



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations**



**World Health
Organization**

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy - Tel: (+39) 06 57051 - Fax: (+39) 06 5705 4593 - E-mail: codex@fao.org - www.codexalimentarius.org

Agenda Item 3b

**CX/FH 15/47/4
October 2015**

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE

Forty-seventh Session

Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America, 9 – 13 November 2015

INFORMATION FROM THE WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE)

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) wishes to thank the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) for the opportunity to contribute to its standard development process.

The relationship between the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Codex is particularly important because risks to human health and food safety may arise at the farm and any subsequent stage in the food production continuum. Therefore, risk management must be tailored to detect and address risks at the appropriate stage(s). The OIE is responsible for setting standards in the domains of animal health and veterinary public health, including animal production food safety, to manage risks arising from the farm level through to primary processing, and the Codex from primary processing through to consumption. The standard setting activities of the OIE and the Codex for food safety and international trade are therefore interdependent, and the relevant standards produced by both organisations must be complementary.

Regular participation in each other's standard setting work improves the coverage by official standards of the whole food production continuum in the standards and guidelines of the two organisations. This is particularly evident in the recent standards developed by both organisations on *Salmonella* in poultry/chicken meat and *Trichinella* in pigs/pork, and the current work on *Salmonella* in pigs/pork and cattle/beef, which are aligned and address all recognised risks to animal health, human health and food safety in the farm to fork food production continuum.

Harmonisation of OIE and Codex approaches to standard setting in the food production continuum

The OIE established the Animal Production Food Safety (APFS) Working Group in 2002, with the view of improving the coordination and harmonisation of standard setting activities of the OIE and Codex. The Codex Secretary or representatives and, on an observer basis, the Chairperson of the Codex, regularly attend the annual meeting of the APFS Working Group. Through this mechanism and through participation in each other's standard setting procedures, the OIE and Codex collaborate closely in the development of standards relevant to the whole food production continuum, taking care to avoid gaps, duplications and contradictions. OIE Members strongly support this collaboration.

Collaboration between OIE and Codex should not occur uniquely at the international level. The OIE actively encourages its national Delegates to collaborate with their national delegations to Codex to ensure, at national level, alignment of their national approach to relevant standards under development by the OIE and Codex.

The OIE invites the chair or relevant experts of a Codex Working Group to OIE *ad hoc* Groups, when relevant, and considers this to be an important means of ensuring alignment of relevant standard development work between the two organisations.

The OIE is also participating in development of the proposed Draft 'Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Foodborne Parasites' and acknowledges the inclusion of cross references to relevant OIE texts.

OIE standard setting work in animal production food safety

In May 2015, a new chapter 'Infection with *Taenia solium*' (Chapter 15.3.) was adopted by the World Assembly of Delegates for inclusion in the 2015 edition of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code). The aim of this chapter is to reduce the risk of infection of humans and animals with *T. solium* and to minimise the international spread of *T. solium*. The chapter provides recommendations for the prevention, control and surveillance of infection with *T. solium* in pigs along with recommendations for the importation of pig meat.

At the February 2014 meeting of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Code Commission), they agreed that the OIE should develop recommendations for the pre-harvest management and control of *Salmonella* in pigs and cattle to complement the Codex draft 'Guidelines for the control of nontyphoidal *Salmonella* ssp. in beef and pork meat' to ensure a whole food chain approach to *Salmonella* risk management in these species.

In September, 2014, the OIE convened an expert *ad hoc* Group, which included a representative from the FAO and the Codex Secretary, to draft a chapter on the 'Prevention, detection and control of *Salmonella* in pig herds (Chapter 6.X.)'. The aim of the chapter is to contribute to the reduction of food-borne illness in humans by controlling and where possible, reducing the prevalence of *Salmonella* infection in pigs, and should be read in conjunction with the Codex Guidelines under development. At the September 2014 meeting of the Code Commission, they reviewed the draft chapter and circulated it to Member Countries for comment.

In December 2014, the OIE convened an expert *ad hoc* Group, which included representatives from the FAO and the Codex Secretary, and a Co-Chair of the Codex Working Group, to draft a chapter on the 'Prevention and control of *Salmonella* in commercial cattle production systems (Chapter 6.X)'. The aim of the chapter is to prevent and control *Salmonella* in cattle and thereby reduce the burden of disease in cattle and the risk of human illness through food-borne contamination, as well as reducing human infections resulting from direct or indirect contact with cattle. This chapter should be read in conjunction with the Codex Guidelines under development. The new draft chapter was reviewed by the Code Commission at its February 2015 meeting and circulated for Member Countries' comments as part of their February 2015 meeting report.

In September, 2015, the Code Commission reviewed Member Countries' comments on both of the draft chapters and referred them to the *ad hoc* Group scheduled to be convened in December 2015. The Code Commission expects to review the *ad hoc* Group report at its February 2016 meeting, and will then circulate the revised chapters for Member Countries' comments in the February 2016 meeting report.

The OIE appreciates the high level of collaboration between OIE and Codex on these draft standards that will result in the development of an integrated food chain approach. The OIE encourages OIE Delegates to collaborate with their national delegations to Codex to ensure alignment of *Salmonella* standards under development by both organisations.

The OIE draft chapters are available at:

http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Internationa_Standard_Setting/docs/pdf/A_TAHSC_Sep_2014_Part_B.pdf (Annex XXIII); and

http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Internationa_Standard_Setting/docs/pdf/A_TAHSC_Feb_2015_Part_B.pdf (Annex XXVII), respectively.

Future standard development in animal production food safety

Given that there have been considerable developments and changes in the roles and responsibilities of veterinarians and Veterinary Services in food safety since the adoption, in 2008, of Chapter 6.1. 'The role of the Veterinary Services in food safety', and that Chapter 6.2. 'Control of biological hazards of animal health and public health importance through *ante-* and *post-mortem* meat inspection', has not been reviewed since its adoption in 2006, the Code Commission has agreed that these chapters should be reviewed and updated.

The OIE, through its Animal Production Food Safety Working Group, has recognised Shiga-like toxin producing *E. coli* (STEC) as an important pathogen for international standard development which will require a coordinated approach by the OIE and Codex to ensure an integrated food chain approach to its control. The OIE will undertake work on STEC should Codex commence new work on this pathogen.

The OIE will continue to address food safety-related issues as a high priority in its standard-setting work and will work closely with CAC and its Committees, and with other international bodies in promoting safe international trade in animals and animal products.