

CODEx ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda item 11

**CRD 8
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ORIGINAL LANGUAGE ONLY

**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION
AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS**

Twenty-second Session

Melbourne, Australia 6-12 February 2016

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE WORK

Islamic Republic of Iran

At the 38th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran requested the inclusion in the Agenda under Other Business a proposal regarding food integrity/authenticity. Due to time constraints the Commission was unable to conclude its discussion on several items including this one.

The Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran wishes to request that the 22nd session of CCFICS consider the issues raised in the attached Conference Room Document (CAC/CRD29) with a view to providing guidance or advice as to whether there is a need for Codex to explore the issue of food integrity/authenticity and if the CCFICS considers it may have a role in providing international guidance in this respect.

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Agenda Item 13

CAC/38 CRD/29

Original language only

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Thirty eighth Session, CIGC

Geneva, Switzerland

6-11 July 2015

OTHER BUSINESS

COMMENTS OF IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)

PROPOSED ON CODEX WORK ON FOOD INTEGRITY / FOOD AUTHENTICITY AS EMERGING ISSUES

The World Food Summit of 1996 defined food security as follows: when all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to meet their dietary needs as well as their food preferences to maintain a healthy and active life.

Safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs as well as their food preferences relates to the overall or integral quality of the food i.e. Food Integrity, which has 3 dimensions, quality which includes the nutritional properties, safety as well as authenticity which is less considered when referring to the overall integral quality of the food.

Therefore what food security envisages is access to food with integrity that leads consumers as per their essential composition and quality factors, nutritional values as well as the true nature of them or their authenticity. Hence what World Food Summit practically defined as food security was actually access to food with integrity.

In our modern societies, food industry has grown with its own complexities and within those complexities is the fact both authorities and the consumers are becoming more and more detached from the food sources which make it almost impossible for them to monitor or trace back the integrity or traceability of the entire food system.

Therefore time to time this may lead some food crises which are both technically difficult for the national authorities to verify and costly in terms of loss of consumer trust to the food system. There is also a need to ensure a day-to-day delivery of food, which is true in nature so to ensure the Codex dual objectives of protecting consumers' health and ensuring fair trade practices.

Food Integrity could therefore be defined as "The state of being whole and attached to its sources and sound in its production".

As mentioned earlier, food integrity has 3 dimensions of safety (mostly addressed in Codex horizontal texts), quality (essential composition and quality factors as usually described in Codex commodity standards) including nutritional values and authenticity, which need to be addressed in a more consistent way within Codex texts and standards.

Food authenticity can diminish the consumer's threat from adulteration of food with cheaper ingredients for economic gain, which tries to exploit their added value. Food authenticity tests can act as reliable protective measures for future food fraud cases too.

The grave consequences of adulteration of milk with Melamine would have been possibly much limited if not completely prevented in case such policies and techniques had been taken in the past. This is an example of how authenticity could be related to the food safety.

There are other examples of authenticity issues related to non-safety issues e.g. mislabelled food such as fish (tilapia as red snapper at sushi restaurants or catfish instead of grouper, pen-raised Atlantic salmon instead of the wild Alaska salmon), honey added sugar, soybean oil added olive oil, synthetic lime juice as natural one, bovine added camel milks, etc, which in addition to mislead consumers to the true nature of the

food, can bring huge economic losses to producing countries especially where the item is an important source of foreign exchange too.

The food integrity / authenticity issue should be properly addressed at Codex level and defined properly how the codex can work on this very important subject in a harmonized way to assure the integrity of food.

To this aim, I.R. Iran would like to elaborate further on this important matter and present a paper for consideration by the next CAC exploring ways forward to ensure the food integrity / authenticity in Codex work by addressing the matter in more depth.