees. We are still faced with the problem of lack of the said data which may be caused by the lack of financial aid and other support in collecting data. So I hope that being together on this occasion will be the start of our co-operation and information exchange.

I note with pleasure that at present the Model Food Law which has begun in the Regional Conference for Asia has been already elaborated and that many countries can use it as guidelines for a food quality control system.

From the agenda before you, it will be noted that a number of important matters of particular interest to all of us are included for consideration, for example, national food control, technical co-operation among developing countries, standards for tropical fresh fruits and vegetables, Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food, food irradiation, activities regarding pesticides and their residues in foods, etc.

It is my belief that continued efforts and close co-operation among the Asian countries will make the growth in standardization continue to progress.

Before I close, may I say how deeply I appreciate the honour of being invited to address this distinguished session. Your deliberations on the many important items of the agenda will, I am sure, result in useful recommendations.

Thank you.

Report of the Working Group to Consider the  
Extent of Mandatory Details Included in Codex Standards  
on Processed Fruits and Vegetables

Membership:

Dr. D.S. Chadha	India	Chairman
Mr. Lindsay Cleary	Australia	Member
Mr. S.V. Subramaniyan	India	"
Mr. Abdul Aziz Mat	Malaysia	"
Mr. Lim Ho Pheng	Malaysia	"
Mrs. Luz A. Mariano	Philippines	"
Mr. Theera Satasuk	Thailand	"
Mr. Raymond I. Mori	USA	"
Mr. Vicente Lim	Philippines	"
Dr. N. Rao Maturu	FAO	

The Working Group deliberated on the desirability of excluding provisions for styles and other criteria which were considered to be a trade barrier in Codex standards for processed fruits and vegetables. In the above discussion canned pineapple was used as an example. Some of the member were of the opinion that the inclusion of the above criteria for canned pineapple in teh Codex standards has proved useful in international trade transactions while others felt that it has proved a trade barrier. It was, however, agreed that the inclusions of such criteria as would afford protection to consumers and facilitated, fair trade are desired.

However, in order to prevent possible use of these criteria as barriers to trade, the group recommended the either the inclusion of general provision "Other Styles" in appropriate Codex commodities. or widening the description of styles.

However, the Working Group finally recommended to adopt "other syles".

1. Type of Pack - The clauses could be expanded by inclusion of one more pack (extra liquid) in case of canned pineapple.

There could be other characteristics in the standards for which modifications may be needed on similar lines.

The labelling clause will also have to be suitably amended to cover the inclusion of the new characteristics suggested.

The above case of pineapple was taken as sample but in no way can be considered as an example for other standards.

The Working Group suggested that a questionnaire/proforma may be formulated to elicit the views of the member countries. The necessary information provided by member countries would then be collated by India and a working paper prepared for discussion by the CAC at its next session. The member countries in the Region of Asia as a group are expected to consider the paper during the Commission Session, and their comments will also be put before the Commission as a room document.

A time schedule for action to be taken was finalized by the Working Group.

Time schedule for eliciting information with respect to optional characteristics in the standard of fruits and vegetables products.

1. Each of the countries, namely Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, and India will send suggestions regarding the format of questionnaire to the other four countries and FAO, Rome by end of March 1984.
2. Each country will send its views on the format proposed by other countries to FAO, Rome by end of May 1984.
3. FAO will send all the above mentioned materials to India for finalization of questionnaire in view of comments received.
4. The final questionnaire formulated by India will be sent to all member countries in the region for eliciting their views through FAO, Rome by end of September 1984.
5. The information received by FAO, Rome will be sent to India by end of December 1984 for collation of data and preparation of working paper.
6. The working paper with data will be sent by India to all member countries through FAO, Rome by end of February 1985 for information and discussion during the 16th Session of CAC.

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THE FIRST SESSION OF THE GROUP  
OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN ASIA CONCERNING  
PESTICIDE RESIDUES PROBLEMS  
PHETCHBURI, THAILAND, 24-27 FEBRUARY 1984

Synopsis

The Session was opened by His Excellency Narong Wongwan, Minister of Agriculture and Co-operatives, Thailand and chaired by Dr. Prayoon Deema, Inspector-General, Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives, Thailand.

The Session was attended by delegates and observers from India, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, People's Republic of China, Philippines, Korea, Nepal, Republic of Korea and Thailand.

