



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON SPICES AND CULINARY HERBS**

Second Session

Goa, India, 14 – 18 September 2015

**DISCUSSION PAPER ON GROUPING OF SPICES AND CULINARY HERBS
(Prepared by India)**

INTRODUCTION

At the First Session of Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH), the delegation of India presented a paper on the "Work Management Modalities of the CCSCH" outlining the process by which CCSCH will undertake its work. The Committee suggested Grouping of Commodities in General Standards and proposed that for effective working, the spices and herbs may be grouped into categories and then a general standard will be developed for a single group. The Committee agreed that India would prepare a discussion paper for the 2nd Session of CCSCH clarifying the intent, purpose and rationale of grouping. India has prepared a discussion paper on Grouping of spices and culinary herbs outlined in the document.

BACKGROUND

For the effective working of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH), India has proposed grouping of commodities under the work management modalities (CX/SCH/14/01/4). At the first Session of the CCSCH, the Committee agreed to establish an electronic Working Group, led by India and working in English only, to prepare a discussion paper for its Second session with the following terms of reference:

- (i) Clarify the intent and purpose of the grouping of spices and culinary herbs, including the rationale;
- (ii) Propose grouping of spices and culinary herbs taking into account scientific and technical information and the work on classification and grouping used by other committees (e.g. CCPR).

INTENT AND PURPOSE OF GROUPING

According to Code of Hygienic Practice for Spices and Dried Aromatic Plants (CAC/RCP 42-1995) spices are defined as follows: "The term spices, which includes dried aromatic plants, relates to natural dried components or mixtures thereof, used in foods for flavoring, seasoning and imparting aroma. The term applies equally to spices in the whole, broken or ground form."

In general use, herbs are any plants used for food, flavoring, medicine, or perfume. Culinary use typically refers to the leafy green parts of a plant (either fresh or dried).

Quality specification of spices or culinary herbs deals with a description of the quality characteristics of the particular commodity. It is the explicit requirement upon which the trade of a spice or a culinary herb is to be based. Such specifications assure that the quality of the commodity is suited to its intended use and encourage fair practices in trade.

There are 109 commodities categorized as spices under the list of ISO (ISO 676:1995). Many spices and culinary herbs have common characteristics and their quality profile may more or less be the same. It would be difficult to elaborate quality standards for each of the spices and culinary herbs individually and hence necessitates the need for grouping. Thus, grouping will ease the development of quality specifications by eliminating duplication of efforts considering the commonality in quality profile of a particular group.

Spices are variously grouped on the basis of their properties, parts used, botanical analogies or families, economic importance, similarities in methods of their cultivation, plant type, growth habit etc. Grouping is closely related to the development of a template for the standards of spices and culinary herbs. Development of templates for the standards on spices and culinary herbs would allow the development of specific standards, which would facilitate compliance and make easier the work of competent authorities and regulators. Further, the standard layout would assist the Committee in the efficient conduct of its work.

Grouping of spices and culinary herbs in the perspective of trade would facilitate framing the template and subsequently elaboration of quality standards. Perspective of trade means that some spices and culinary herbs are categorized not based strictly on their botanical definition, but based on their commercial class. For example, Cumin, Coriander, Aniseed etc. are traded as “seeds” in international markets while the correct botanical definition is “fruits”. In such instances, the trade’s point of view would be preferred.

PROPOSAL FOR GROUPING OF SPICES AND CULINARY HERBS

Proposed grouping of spices and Culinary Herbs

Spices

- 1) Dried Fruits and Berries
- 2) Dried Roots, Rhizomes, Bulbs
- 3) Dried Seeds
- 4) Dried Floral parts
- 5) Dried Leaves
- 6) Dried Bark
- 7) Others

Culinary Herbs

- 1) Dried Herbs

Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) has divided Spices Group 028 into 07 subgroups namely, Seeds, Fruit or Berry, Bark, Root or Rhizome, Buds, Flower or Stigma and Aril. In contrast to the grouping by CCPR, a revised proposal of grouping for ‘dried fruits and berries’ is suggested considering the fact that certain fruits and berries assume the status of spices only upon drying. Examples of spices to be considered under the group “dried fruits and berries” may include: cardamom, pepper (black, white and green), chillies etc. In addition, chillies are used as spices in their dried form but in the fresh form it is used as a vegetable and the specifications varies which is dealt by the CCFFV.

