



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**  
**Ninetieth Session**  
**WHO headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland**  
**29 June – 3 July 2026**

**CRITICAL REVIEW - PART I**

**(standards for adoption and monitoring of work progress – CCSCH, CCFH)**

**Procedural background for the critical review**

1. In line with Section 2.1 *Procedures for the elaboration of Codex standards and related texts* of the *Codex Procedural Manual*<sup>1</sup>, paragraphs 2 and 3, and Part 2 Critical Review (paragraphs 12-19), and taking into account the comments of the Chairpersons and the Codex Secretariat, CCEXEC is invited to critically:
  - review standards and related texts submitted to the Commission for adoption;
  - monitor the progress of standards development, also in accordance with the *Criteria to facilitate the conduct of monitoring progress of standards development*<sup>2</sup> (as agreed by CCEXEC58 (2006)); and
  - review proposals for new work or revision of standards.

**Ongoing development of the supporting documentation for the critical review**

2. The documents to support the critical review have evolved over time with the aim of better supporting this task.
3. As indicated at CCEXEC86 (2024),<sup>3</sup> the Codex Secretariat is carefully reviewing the critical review documents to ensure a consistent approach including the degree to which information from the committee reports should be included therein. This will continue to evolve as documents are developed for upcoming sessions of CCEXEC.
4. The Codex Secretariat, since CCEXEC87, has been presenting an overview of all new work proposals. For CCEXEC90, new work proposals are compiled in CX/EXEC 26/90/3 Add.4.
5. CCEXEC88 (2025) based upon a request from CCEXEC87 (2024), discussed work management challenges related to the timeliness and translation of working documents. The current structure for the critical review focuses only on information that in addition to those found in the relevant committee report would contribute most consequentially to CCEXEC's preparations in advance of plenary sessions and which would also enable a more stringent word count.

**Structure of appendices**

6. The work of the different committees is addressed in separate appendices.
7. The current structure of the appendices for each committee is as follows:
  - A. General information on the committee and session
  - B. Status of work items (Overview) with explanatory notes as relevant from the Codex Secretariat and Chairperson's comments on specific work items
  - C. Chairperson's comments on the overall work of the committee in light of the purpose of the critical review

**List of appendices**

- Appendix 1: Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs, 8th session (CCSCH8)
- Appendix 2: Codex Committee on Food Hygiene, 55th session (CCFH55)

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/publications/procedural-manual/en/>

<sup>2</sup> ALINORM 06/29/3A, paragraph 47

<sup>3</sup> REP24/EXEC1, paragraph 11

## Appendix 1

## A. General information on the committee and session

Committee	Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH)		
Host	India	Chairperson	Dr. M. R. Sudharshan
Session reported on	CCSCH8	13-17 October 2025	
Next session	CCSCH9	2027, dates TBC	
Report	<a href="#">REP26/SCH</a>		

## B. Status of work items (Overview)

Existing work item(s) for decision by the Commission (adoption, revocation, discontinuation)						
Topic	Job number	Target year	Recommendation of the committee	Status of endorsement (where applicable)	Reference	Explanatory notes (if any)
1. Standard for spices in the form of dried fruits and berries - Requirements for vanilla	N03-2021	CCSCH8	Adoption at Step 8	Both the food additive provisions and food labelling provisions have been endorsed by CCFA56 and CCFL49, respectively.	REP26/SCH, paragraph 61(i) and Appendix III	<p>CCFA56 endorsed the food additive provisions without any changes (REP26/FA, App. IV, Part C).</p> <p>At CCFL49, during consideration of the labelling provisions, concerns were raised about the mandatory declaration of trade names, noting inconsistency with the <i>General standard for the labelling of pre-packaged foods</i> (GSLPF, CXS 1-1985) and lack of clarity regarding their classification.</p> <p>CCFL49 endorsed the food labelling provisions with modifications to improve clarity and requested CCSCH to clarify how the term “trade name” aligns with GSLPF naming categories and reiterating that any mandatory provisions should be duly justified and consistent with the GSLPF in future similar cases (REP26/FL, paragraph 57).</p> <p>CCMAS45 endorsed the methods of analysis in the draft standard with some revisions; these methods will be included in the <i>Recommended methods of analysis and sampling</i> (CXS 234-1999).</p>

