

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Opening

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CODEX COMMITTEE ON FATS AND OILS

Twenty-Sixth Session

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 25 February- 01 March 2019

Opening Remarks

YB DATO' SERI DR. DZULKEFLY BIN AHMAD, THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF HEALTH, MALAYSIA

Yang Berbahagia Dato' Seri Dr. Chen Chaw Min, Secretary General, Ministry of Health Malaysia

Professor Purwiyanto Hariyadi, Vice Chair of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Representing the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Codex Alimentarius Commission,

Yang Berusaha Ms. Noraini binti Dato' Mohd. Othman, Chairperson to the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils

Mr. Patrick Sekitoleko, Codex Secretariat

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies & Gentlemen,

1. First and foremost, on behalf of the Government of Malaysia and the Ministry of Health, Malaysia, it is a great honour and pleasure for me to welcome you to the 26th Session of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils in Kuala Lumpur.

2. I am truly impressed by Members' commitment in attending the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils, a committee that brings together member countries of such diverse cultural and legal settings but yet are bonded by a strong value system in setting international standards, codes of practices and guidelines for fats and oils to protect consumers' health and ensuring fair practices in the trade of fats and oils.

3. In recent years, there has been an increasing number of delegates participating in the Sessions of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils. This is indicative of the importance and high degree of commitment Members placed on the shared goal of developing global standards for fats and oils.

Ladies and gentlemen,

4. As we all know, for over 5 decades, Codex Alimentarius has shouldered the extremely important responsibility of laying the foundation of safety and quality of food for human consumption, to safeguard the health of the consumers. At the same time, Codex facilitates fair practices in the food trade. The importance of this dual mandate of Codex is reflected through the recognition of Codex standards by the World Trade Organization (WTO) as the reference point in international food trade.

5. World production of fats and oils was estimated at 222 million tonnes in 2017, with an export value of USD 99.3 billion. Palm oil and soybean production were 68 million tonnes and 54 million tonnes respectively, accounting for 55% of the total world production. Over the last ten years, total production of fats and oils has grown by over 40%. World average per capita consumption has also increased progressively each year during the last decade, from 23 kg in 2007 to 29 kg in 2017. This demand for fats and oils is expected to continue to rise.

6. With increased in health awareness of consumers worldwide, there has been increased demand for healthier oils. This has resulted in the introduction of new varieties of this commodity, as well as enhancement

of technological and scientific innovations. In line with this development, I believe that Codex Committee on Fats and Oils will continue to face challenges in establishing new standards for fats and oils as well as updating existing ones.

7. Nevertheless, I am confident that with the availability of diverse expertise and talents among Members from all regions of the world participating in this committee, you will be able to circumvent all obstacles. Codex Committee on Fats and Oils would necessarily need to take into account the varying situation in different countries, but without compromising the common goal of protecting the health of the consumer and ensuring fair practices in food trade.

Ladies and gentlemen,

8. This year marks an important milestone for Malaysia as she celebrates a decade as the host country of Codex Committee on Fats and Oils. We are honoured to have been entrusted with the task of hosting and chairing this Committee. Indeed, it has been a most valuable journey for Malaysia. I would dare say that over the years, our capability as Chair and Secretariat have improved and matured along the way. We will certainly continue to give our outmost commitment to the mandate given to us to serve the Committee towards setting of international standards on fats and oils.

9. Malaysia's own involvement in the work of Codex Alimentarius started way back in 1971, when Malaysia became a member of Codex, and the designation of the Food Safety and Quality Division of the Ministry of Health, Malaysia as the Codex Contact Point. Over the years, Malaysia has been actively participating and contributing significantly to the work of Codex. This is evidenced by the standards and guidelines adopted by Codex that had been initiated and drafted by Malaysia in this Committee as well as in other Codex Committees.

10. Malaysia will definitely continue to actively participate in the work of Codex and at other international fora. As the challenges and complexity on food safety continue to increase and evolve, the food safety controls need to be further strengthened to better protect the health of consumers.

11. In view of this, I am proud to announce that the Malaysian government will elevate Food Safety and Quality Division, Ministry of Health to become Food Safety Authority Malaysia. I am confident that such an authority would be more responsive, efficient and effective in dealing with food safety issues thereby, enhance credibility and instilling greater public confidence.

Ladies and gentlemen,

12. I have been informed that for the last few sessions of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils, the Committee had successfully concluded the deliberation of several issues that had been on the agenda of the Committee, resulting in the development of new global standards on fats and oils as well as revision of existing ones. I would like to congratulate the Committee on this significant contribution to the work of Codex. I am confident that the Committee will be able to continue to devote its full attention to fulfill the mandate of this Committee.

13. This success would not have been possible without the commitment and expertise of the Codex Secretariat. I thank them for their undivided support and invaluable contribution.

14. It is my pleasure to place on record my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Ms Noraini Dato Mohd Othman, Chair of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils for her able leadership since 2009 when Malaysia first took over the role of host country of this Committee. Undoubtedly her passion and able leadership has been the key for much of the success that the Committee has achieved.

15. We should not overlook the significant contribution of the Malaysian Secretariat, through the Food Safety and Quality Division, Ministry of Health, to the smooth conduct of five sessions of this Committee, I thank them for their due diligence in attending to all the details needed to organize such international meetings.

Ladies and gentlemen,

16. I am sure you will all be busy with many agenda items to be discussed during the course of the meeting this week. However, I do hope that you will find time to enjoy the vibrant atmosphere of Kuala Lumpur, visit

the surrounding iconic attractions and have a taste of the multi-cultural cuisine and bring back pleasant memories of your stay here.

17. With that, I would like to wish all delegates a fruitful meeting. I am confident that you will achieve much in all the agenda items. On that note, it gives me great pleasure to officially declare open the 26th Session of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils.

Thank you.