The Group passed a resolution concerning acceptance of Codex MRLs and ERLs by Governments. It agreed that this resolution be brought before the next session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues for endorsement and subsequent approval by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

For the text of the resolution, please see Appendix V of the  
Draft Report (Conference Room Document No. 9)

The Group supported the elaboration of a code of conduct on the distribution and use of pesticides and exhorted the efforts of international organizations in this regard.

The Group made the following observations/recommendations:

RECOMMENDATIONS

Generation of Residue Data from Supervised Trials

Noting the similarities in conditions within the Region, the Group recommended that governments should be urged to undertake collaborative studies aimed at generating residue data from supervised field trials conducted according to Good Agricultural Practice for pesticides of common interest in the Region. Such an exercise enables the active participation of the developing countries in the Region in the process of establishing Codex MRLs and ERLs in order to ensure that Codex Limits are appropriate to the situations prevailing in those countries.

Technical Assistance from Industry

Noting and appreciating the existing allocation of resources by industry to further the safe and efficient use of pesticides in developing countries, the Group strongly recommended that GIFAP should review their current assistance in this area to developing countries and seriously examine the possibility for industry to introduce a "pesticide penny" scheme of the order of perhaps 1% on the total sales of pesticides to developing countries. Recognizing that there will be an increasing demand for pesticides in developing countries, the Group felt very strongly that it would be appropriate for industry to make a gesture of the kind suggested above and to establish a specific fund which should be devoted exclusively to pesticide residues and pesticide quality control work. The Group requested GIFAP to examine sympathetically this recommendation and to discuss with FAO how and to what extent the wishes of the Group could be met.

Strengthening the Infrastructure Structure in the Developing Countries  
for Enforcing Codex MRLs

Noting the need for strengthening the existing infrastructure in the developing countries for enforcing Codex MRLs, the Group recommended the establishment of a regional pesticide laboratory mainly for training of laboratory staff in the field of residue analysis and formulation control. The regional laboratory would also serve as a reference including applied research and service laboratory for analytical work, especially for those countries in the Region without or with only limited laboratory facilities and also as a co-ordinating centre for collaborative studies on pesticide residues under GAP in the Region. The above mentioned regional laboratory should be established in Thailand. It is expected that the Government of Thailand will take the initiative to find out ways and means to secure financial and technical support for the regional laboratory. Member countries in the Region are expected to actively support such an effort.

Noting the urgent need for trained personnel in residue analysis in many countries of the Region, the Group recommended that the regional network for production, marketing and control of pesticides which is presently interesting itself in the pesticide problems of countries in the Region of Asia should favourably consider organizing a workshop for training personnel in residue analysis. Efforts should, in this context, be made for collaboration between authorities responsible for pesticide registration and those responsible for pesticide analysis in food. The Group also recommended that the workshop may possibly be held in Thailand.



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Evaluation of New Pesticides Used in the Region

The Group expressed its opinion that there is a need for toxicological evaluation and establishment of MRLs for such of the pesticides which are widely used in the Region through the JMPR/CCPR mechanism.

Action taken on Recommendations of the Working Group on Pesticide Residue Problems in the Developing Countries

The Group noted with satisfaction that several member states as well as FAO and WHO had already taken some action and expressed the opinion that the recommendations needed to be updated periodically.

Further Meetings of the Group

The Group recommended that meetings of the Group of Developing Countries in Asia Concerning Pesticide Residue Problems should be held regularly alongside meetings of the Co-ordinating Committee for Asia which meets bi-annually. This would ensure maximum attendance and active participation.

Resolution on Food Safety

The Regional Coordinating Committee for Asia of the Codex Alimentarius Commission at its Fourth Session held in 1984 in Thailand.

- having considered the document CX/ASIA 84/7 on the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Safety, Geneva 1983.
- recognizing the essential role of safe food for reaching the social target of Member States and WHO, namely, Health for all by the Year 2000.
- recognizing the fact that food borne diseases, often in the form of acute diarrhoea, contribute significantly to morbidity and mortality rates, especially in developing countries.
- recognizing the fact that the great public health significance of food borne diseases is often insufficiently appreciated by health authorities.
- recognizing the vast economic losses and the great social consequences due to contamination food.

1. RECOMMENDS that National Governments:

- i) assess national needs for the further development of food safety.
- ii) develop food safety as an integral part of the primary health care delivery system as well as the food production and distribution system. Persons working in these programmes should be informed about the role of food as an important vehicle of diarrhoeal and other diseases and about appropriate intervention measures.
- iii) to develop an effective system for coordination and collaboration of food safety between responsible ministries and other authorities.

2. REQUESTS FAO and WHO to continue to support Governments in developing and improving integrated national food safety programmes by:

- i) cooperating in the assessment of national needs.
- ii) cooperating in elaborating national action plans aimed at reducing food borne morbidity and mortality as well as food losses.

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- iii) cooperating in the formulation and establishment of guidelines in the integration of food safety in the PHC system, including the undertaking of pilot studies in the formulation of such studies.
  - iv) cooperating in making available educational materials on food safety aimed at public at large.
  - v) cooperating in the training of personnel involved in the programme.
3. Countries as well as FAO and WHO shall report to the next session of the Regional Coordinating Committee for Asia of the Codex Alimentarius Commission on progress made in implementing the provisions contained in this Resolution.

Statement made by the Delegation of the People's Republic of China

at

The 4th Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for us, the Chinese delegation, as an observer to be here to attend the 4th Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia.

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to the Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia for inviting us to this Meeting, and also give thanks to our hosts and Prof. Bhumiratana for their cordial hospitality and the cooperation and friendship from friends of each country.

The aim of food safety control and the formulation of food hygiene standards is to guarantee consumers wholesome and good quality foods and to protect them from unsafe foods, so as to improve their health status. As an old Chinese saying goes "feeding the people is a matter of prime importance under heaven". Therefore, it is of the utmost significance to carry out food safety control and to formulate food hygiene standards. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, a system of food safety control from the central government to different levels of local governments has been established and a series of food hygiene regulations as well as the quality and hygiene standards for various foods have been developed and put into practice. On the basis of what has been done, provisional food safety law has been adopted in November 1982, and has begun to come into force since July 1, 1983. This is the first law of food safety in China. We are convinced that the implementation of the food safety law will certainly improve the work of food safety control and the development of food hygiene standards in China, and it will also promote the development of the international food trade.

In China, the Ministry of Public Health is responsible for the promulgation of food hygiene standards. There is a Technical Committee for National Hygiene Standards in the Ministry of Public Health, which governs all kinds of hygiene standards, including food hygiene standards, standards for the use of food additives, pesticide residue tolerances in food, etc. The Institute

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of Food Safety Control and Inspection under the leadership of the China National Centre for Preventive Medicine in the Competent Authority in charge of organizing the study and draft of food hygiene standards. For the control of the use of food additives, the Technical Standardization Committee on Food Additives, jointly organized by some Ministries, is responsible for it. The Ministry of Public Health plays the leading role in this Organization. As far as pesticides are concerned, the National Evaluation Committee on Pesticides is responsible for reviewing the reported data on pesticides and also for the registration of pesticides whether produced domestically or imported from other countries. The State Administration for Inspection of Imported and Exported Commodities of the People's Republic of China is in charge of the safety inspection of exported foods. All exported foods are subject to strict inspection. They must meet the requirements in the trade contract and also conform to the related food hygiene legislation of the imported countries.

Up to now, our food hygiene standards covering 80 kinds of food in 18 categories and related regulations have been promulgated and put into force. These standards are formulated on the basis of more than 50,000 data of sample determination.

For strengthening the safety control and inspection of foods, a food safety inspector systems has been established all over the country. There will be one inspector per 20,000-30,000 people.

We would like to express our appreciation of the remarkable efforts of FAO, WHO, the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia in protecting the health of consumers and promoting international trade. We would like to express our support to their work and do our best in the development of activities related to food safety control and food standards.

We consider that the formulation of unified international food standards should be coordinated and adjusted according to the practical conditions of each country, and our basic standpoint on the unified international food standards is: it should be based on adequate scientific data, be practical and realistic, and the criteria should not be overdemanding or lowered. We believe that the food standards formulated according to the principles mentioned above will have extensive acceptability.

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Mr. Chairman, This is the first time for us to attend a session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia. Now we have a much better understanding about the Codex Coordinating Committee for Asia and the work on formulating food standards of the member countries. We firmly believe that after this successful beginning, we will have more opportunities to exchange information and experience with our colleagues in this region and make joint efforts to improve the domestic and international work on safety control and the development of food standards. And we are looking forward to joining the Codex Alimentarius Commission as a member in the near future.

In closing, congratulations for the success of this meeting and we wish prosperity and a happy life in all countries.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all friends.