For some spices like cumin, all though the term “seeds” is currently used in commerce, the term “fruits” is the correct botanical term (Ref. ISO 6465:2009). Hence, it is proposed to have grouping for “seeds” taking into account the trade for the spices in the category of seed spices. This kind of categorization will support grouping based on the perspective of trade. Such a grouping method will be followed along with consideration on its morphological similarity and parts of plants used.

Another category termed as “Others” has been included in the grouping system which is inclusive of all other plant parts used as spices. Since each commodity under this category differ in their quality characteristics and the absence of commonality calls for proposing such a miscellaneous group. It is proposed that the standards for the group “Others” would be developed after the completion of the work on the specific groups.

APPROACH

The Committee will categorize the spices and culinary herbs into various groups and the Committee can develop a general standard for the group based on the similarity of their morphology and parts of plants used. The individual standards for the spices and culinary herbs will be placed as annexures to the general standard.

The spices based on their significance in global trade has been categorized into different groups on the basis of the proposed grouping mechanism (Annexure I). Similarly, culinary herbs are also grouped (Annexure II). Annexure III comprises of the list of remaining spices and culinary herbs. Some spices and culinary herbs may have multiple utility with regard to their plant parts used and there is a possibility that same spice or culinary herb might fall under different groups. However, in the proposed grouping, only their major utility is taken into consideration.

It is a common experience that the same spice is known by different names in different parts of the world. In order to help identify the correct spices, the common English names as well as the scientific or botanical names and HS Code have also been given in respect of each of the spices. The value of scientific names lies in the fact that they are international and they enable one to initiate and continue investigations on any particular spice in any part of the world. The Harmonized System (HS Code), i.e., Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System, is an international classification system used for all internationally traded commodities. In the Harmonized System, every traded product is classified in accordance with certain logical and systematical framework. It is used as a basis for the collection of international trade statistics. HS Code for every commodity available has also been mentioned.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee agree to initiate new work to categorize spices and culinary herbs into groups based on their morphology and parts of plants used taking into consideration their major utility and the terminology used in global commerce. The proposed grouping will be dynamic and open to include other spices and culinary herbs in the future.

Annex I – Spices Grouping

Sl. No	Name of Spice	Scientific Name	HS Code
Dried Fruits and Berries			
1.	Allspice	<i>Pimenta dioica</i> (L.) Merr.	
2.	Star Anise	<i>Illicium verum</i> Hook.f.	HS 090910
3.	Bengal cardamom	<i>Amomum aromaticum</i> Roxb.	
4.	Cardamom (Large)/ Black cardamom	<i>Amomum subulatum</i> Roxb.	HS 09083110
5.	Cardamom (Small)	<i>Elettaria cardamomum</i> Maton	HS 09083120
6.	Cameroon cardamom	<i>Aframomum hanburyi</i> K.Schum.	
7.	Cambodian cardamom	<i>Amomum krevanh</i> Pierre ex Gagnep.	
8.	Korarima cardamom	<i>Aframomum corrorima</i> (Braun) P.C.M.Jansen	
9.	Madagascar cardamom	<i>Aframomum angustifolium</i> K.Schum.	
10.	Round cardamom/Chester cardamom/Siamese cardamom/ Indonesian cardamom	<i>Amomum kepulaga</i> Sprague & Burkill	
11.	Sri Lankan Cardamom	<i>Elettaria cardamomum</i> Maton	
12.	Tsao-ko Cardamom	<i>Amomum tsao-ko</i> Crevost & Lemarié	
13.	Chilli	<i>Capsicum annuum</i> L.	HS 090420
14.	Paprika	<i>Capsicum frutescens</i> L.	
15.	Chinese pepper	<i>Zanthoxylum acanthopodium</i> DC.	
16.	Chinese prickly ash pepper/ Sechuang pepper	<i>Zanthoxylum bungei</i> Hance	
17.	Cubebs	<i>Piper cubeba</i> Bojer	
18.	Grain of paradise (Guinea grains, Melegueta pepper, Alligator pepper)	<i>Aframomum melegueta</i> K.Schum.	
19.	Negro pepper / Guinean pepper pods	<i>Xylopiya aethiopica</i> A.Rich.	
20.	Pepper (Black, White, Green)	<i>Piper nigrum</i> Beyr. ex Kunth	HS 090411
21.	Pepper Long	<i>Piper longum</i> Blume	HS 09041110
22.	Pink pepper Brazilian pepper	<i>Schinus molle</i> hort. ex Engl. <i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i> Raddi	
23.	Sichuan pepper /Japanese pepper	<i>Zanthoxylum piperitum</i> Benn.	
24.	West African / Benin pepper	<i>Piper guineense</i> Thonn.	
25.	Dried Mango	<i>Mangifera indica</i> Thwaites	
26.	Camboge	<i>Garcinia cambogia</i> hort. ex Boerl.	
27.	Kokam	<i>Garcinia indica</i> (Thouars) Choisy	HS 12079940
28.	Juniper berry	<i>Juniperus communis</i> Thunb.	HS 09095021
29.	Tamarind fruit	<i>Tamarindus indica</i> L.	HS 08134010
30.	Vanilla	<i>Vanilla planifolia</i> Andrews	HS 090500
31.	Pompon vanilla	<i>Vanilla pompona</i> Schiede	
32.	Tahitian Vanilla	<i>Vanilla tahitensis</i> J.W.Moore	

Dried Roots, Rhizomes, Bulbs			
33.	Dried Garlic	<i>Allium sativum</i> L.	HS 07129040
34.	Shallot	<i>Allium ascalonicum</i> L.	
35.	Galanga	<i>Kaempferia galanga</i> L.	HS 12119042
36.	Greater galangal	<i>Alpinia galanga</i> Willd.	
37.	Lesser galangal	<i>Alpinia officinarum</i> Hance	
38.	Ginger	<i>Zingiber officinale</i> Roscoe	HS 091010
39.	Horse Radish root	<i>Armoracia rusticana</i> G.Gaertn., B.Mey. & Scherb.	HS 07069010
40.	Sweet flag	<i>Acorus calamus</i> L.	HS 12119048
41.	Turmeric	<i>Curcuma longa</i> L.	HS 091030
Dried Seeds			
42.	Aniseed	<i>Pimpinella anisum</i> L.	
43.	Ajowan/ Ajwain	<i>Trachyspermum ammi</i> Sprague	HS 09109914
44.	Black caraway	<i>Bunium persicum</i> B.Fedtsch.	
45.	Black caraway	<i>Carum bulbocastanum</i> W.D.J.Koch	
46.	Caraway	<i>Carum carvi</i> L.	HS 090940
47.	Black cumin	<i>Nigella sativa</i> L.	
48.	Cumin (Green /White Cumin)	<i>Cuminum cyminum</i> Wall.	HS 090930
49.	Damas black cumin	<i>Nigella damascena</i> L.	
50.	Black mustard	<i>Brassica nigra</i> (L.) Andrz.	
51.	Mustard	<i>Brassica juncea</i> (L.) Hook.f. & Thomson	HS 120750
52.	White/yellow mustard	<i>Sinapis alba</i> L.	
53.	Celery	<i>Apium graveolens</i> L.	HS 09109911
54.	Garden Celery	<i>Apium graveolens</i> L.	
55.	Coriander	<i>Coriandrum sativum</i> L.	HS 090921
56.	Dill	<i>Anethum graveolens</i> L.	HS 09109913
57.	Indian Dill	<i>Anethum sowa</i> Roxb.	
58.	Fennel	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Mill.	HS 090950
59.	Sweet fennel	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Hill	
60.	Fenugreek	<i>Trigonella foenum-graecum</i> Sm.	HS 09109912
61.	Nutmeg	<i>Myristica fragrans</i> Houtt.	HS 090810
62.	Papuan nutmeg	<i>Myristica argentea</i> Warb.	
63.	Poppy seed	<i>Papaver somniferum</i> L.	HS 120791
64.	Sesame/ Gingelly	<i>Sesamum indicum</i> L.	
65.	Pomegranate seed	<i>Punica granatum</i> L.	
Dried Floral parts			
66.	Clove	<i>Syzygium aromaticum</i> (L.) Merr. & L.M.Perry	HS 090700
67.	Saffron	<i>Crocus sativus</i> Biv. ex Steud.	HS 091020

