

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 12

CRD22

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FATS AND OILS

25th Session

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 27 February - 3 March 2017

REVISION OF THE *STANDARD FOR NAMED VEGETABLE OILS* (CODEX STAN 210-1999): REPLACEMENT OF ACID VALUE WITH FREE FATTY ACIDS FOR VIRGIN PALM OIL AND INCLUSION OF FREE FATTY ACID FOR CRUDE PALM KERNEL OIL

(Prepared by Malaysia)

PROJECT DOCUMENT

1. Purpose and scope of the standard

The purpose and scope of the proposed revisions to the *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils* (CODEX STAN 210-1999) is to replace acid value with free fatty acids (FFA) expressed as palmitic acid for virgin palm oil and to include FFA for crude palm kernel oil expressed as lauric acid in the Appendix to the Standard.

2. Relevance and timeliness

Palm oil is the largest produced, consumed and traded vegetable oil in the world while palm kernel oil is amongst the largest edible oils traded worldwide. The oils have been globally traded for the last five decades and are widely consumed in countries such as India, Europe, China, Indonesia, Malaysia and other parts of the world.

The global trade practices for characterising acidity as one of the main quality specifications of virgin palm oil and crude palm kernel oil has always been expressed in terms of the content of FFA. However in the *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils* (CODEX STAN 210-1999), the acidity of virgin palm oil is currently expressed as acid value. As for the acidity of crude palm kernel oil, the current specification is 4.0 mg KOH/g oil. The inconsistency in the different expression terms of the acidity of virgin palm oil and crude palm kernel oil has resulted in difficulties in international trade.

Codex Standards have been accepted internationally as the main reference in the development of national legislations. Therefore, the proposed revisions will promote standardization and harmonization with national legislations, thus avoiding any impediments to the international trade of palm oil and palm kernel oil. Hence, it is imperative that Codex consider amending the parameter related to acidity and to replace the acid value with FFA expressed as palmitic acid for virgin palm oil and to include acidity of crude palm kernel oil expressed as FFA content as lauric acid in the Standard to avoid any disruption to trade.

3. Main aspects that should be covered

The revisions will include a proposed value for FFA content of virgin palm oils, expressed as palmitic acid and the inclusion of acidity for crude palm kernel oils, expressed as FFA content expressed as lauric acid to be incorporated under the section **Quality Characteristics** in the Appendix of the *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils* (CODEX STAN 210-1999) and consequential changes to Section 8 on Method of Analysis and Sampling.

4. An assessment against the criteria for the establishment of work priorities

Criteria applicable to commodities:

General Criterion

Consumer protection from the point of view of health, food safety, ensuring fair practices in the food trade and taking into account the identified needs of developing countries

There are already provisions in the *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils* (CODEX STAN 210-1999) to ensure consumer protection in terms of food safety and authenticity of these products. The new proposed revisions will serve to enhance international trade of palm oil and palm kernel oil to ensure the quality of the oils and consistency in global practices.

a) Volume of production and consumption in individual countries, and volume and pattern of trade between countries

According to data published by the Oil World Annual, the total world production of 17 major oils and fats in 2015 amounted to 206.38 million tonnes¹. Palm oil is the largest produced vegetable oil in the world. The global production of palm oil reached 62.56 million tonnes, representing 30% of the total world production of major oils and fats. This is followed by soybean oil (24%), rapeseed oil (13%) and sunflower oil (7%). Palm kernel oil is the fifth largest produced vegetable oil at 6.85 million tonnes, contributing to about 3% of total world production of oils and fats (Figure 1).

