

# CODEx ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture  
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Agenda Item 9

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## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES Fifty-Fourth Session

Comments of Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee for the Promotion of Tropical Fruits, Off-Season Vegetables, Flowers, Ornamental Plants and Spices (COFALEC)

### DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARD FOR BAKER'S YEAST

#### Background

In the forty-fourth session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC44)<sup>1</sup> in November 2021, China introduced a proposal for the development of a Codex standard for yeast. China requested guidance from CAC44 regarding the Codex committee that could undertake new work on yeast, a product that has a wide application globally, noting that this product fell outside of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the existing committees. CAC44 agreed that the discussion paper on the development of a standard for yeast should be presented at the fifty third session of Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA 53) in March 2023.

At CCFA53<sup>2</sup>, China presented the discussion paper (CCFA53/CRD6), emphasizing the need to establish a standard for yeast. In response to feedback received, China proposed excluding edible yeast from the scope and suggested further discussion on the scope during the standard's development.

CCFA53 agreed to request China, France, and other interested Members, to prepare a discussion paper which would be included for discussion on the agenda of CCFA54.

Following CCFA53, China has collaborated with France, Japan, Türkiye, and the Confederation of European Yeast Producers to conduct a comprehensive review of the project document, taking into consideration the comments received at CCFA53.

CCFA54 is now invited to consider the revised project document<sup>3</sup>, make amendments as it considers appropriate, and recommend new work on development of a standard for baker's yeast for approval by CAC47.

#### Who is COFALEC?

COFALEC is the European Confederation of Yeast Producers. It represents the yeast producers in Europe and is present in 24 European countries. The European yeast industry is the world leader in this sector with around 35% of world market share and exports 30% of its production to third countries.

#### General Comments

COFALEC welcomes the possibility to comment the proposed project document and is grateful of the collaborative work led by China to propose a comprehensive document focusing solely on developing a standard on baker's yeast.

COFALEC would like to highlight that ISO is currently conducting an extensive work to develop global characteristics for fresh and dry bakers' yeast. The status of this work is well advanced with an ongoing 2nd round of ballot for ISO/WD 23 983 "*Characteristics of fresh and dry baker's yeast*" to go for CD stage.

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<sup>1</sup> REP21/CAC paragraphs 151-153

<sup>2</sup> REP23/FA paragraphs 191-195

<sup>3</sup> CX/FA 24/54/12, Appendix I

This ISO work was launched in January 2024 following a ballot organized by the chair of ISO/TC 34 in 2023. The work to develop ISO specifications for fresh and dry baker's yeast received strong support worldwide (31 yes and 13 delegations willing to actively participate).

ISO delegations were all invited to this work and **China participated actively together with France, Japan, Turkey, COFALEC members and many other delegations.**

COFALEC has also actively participated in the revision of the working document on the development of a Codex standard for baker's yeast. We consider that it has been improved by the collective changes made. Still, various questions and concerns remain regarding the relevance of such a standard.

Indeed, COFALEC is concerned that the development of another international standard for baker's yeast at Codex level might lead to inconsistent standards which would undermine one of the very goals of such a Codex standard, i.e. to avoid trade barriers.

In addition, as COFALEC already stated in its joined CRD4 with OENOPPIA at CCFA53, we are concerned that having this standard developed under CCFA could generate confusion **about the status of yeast which is not an additive.**

COFALEC would also like to highlight that the development of a robust and evidence-based global standard for baker's yeast necessitates a specific expertise on both this living microorganism and its manufacturing process, which is different from CCFA's main areas of competence.

We also took note during the drafting of the working document that one of the arguments to support this work was driven by the existence of food safety-related regulatory limits set up by different countries that may induce trade barriers. We share, with other national delegations, the views that food safety concerns should be dealt with the relevant codex committees aiming to set if appropriate proper limits (e.g. CCCF) and not within the proposed new standard.

To save time and resources and avoid duplication of workload with a potential result of non-aligned standards in the world, **COFALEC would recommend NOT to launch the work at Codex level.**

Should the work be approved by CCFA, COFALEC recommends the committee to:

- Ask CAC47 to consider another subsidiary-body that could take in charge this work;
- Invite CAC47 to reflect on a possible collaboration with ISO as a way to avoid duplication of work and promote consistent international standardization.

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<sup>4</sup> CCFA53/CRD31