TCDC WITHIN THE ASEAN

1. The ASEAN Working Group on Food Technology Research and Development

The projects of the ASEAN Working Group on Food Technology Research Development which is being funded by the Australian Government under the Asean Australia Economic Cooperation Programme has the following objectives:

1. To promote the development of food processing technologies and industries in the ASEAN region;
2. To develop the quality and safety of ASEAN food products;
3. To increase the utilization of local food raw materials for local and export markets and;
4. To facilitate the transfer of food processing technologies through pilot testing and information dissemination.

There are 4 common projects being pursued to be able to attain these objectives and which are now in varying stages of implementation. There are:

1. The evaluation of the quality and safety of ASEAN food products;
2. Analysis of the composition and characteristics of foods;
3. Improving the utilization of local food raw materials; and
4. Improving the processing technology for the ASEAN food products.

Important steps have been taken up to set up facilities and methods for the evaluation of the quality and safety of food products in the Region. The analyses being worked on are: aflatoxin, nitrites and nitrosamine, carcinogenic compounds, heavy metals, microbial quality and vitamins.

The basic information on the composition and characteristics of foods in the ASEAN region will establish scientific basis for food processing and for developing and/or improving the market potential of the ASEAN food products.

Although the project is only 1½ years old, steps have been taken to establish the research infrastructure for improving the quality and marketability of ASEAN food products. Recently, the ASEAN FTRD Working Group has agreed to undertake a common project on the development of food standards for the ASEAN region and has formed an ad hoc working group for this purpose.

## 2. ASEAN Protein Project

ASEAN Protein Project (1975-1984) is an ASEAN cooperative project coordinated by the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Protein which is chaired by Prof. Amara Bhumiratana. The Sub-Committee is one of the Sub-Committees of the ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology. The project is participated by the five ASEAN member countries i.e. Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. It has obtained fund from the Australian Government under the ASEAN-Australia Economic Cooperation Programme.

The project is aimed at solving the common problems in the ASEAN region, i.e. i) the protein-calories malnutrition, and ii) the need of strengthening the scientific and technological in the ASEAN member countries through the joint cooperative efforts.

The scope of the project include: i) the production of low cost high protein rich foods, in the field of infant weaning foods by extrusion. cooking techniques and also in the field of improvement of traditional fermented foods like tempe, oncom, and sauce and other fermented like products; ii) evaluation of the developed products (i.e. chemical, biological, clinical and field trial); and iii) the collection, identification and selection of the microbial cultures used in fermented protein rich food manufacturing. The project is also concerned with the implementation and dissemination of the R & D results at the national level as well as the ASEAN level. Various ASEAN workshops and training workshops have been organized in the areas of low cost high protein rich foods, solid substrate fermentation, extrusion process, soy sauce, food habits and food analytical techniques.



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The ASEAN Protein Project has promoted the cooperative effort not only at the regional level but also promoting networks at the national level. It hoped that the experiences developed through this kind of cooperative effort could be maintained and developed further to solve other common problem areas which are the concern not only in the ASEAN region but also at the ASIAN level as well.

### 3. ASEAN Food Waste Materials Project

The ASEAN Project on Management and Utilization of Food Waste Materials was conceived under the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Protein. It has existed since 1980 and been managed by the ASEAN Working Group on Food Waste Materials under the Chairmanship of Prof. Oei Ban Liang of Indonesia. It is one of the projects undertaken under the ASEAN-Australia Economic Cooperation Programme.

The Project's main objective is to develop technologies and useful products as a means of pollution control utilizing abundant food wastes/effluents, in particular those generated in quantities in food processing establishments. Among those identified in the ASEAN region as of priority concern, are palm oil mill effluents and residues, coconut waste water and residues, fish and shellfish processing wastes, tapioca/cassava bagasse, soft drink waste effluents, pineapple and banana wastes, etc. Some degree of success has been attained in the application of reverse osmosis and ultra filtration techniques on food waste effluents like coconut water, pineapple wastes, soft drink waste water, and palm oil mill effluents. Technologies have also been developed towards the utilization of selected food wastes in the production of animal feed and food products. Likewise, fermentation technologies have been applied in the production of other useful industrial products such as acetic acid, citric acid and other organic acid, yeasts, enzymes, antibiotics, vitamins and biogas.

The Working Group meets regularly to assess research results. Workshops training and study visits are the other activities of the Project aside from R & D activities. The Project is now on its 4th year of implementation. Research efforts are now on the quality evaluation of products including food products developed in the project, and piloting of promising technologies. Linkages in a way have been established with interested industries. Technology transfer is thus other important aspect of the Project. The Project is envisioned to be pursued for the next 4 more years.