CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

World Health Organization

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Agenda Item 11 **CRD31**

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES

Fifty-third Session

DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARD FOR YEAST

(Comments of OENOPPIA)

Background

In the forty-fourth session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC44), China introduced a proposal for the development of a Codex standard for yeast. China requested guidance from CAC44 regarding the Codex committee that could undertake new work on yeast, a product that has a wide application globally, noting that this product fell outside of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the existing committees. CAC44 agreed that the discussion paper on the development of a standard for yeast should be presented at the next session of CCFA.[1]

China has amended the project document that now includes a preliminary draft standard. CCFA53 is invited to consider this proposal enclosed in CCFA53/CRD6 under the agenda point 11 “for the future work of the Committee”.

Who is Oenoppia?

Oenoppia is a non-profit association created in 2009 and grouping together the principal parties involved in the production and development of œnological products. The members of Oenoppia represent approximately 90% of œnological products used by wine makers throughout the world.

OENOPPIA delegation is here representing one of its associate members COFALEC. COFALEC is the European Confederation of Yeast Producers. It represents the yeast producers in Europe and is present in 24 European countries. The European yeast industry is the world leader in this sector with around 35% of world market share and exports 30% of its production to third countries.

General comments

OENOPPIA and COFALEC members share the view that it is of interest to see the emergence of a global standard for live baker's yeast. Given that live baker's yeast is one of humankind’s oldest food ingredients and the most traded product in the field of yeast, such an international reference would facilitate the harmonization of practices and the global yeast trade.

Besides, OENOPPIA and COFALEC members have organized themselves for more than 15 years (since 2006) to develop specifications for baker's yeast in liquid, compressed and dry form.

These specifications are largely used in different part of the world (especially in Europe, North and South America). They concern around **50% of world production** and have already greatly contributed to limiting trade barriers and improving global exchanges.

These specifications have been recently registered by DIN (German institute for Standardization) in July 2022. https://www.beuth.de/en

COFALEC is actually considering the possibility of continuing to work on developing an international standard by launching **a project under the ISO TC 34 working group**.

Specific comments

The Committee on Food Additive (CCFA) is invited to reflect on the possible development of a standard for yeast. We would like the committee to consider the **risk of confusion** that will inevitably be created by developing such work within this specific Committee as regards the status of yeast. Indeed, being one of the oldest food ingredients, **baker’s yeast is not an additive** but could be assimilated to an additive through this

[1] REP21/CAC paragraphs 151-153

project. We fear that under such circumstances, this work would bring more confusion regarding baker's yeast than clarification and harmonization of trade practices.

Furthermore, from a procedural point of view, since yeast is not an additive, we would like to understand how this work will **fit under the current Terms of Reference of the CCFA**, whose missions are centered on additive dispositions. Also, CCFA, as a general subject committee, may not be eligible to drafting a commodity standard. It may also lack the technical expertise to work on yeasts, and its current workload should be taken into account.

In addition, it is also our view that **the scope of the current proposal is too large** as it encompasses different products for several applications, some of which fall outside the mandate of Codex. Indeed, yeasts and yeast-derived products are now widely used in different industrial sectors such as food (bakery, wine-making, brewery…), feed, nutrition (probiotics), biotechnology & pharmaceutical applications (cell culture, microbial fermentation), bioenergy, agriculture (biocontrol, biofertilization) etc.

In that respect, if a "yeast" standard is to be developed, it is of importance for the committee to **refine the scope of this project to live baker's yeast** (in liquid or dry form). Indeed, there are very strong differences both in terms of nature (very different strains used) and in terms of the method of use between live yeasts used in baking, those used live in brewing and winemaking. It is even more so when it comes to deactivated yeast and edible yeast. **Therefore, the codex standard for "yeast" should be applied to a homogeneous perimeter.** For this reason, it seems imperative to us that this potential future standard should only cover baker's yeast in both its liquid, compressed and dry formats – as it is already available in the COFALEC' s Characteristics of baker's yeast.

In addition, the inclusion of "gassing power" in the proposed standard would generate trading barriers. Indeed, even if fermentation is one of the key parameters for which a customer purchases a certain live baker's yeast, setting a method or value for gas power in a yeast standard would be inappropriate and market limiting because the recipes for applying yeast to doughs are very different all over the world. As such, no single method or value can reflect this variance.

In summary, OENOPPIA and COFALEC do support the idea of a global standard for live baker's yeast only taking into account that:

- We are concerned that having this standard developed under the CCFA will inevitably create **confusion about the status of yeast** which is not an additive;
- The proposed scope should be limited and **covering only the baker's yeast**, noting that an ISO standard will also be initiated shortly on this product;
- The inclusion of gassing power in such a standard would generate a risk of trading barriers.

Recommendations

CCFA53 is invited to:

- Recommend that the scope of the project document be clarified and narrowed to baker's yeast only;
- Ask CAC46 to consider another subsidiary-body that could take in charge this work;
- Invite CAC46 to reflect on a possible collaboration with ISO as a way to avoid duplication of work and promote consistent international standardization.