



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

Sixth Session

Virtual

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Comments from Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization (AIDSMO)

The objective of this Conference Room Document is to offer comments on behalf of the Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization (AIDSMO), an observer organization of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, on various agenda items tabled at the 6th Session of the **Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH6)**.

These comments were developed by an Expert Group of the Arab Codex Initiative affiliated with AIDSMO and with consultation of Codex contact points of Arab countries.

These comments should not be considered as an official position in lieu of the official position of country delegations, members of the League of Arab states, represented at the CCSCH6.

General Comments

- Keeping in mind that national standards can be developed based on a country's specific needs, the act of endorsing the standards of Spices and Culinary Herbs reflects the support of international food trade practices, especially when thorough and sufficient information is covered.
- It was highlighted that a Codex standard for sampling plan will be established for CCSCH commodities. For the time being, clause 9.2. "The sampling plan" is being accepted as "to be developed". AIDSMO supports the development of this text at the earliest opportunity.

Agenda Item 3.1: Draft Standard for Saffron (CX/SCH 22/6/3)

- Saffron is one of the important commodities produced and used in the Arab region, mainly in the field of food, medicine, perfumes, and cosmetics. Being highly produced in and possibly exported from some Arab countries, the development of the Codex standard for Saffron is of high relevance to the Arab region.
- Based on the progress accomplished to date in the development of this standard, AIDSMO supports its advancement to final adoption by CAC45 (2022).

Agenda Item 4.1: Draft Standard for Dried Nutmeg (CX/ SCH 22/6/4)

- Nutmeg is widely used in the Arab region as a culinary spice. It is commonly employed in milk-based sauces and is added in some instances to hot beverages like tea and coffee.
- Considering the level of progress of the standard for Dried Nutmeg, drafted by the EWG chaired by Indonesia and India, and the fact that most issues under discussions were addressed, AIDSMO supports the advancement of this standard to step 8 for final adoption by CAC45.

Agenda Item 5.1: Proposed Draft Standard for Dried or Dehydrated Chilli Peppers and Paprika (CX/ SCH 22/6/5)

- Suggestion of amendments to section 2.2 of the standard, in particular to the following part: "*Ground chilli peppers or/and ground paprika is the product obtained by grinding whole dried chilli peppers or paprika with or without variant proportions of pericarp, placenta, seeds, pedicel and calyx, without any other added matter*", to address some possible ambiguities regarding the thresholds (ranges) for the "variant proportions".
AIDSMO suggests the following wording:
"*...With or without variant proportions of pericarp, placenta, seeds, pedicel and calyx, as long as it does not exceed the percentage of the fruit shell (pericarp)...*".
- Noted that Capsaicin quantification by chromatographic methods would constitute a more accurate and precise approach to evaluate the pungency of the spice, with a potential to substitute the Scoville Heat

unit's sensory method. This updated approach would however require correlating the chromatography-based findings with the sensory testing such that the two approaches are deemed equivalent.

- Recommends the advancement of the proposed standard in the Codex procedure with the possible consideration of the accelerated adoption at Step 5/8, by the Codex Commission during its next meeting (CAC45).

Agenda Item 5.2: Proposed Draft Standard for Small Cardamom (CX/ SCH 22/6/6)

- Cardamom seeds are used widely for flavoring purposes in food in the Arab region. A large percentage of the world production is exported to Arab countries, where it is used to prepare various dishes including coffee.
 - Recommendation of the consideration of the value of 9.5% for the total ash content of cardamom seeds as per ISO 882-2.
 - Supports the addition of a comprehensive definition for “small cardamom” either by:
 - adding the maximum size/dimension as a second sentence in section 2.1.
- Or
- by inserting “Green Cardamom” in brackets next to Small Cardamom in the Common name; to clarify that this standard only covers the “small green cardamom”; while another variety exists which is the “Large/Black cardamom”.
- Recommendation of the advancement of this standard for adoption, possibly through the accelerated procedure at step 5/8, by the Codex Commission during its next meeting (CAC45).

Agenda Item 5.3: Proposed Draft Standard for Spices in Dried Fruits and Berries (Allspices, Juniper berry, Star anise and Vanilla) (CX/ SCH 22/6/7)

The proposed draft standard constitutes, undoubtedly, a step forward regarding the approach adopted by CCSCH. The grouping of products to be considered will accelerate the frequency of standards' adoption, which will have positive impact on international trade.

However, the document requires further discussions and revision, e.g., to address disparities related to the inclusion of Vanilla and to review the chemical and physical requirements.

Supports maintaining the draft standard at step 2/3 for another round of discussions. This will allow a re-established EWG to provide a more developed draft to the CCSCH7 for consideration.

Agenda Item 6.1: Proposed Draft Standard for Turmeric (CX/ SCH 22/6/8)

Supports the initiation of this work, given the potential benefit it may bring to this commodity, being produced in the Arab region. As a result, AIDSMO will encourage Arab Codex delegations to actively contribute to this work.

Agenda Item 7.2: Update to the template for SCH standards (CX/ SCH 22/6/10)

The proposed updated template seems to cover all information and requirements necessary for the development of a group standard for spices and culinary herbs. AIDSMO, therefore, supports its advancement through the Codex procedure.