2. Standard for spices in the form of dried fruits and berries - Requirements for large cardamom	N03-2024	CCSCH10	Adoption at Step 5/8	Both the food additive provisions and food labelling provisions have been endorsed by CCFA56 and CCFL49, respectively.	REP26/SCH, paragraph 74(i) and Appendix IV	CCFA56 endorsed the food additive provisions (REP26/FA, App. IV, Parts D and E) and CCFL49 endorsed the food labelling provisions (REP26/FL, paragraph 52), respectively.
3. Standard for spices in the form of dried seeds - Requirements for coriander	N02-2024	CCSCH10	Adoption at Step 5/8		REP26/SCH, paragraph 104(i) and Appendix V	CCMAS45 endorsed the methods of analysis in the draft standards with some revisions; these methods will be included in the <i>Recommended methods of analysis and sampling</i> (CXS 234-1999). CCMAS45 also requested further clarification if some of the methods were fit-for-purpose.
4. Standard for herbs - Requirements for sweet marjoram	N01-2024	CCSCH10	Adoption at Step 5	The food additive provisions are still pending endorsement by CCFA, while the food labelling provisions have been endorsed by CCFL49.	REP26/SCH, paragraph 122(i) and Appendix VI	CCFA56 did not endorse the food additive provision in the draft standard and referred these provisions back to CCSCH for further clarification (REP26/FA paragraphs 65 and 66). CCFL49 endorsed the food labelling provisions (REP26/FL, paragraph 52).

**Chairperson's comments on specific work items from the above in light of the purpose of the critical review**

**Topic 1:** Regarding labelling provisions for Country of Harvest (COH) as optional/mandatory, CCSCH8 discussed how to take forward the draft standard for final adoption, while CCFL was yet to deliberate on labelling of COH. The Codex Secretariat presented two procedural options for CCSCH8's consideration. CCSCH8 agreed to the first option of forwarding the draft standard for adoption at this stage with optional declaration of COH, and revisit the provision for COH at a later stage if mandatory declaration of COH would become acceptable. CCSCH8 consensually agreed to forward the draft standard to CAC for adoption at Step 8 with optional declaration of COH, noting that the provisions for food additives and food labelling would need to be endorsed by CCFA and CCFL, respectively, before CAC adoption.

One of the major challenges faced by the spices industry is food fraud and adulteration especially in case of high value spices like saffron and vanilla, this concern has resulted in the debate on optional/mandatory labelling provisions for COH in Spices and Culinary Herbs (SCH) standards. CCSCH8 agreed to request CCEXEC and CAC to consider providing further guidance on how CCFICS texts (e.g., on food fraud and traceability) could be integrated into commodity standards in order to provide for a more integrated approach to the inclusion of other fair trade related tools that can remind users of the food standards on how to address issues such as food fraud, traceability/product tracing among others..

**Topics 2 and 3:** These works are well within the prescribed timeframe, and there were no major impediments or consensus issues.

**Topic 4:** Though most of the issues were resolved, some issues required wider circulation for comments and thus CCSCH8 agreed to forward the draft standard to CAC for adoption at Step 5; and submit the provisions on food additives and food labelling to CCFA and CCFL, respectively, for endorsement. There were no major impediments or consensus issues on procedural matters, this work is well within the prescribed timeframe.