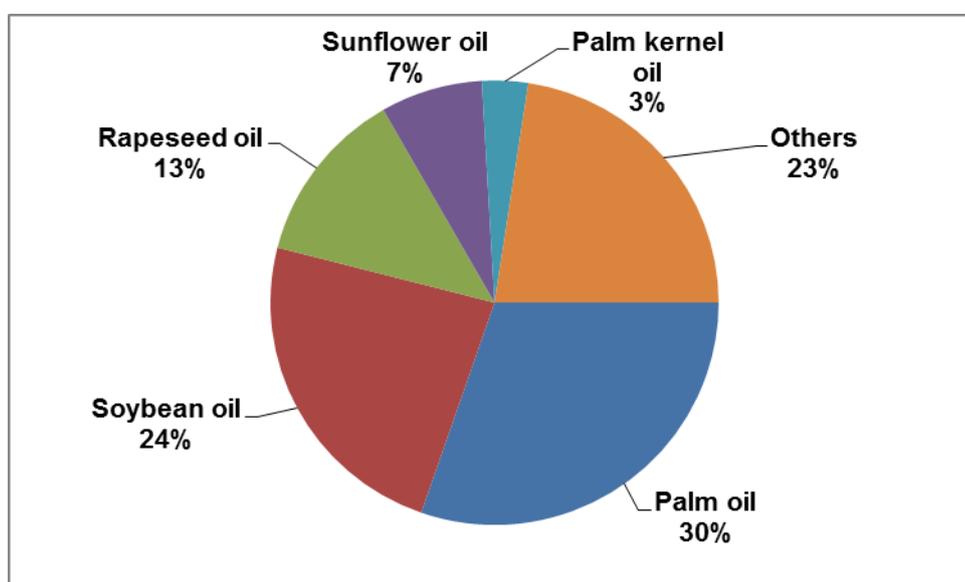


Figure 1. World production of major oils and fats in 2015

In 2015, more than 85% of total world production of palm oil and palm kernel oil were contributed by Indonesia (33.40 million tonnes) and Malaysia (19.96 million tonnes), the major producers of these oils. Other producers of palm oil and palm kernel oil include Thailand, Colombia, Nigeria, Ecuador and many other countries².

In the same period, palm oil and palm kernel oil has been largely consumed worldwide by countries such as India, Indonesia, European Union (EU), China, Malaysia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Thailand, United States of America (U.S.A), Colombia as well as many other countries. Table 1 tabulates the global consumption of palm oil while the worldwide consumption of palm kernel oil is shown in Table 2.

¹ Oil World Annual 2016

² Oil World Annual 2016

Table 1. Worldwide consumption of palm oil in 2015³

Country	Palm oil consumption (million tonnes)
India	9.29
Indonesia	7.34
EU	7.24
China	5.84
Malaysia	2.92
Pakistan	2.52
Others	25.94
Total	61.09

Table 2. Worldwide consumption of palm kernel oil in 2015⁴

Country	Palm kernel oil consumption (million tonnes)
Indonesia	1.68
Malaysia	1.50
EU	0.67
China	0.62
U.S.A	0.27
Brazil	0.24
India	0.22
Others	1.52
Total	6.72

The major exporters of palm oil and palm kernel oil are Indonesia and Malaysia. In 2015, Indonesia and Malaysia exported a combined total of 44 million tonnes and 2.96 million tonnes of palm oil and palm kernel oil, respectively. Both oils are imported by more than 150 countries of which the major importers are India, EU, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, U.S.A and Brazil. Figure 2 illustrates the major palm oil importers in 2015 while Figure 3 shows the major importers of palm kernel oil in the same year.

