



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ALIMENTATION ET  
L'AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZACION DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA LA AGRICULTURA  
Y LA ALIMENTACION  
Rome, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla. Cables: FOODAGRI, Rome.  
Tel. 590 011

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WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTÉ  
Genève, Palais des Nations. Câbles: UNISANTÉ, Genève. Tél. 33 10 00

Item 4 of  
Provisional Agenda

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JOINT FAO/WHO PROGRAM ON FOOD STANDARDS  
CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Second Session, Geneva, 28 September - 7 October 1964

PROGRESS REPORT OF EXPERT COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES

THE HAGUE 19-22 MAY 1964

1. The Expert Committee on Food Additives under the chairmanship of the Netherlands Government, met at the request of the Joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission to draw up lists of permissible food additives including tolerances wherever possible.
2. The Committee met for the first time at The Hague from 19-22 May 1964. Government experts and observers from the following countries attended the meeting: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, India, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. Representatives of the International Organisation of Standards TC 34 and of the International Vine and Wine Office were also present. Prof. Dr. M.J.L. Dols (Netherlands) was chairman of the meeting, Dr. R.A. Chapman (Canada) vice-chairman and Mr. H.P. Mollenhauer (Federal Republic of Germany) rapporteur.
3. In addition to an agenda there was a report drawn up by the Dutch Technical Secretariat which had prepared the ground work on legal tolerances for various additives in a number of foods in several countries.
4. The representative of the International Vine and Wine Office read an interesting paper on the use and level of SO<sub>2</sub> in various kinds of wine. During the meeting it became apparent that the legal tolerances for food additives were often higher in many countries than the actual levels applied. The Committee realised that there was an urgent need to have reliable consumption figures of these additives for various countries. All delegates were requested to supply their national figures as far as they were available.
5. The Committee expressed its anxiety during the discussions about the extensive use of SO<sub>2</sub> in foods in connection with the low acceptable daily intake as ascertained by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives.

6. The Committee put forward tentative tolerances for the following preservatives in a number of foods: sulphur dioxide, sorbic acid and its two salts, benzoic acid and its salts and propionic acid and its salts.
7. The Committee also proposed tentative tolerances for the following antioxidant in a number of foods: butylated hydroxy anisole.
8. The determination of tolerances for a number of preservatives and antioxidants was referred back to the Expert Committees who were most suited to do this work for the various foods.
9. The meeting, finally, drew up the following recommendations:-
  - A. That the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives should be requested to reconsider the toxicological evaluation of:
    - hexamethylenetetramine (already included in the agenda of the 8th Session of the Expert Committee)
    - sulphur dioxide
    - gallates (new evidence concerning propylgallate)
    - butylated hydroxytoluene (already included in the agenda of the 8th Session of the Expert Committee)
    - formic acid
  - B. That countries provide figures on the per capita consumption of foods broken down as far as possible according to various food items in each category.
  - C. That countries supply the Secretariat with scientific reports dealing with the technological justification for the use of antioxidants and antimicrobials in foods, particularly SO<sub>2</sub>.
  - D. That the following additives used in fish products be referred for comment to the Expert Committee on Fish and Fish Products sorbic acid, benzoic acid, nitrates and nitrites.
  - E. That the use of the following additives in fruit juice products be referred to the UNECE/Codex Committee on Fruit Juices sorbic acid, benzoic acid.
  - F. That the use of the following additives in cheese products or cheese production "be referred to the Government Expert Committee on Milk and Milk products for comment - sorbic acid and nitrates.
  - G. That the use of the following additives in preserved meat products be referred for comment to the Expert Committee on Meat and Meat Products - nitrates and nitrites.
  - H. That the Codex Alimentarius Commission at its 2nd Session should assign the subject of heavy metals in foods to an Expert Committee.
  - I. That delegates indicate to the Nutrition Unit of WHO those food additives that they consider should be dealt with at a future meeting of the FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives.