CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

World Health Organization

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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COMMUNICATION FROM IAEA[1]

INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF THE JOINT FAO/IAEA DIVISION OF NUCLEAR TECHNIQUES IN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE RELEVANT TO CODEX WORK

1. Since 1964, the Joint Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture (the "Joint Division") has promoted the mandates of both the FAO to eliminate world hunger and poverty through sustainable agricultural and rural development, improved nutrition and food security and the IAEA to accelerate and expand the contributions of nuclear technologies to promote global health and prosperity through peaceful uses of atomic energy.

2. The activities of the Joint Division most closely related to the work of Codex are the use of ionizing radiation, food traceability and authenticity, the control of food contaminants, and nuclear or radiological emergency preparedness for events that could affect food and agriculture.

3. The Food and Environmental Protection Section and Laboratory comprise a subprogramme that coordinates international research and technical cooperation projects at national, regional and interregional levels and focuses on food safety initiatives such as monitoring for pesticide and, veterinary drug residues, mycotoxins and heavy metals among others in food and feed commodities as well as the environment.

4. The Joint Division actively participates in the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF), the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF), and the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR).

Highlights of some of the recent activities of the Food and Environmental Protection subprogramme relevant to Codex work are as follows:

CONTAMINANTS IN FOODS

5. The CCCF10 was up-dated on the work of the IAEA Radiation Safety Standards Committee[2] (RASSC) involving international standards relating to radionuclides in food and drinking water. This work has resulted in a new IAEA technical document (TECDOC) publication Criteria for Radionuclide Activity Concentrations for Food and Drinking Water, which is freely available online[3]. The TECDOC has been disseminated to CCCF delegates through the Codex Secretariat.

6. Developed in collaboration with Member Countries and international bodies including the Codex secretariat, the TECDOC provides technical details on establishing national criteria for radionuclide activity concentrations (Bq/kg) for food and drinking water. An equivalent approach to that used to calculate the Codex Guideline Levels is used as an appropriate framework for calculating criteria (Bq/kg) for radioactivity in food in "normal" circumstances or well after an emergency has been declared ended.

The TECDOC compliments and does not supersede nor replace activity concentrations already established for food, milk and water in IAEA standards and guidelines intended for use in nuclear or radiological emergency situations.

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[1] Document prepared by and under responsibility of the Joint FAO/IAEA Division (please see http://www-naweb.iaea.org/nafa/index.html for additional details).

[2] A standing body of senior experts in radiation safety, it advises the IAEA on the radiation safety programme for the development, review and revision of standards relating to radiation safety and the programme for their application.

3 http://www-pub.iaea.org/books/IAEABooks/11061/Criteria-for-Radionuclide-Activity-Concentrations-for-Food-and-Drinking-Water

CADMIUM IN CHOLOCATE AND COCOA DERIVED PRODUCTS

7. The Joint Division will continue to participate in on Codex work related to the establishment of maximum levels for cadmium in chocolate and cocoa products. As reported at CCCF10, the Joint Division also support Member Countries develop capacity to collect relevance occurrence data. This support is through IAEA's technical cooperation activities such as the new interregional food safety project.

OTHER CONTAMINANTS

8. Capacity building also continues in Member Countries to support the monitoring and generation of occurrence data for other contaminants such as but not limited to mycotoxins.

PESTICIDE RESIDUES IN FOOD AND FEED COMMODITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

9. At the 48th Session of the CCPR, the Joint Division provided valuable technical contributions to the development of Performance Criteria Specific for Methods of Analysis for the Determination of Pesticide Residues. This is now at step 5 of the process.

RESIDUES OF VETERINARY DRUGS IN FOODS

10. The Joint Division will participate in the forthcoming 23th Session of the CCRVDF and contribute to various deliberations such as work on Carryover in Feed among others. The Joint Division was member of the CCRVDF electronic working group on Carryover in Feed.

11. Many Codex Member Countries still require support to implement standards/guidelines such as CAC/GL 71-2009. The Joint Division continues to support many of these countries through its technical cooperation and coordinated research activities as well as hosting an accessible Codex recommended database of analytical methods.

FOOD TRACEABILITY AND AUTHENTICITY

12. The Joint Division implements a Coordinated Research Project, "Accessible Technologies for the Verification of Origin of Dairy Products as an Example Control System to Enhance Global Trade and Food Safety" (Dairy Origin). This project will develop a complete end-to-end system, using dairy milk as an example commodity. This system will then be available as a template that can be transferred to other commodities as required.

13. It is anticipated that these activities will contribute to the future revision of the Codex Standard 234-1999 (Amended 2015), in particular section 3.4 Verification of Composition, Quality and Authenticity; as well as assisting in the general development of methods and procedures to establish the authenticity of products or identify adulteration.

14. The Joint Division Laboratories will also continue to support the activities of the Member Countries in their efforts to ensure food safety, quality and authenticity and Codex in their efforts to address these issues in a harmonised way through the concept of "Food Integrity".

For further information please contact:

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