³ Oil World Annual 2016

⁴ Oil World Annual 2016

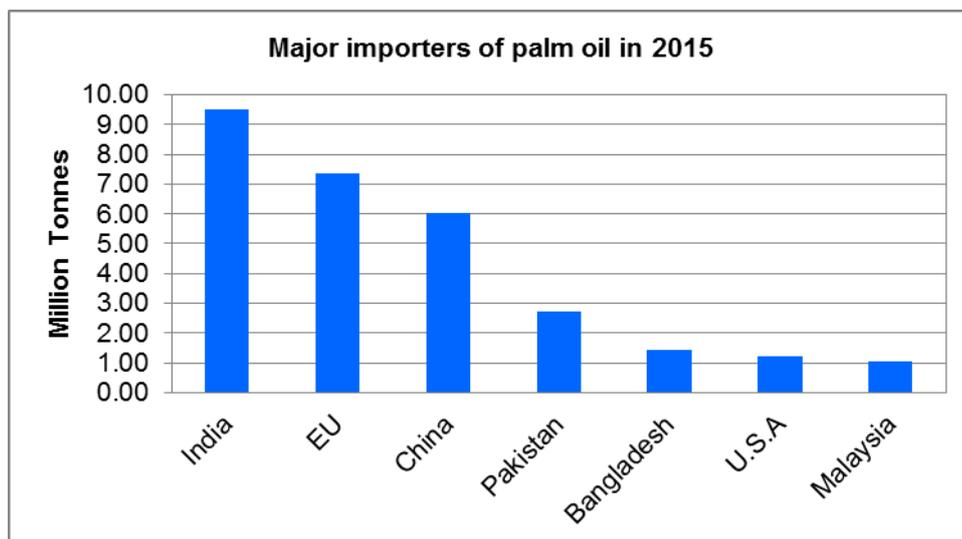


Figure 2. Major importers of palm oil in 2015

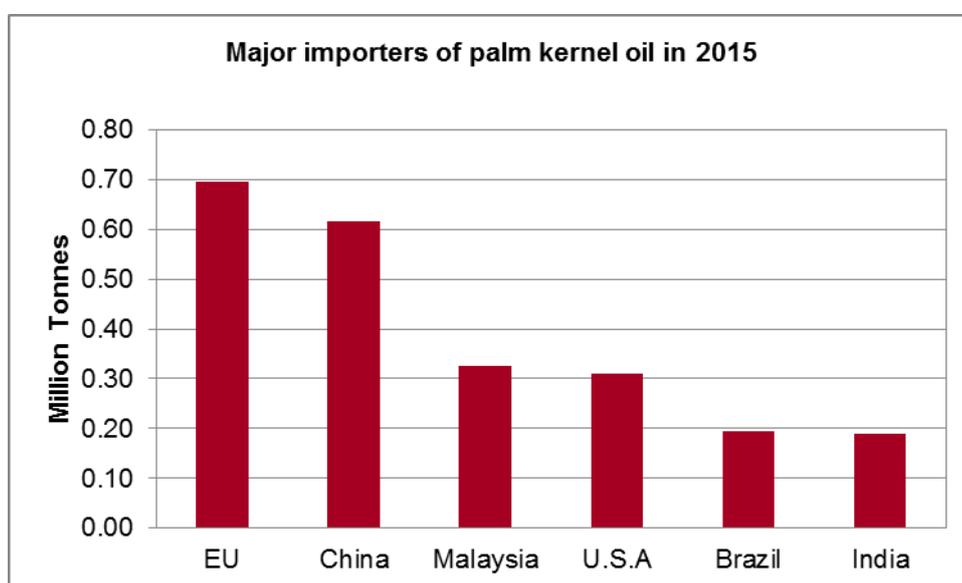


Figure 3. Major importers of palm kernel oil in 2015

b) Diversification of national legislations and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade

The proposed revision in the *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils* (CODEX STAN 210-1999) would facilitate in the harmonization of national legislations with international standards and thus reduce impediments to international trade of palm oil and palm kernel oil.

c) International or regional market potential

There is existing substantial global trade volume of palm oil and palm kernel oil and this trend is expected to increase further in the future. In 2015, the world production of oils and fats was 206.38 million tonnes and palm oil and palm kernel oil constituted 30% and 3% of world production of main oils and fats, respectively. The global exports of palm oil in 2015 were 48.23 million tonnes, which constitutes about 57% of total world exports of main oils and fats. Approximately 3.31 million tonnes of palm kernel oil was exported worldwide in the same year.

d) Amenability of the commodity to standardization

The specification for acidity expressed in terms of FFA expressed as palmitic acid for palm oil and FFA expressed as lauric acid for palm kernel oil has already been well-established in palm oil and palm kernel oil trade worldwide. Therefore, the proposed revisions are suitable for standardization in the existing *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils* (CODEX STAN 210-1999) to facilitate the harmonization of national legislations with international standards.

e) Coverage of the main consumer protection and trade issues by existing or proposed general standards

There are already provisions in the existing *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils* (CODEX STAN 210-1999) which cover the main consumer protection and trade issues. The proposed revisions will provide further improvement to the standard and thus facilitate its implementation.

f) Number of commodities which would need separate standards indicating whether raw, semi processed or processed

This item is not relevant to this proposal.

g) Work already undertaken by other international organizations in this field

There is no other known international organisation which have already undertaken this work.

5. Relevance to Codex strategic objectives

This revision is consistent with the Strategic Plan of the Codex Alimentarius Commission 2014-2019 to establish international food standards in response to needs identified by Members and in response to factors that affect food safety, nutrition and fair practices in the food trade.

6. Information on the relation between the proposal and other existing Codex documents as well as other ongoing work

This proposal is a revision to the existing *Codex Standard for Named Vegetable Oils* (CODEX STAN 210-1999).

7. Identification of any requirement for and availability of expert scientific advice

No expert scientific advice from external bodies is necessary.

8. Identification of any need for technical input to the standard from external bodies so that this can be planned for:

No technical input to the standard from external bodies is necessary.

9. The proposed timeline for completion of the new work, including the start date, the proposed date for adoption at step 5, and the proposed date for adoption by the Commission

Approval as new work by the 40th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in July 2017;

Proposed draft revisions considered at Step 4 at the 26th Session of CCFO, February 2019.

Final adoption at Step 5/8 in the 42nd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in July 2019.