68.	Caper	<i>Capparis spinosa</i> L.	HS 071130
Dried leaves			
69.	Bay Leaf	<i>Laurus nobilis</i> Cav.	HS 09104030
70.	Leek / Winter leek	<i>Allium porrum</i> L. <i>Allium ampeloprasum</i> Boiss.	
71.	Curry leaf	<i>Murraya koenigii</i> Spreng.	HS 091050
72.	Pandan wangi	<i>Pandanus amaryllifolius</i> Roxb.	
73.	Tejpat (Indian Bay)	<i>Cinnamomum tamala</i> (Buch.-Ham.) T.Nees & C.H.Eberm.	HS 09104010
Dried Bark			
74.	Cassia	<i>Cinnamomum cassia</i> Siebold	HS 09061910
75.	Indonesian cassia	<i>Cinnamomum burmannii</i> (Nees & T.Nees) Blume	
76.	Vietnamese cassia	<i>Cinnamomum loureirii</i> Nees	
77.	Cinnamon	<i>Cinnamomum zeylanicum</i> Blume	HS 090611
Others			
78.	Asafoetida	<i>Ferula assa-foetida</i> L. <i>Ferula foetida</i> (Binge) Regel <i>Ferula narthex</i> Boiss	HS 13019013
79.	Carambola	<i>Averrhoa carambola</i> L.	
80.	Mace	<i>Myristica fragrans</i> Houtt.	HS 090820
81.	Papuan mace	<i>Myristica argentea</i> Warb.	

Annex II – Culinary Herbs Grouping

SI. No	Name of Culinary Herb	Scientific Name	HS Code
Dried Herb			
82.	Basil	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i> L.	
83.	Hyssop	<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i> L.	
84.	Lovage	<i>Levisticum officinale</i> W.D.J.Koch	HS 12119095
85.	Peppermint	<i>Mentha x piperita</i> L., pro spec. & Hylander	HS 12119070
86.	Spearmint	<i>Mentha spicata</i> L.	
87.	Japanese mint / field mint / corn mint	<i>Mentha arvensis</i> L.	
88.	Balm/ Lemon balm/ Melissa	<i>Melissa officinalis</i> L.	
89.	Bergamot	<i>Mentha citrata</i> Ehrh.	
90.	Marjoram	<i>Majorana hortensis</i> Moench	
91.	Sweet marjoram	<i>Origanum majorana</i> L.	
92.	Oregano	<i>Origanum vulgare</i> L.	
93.	Mexican oregano	<i>Lippia graveolens</i> Kunth	
94.	Parsley(curly)	<i>Petroselinum crispum</i> (Mill.) A.W.Hill	
95.	Parsley (flat)	<i>Petroselinum sativum</i> Hook. & Gillies	
96.	Rosemary	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> L.	
97.	Sage	<i>Salvia officinalis</i> Pall.	
98.	Thyme	<i>Thymus vulgaris</i> L.	HS 09104020
99.	Creeping thyme / Wild thyme / Mother of thyme	<i>Thymus serpyllum</i> L.	
100	Tarragon	<i>Artemisia dracunculus</i> L.	HS 07108010
101			
102	Summer Savory	<i>Satureja hortensis</i> L.	
103	Winter Savory	<i>Satureja montana</i> L.	
104	Sri Lankan Citronella	<i>Cymbopogon nardus</i> (L.) Rendle	
105	West Indian Lemon grass	<i>Cymbopogon citratus</i> Stapf	

Annex 3 - List of remaining Spices & Culinary Herbs

Sl. No.	Name of Spice/ Culinary Herbs	Scientific Name	HS Code
106.	Belimbing / Bilimbi / Cucumber tree	<i>Averrhoa bilimbi</i> L.	
107.	Chervil	<i>Anthriscus cerefolium</i> Hoffm.	
108.	Chive	<i>Allium schoenoprasum</i> Regel & Tiling	
109.	Indian leek/ Chinese chive	<i>Allium tuberosum</i> Rottler ex. Sprengel	
110.	Garden angelica	<i>Angelica archangelica</i> L.	
111.	Stony leek/ Welsh onion/ Japanese bunching onion	<i>Allium fistulosum</i> L.	
112.	Potato onion	<i>Allium cepa</i> L.	
113.	West Indian bay	<i>Pimenta racemosa</i> (Mill.) J.W. Moore	