Monitoring						
Topic	Job number	Target year	Status (Step)	On track for completion?	Reference	Explanatory notes (if any)
5. Standard for spices in the form of dried barks - Requirements for cinnamon	N04-2024	CCSCH 10	2/3	Yes	REP25/SCH, paragraph 87(ii)	The draft standard was returned to Step 2/3 in light of the many outstanding issue, including the product definition.
For information						
Topic			Reference		Explanatory notes (if any)	
6. Template for SCH standards			REP26/SCH, paragraph 157 and Appendix VII		The template was completed and published as an <a href="#">information document</a> noting that it would remain a living document which would be updated as need arises.	
7. Grouping of existing individual SCH standards			REP26/SCH, paragraph 132		In line with CCEXEC recommendations on developing group standards <sup>4</sup> , CCSCH8 noted that India expressed its willingness to undertake a pilot project on the grouping of existing individual SCH standards belonging to a group into the SCH group template through a comparative analysis, for consideration by CCSCH9.	
<b>Chairperson's comments on specific issues for monitoring and information in light of the purpose of the critical review</b>						
<b>Topic 5:</b> There was no consensus regarding the common name, whether it should be cinnamon, or both cinnamon and cassia cinnamon. CCSCH8 discussed the proposal to separate cinnamon and cassia as separate commodities due to differences in trade codes and safety concerns (e.g. coumarin contentThe Chairperson clarified that safety concerns should be referred to the relevant committees (e.g., the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) or Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCCF)). CCSCH8 noted that there were a number of unresolved issues in the Tables for chemical and physical characteristics, as well as the Table for the methods of analysis.  CCSCH8 agreed to return the draft standard to Step 2/3 for redrafting taking into account the discussions at CCSCH8. Lack of consensus was regarding technical issues and not on procedural matters. This work is within the prescribed timeframe.						
<b>Topic 6:</b> SCH standards represent a diverse group of products, and it was against this background that CCSCH had agreed to use a dynamic, flexible template for future standards, adaptable to both group and individual spices/culinary herbs. CCSCH8 confirmed that the template would remain a living document that would be updated as need arises, and encouraged Members/Observers to make proposals to this effect; and requested the Codex Secretariat to publish the updated SCH template as an information document on the Codex webpage. There were no major impediments or consensus issues on procedural matters.						

<sup>4</sup> REP17/EXEC2, paragraph 37(ii)a.

**Topic 7:** CCSCH has 14 published standards so far, some of them are individual standards, some in the group standard format, and only one group standard. To align the standards into group format in line with CCEXEC recommendations on developing group standards, it was proposed that CCSCH could undertake a pilot project focusing on grouping standards under a group category to gain experience. The outcome of this pilot project would pave way for completing the grouping of rest of the standards subject to clarity on procedural matters.

**C. Chairperson's comments on the overall work of the committee in light of the purpose of the critical review**

CCSCH8 was successfully conducted as a physical session and was well attended. Spices and Culinary Herbs are a diverse and heterozygous group of products and grouping them and elaboration of group standards is a success story. Development of a Template for the SCH standards is going to bring in uniformity in reporting and aligned texts for publication. Participation of members and observers in the eWGs is still a matter of concern, virtual meetings of eWGs have been productive. CCSCH has employed virtual, physical and in-session working groups effectively in resolving the issues and reaching consensus.

Availability of trade data for spices and culinary herbs is sketchy, scanty or sometimes lacking, which causes challenges in the development of new work proposals. United States of America had prepared a discussion paper for CCSCH8 on this issue to facilitate further discussion and find way forward. Due to lack of time this could not be taken up for discussion and would be taken up in CCSCH9.

In consideration of future work, it is proposed to prioritize individual products under each group and take up elaboration of group standards. Committee is relevant and has working relationship with the general subject committees as per procedural manual.

CCSCH8 discussed one of the most debated sensitive issue which required procedural clarity on labelling provisions for declaration of Country of Origin and Country of Harvest. This issue cropped up in each and every draft standard discussed. Codex Secretariat provided necessary guidance in time, the collaboration and support of Codex Secretariat is highly appreciated and acknowledged.

## Appendix 2

## A. General information on the committee and session

Committee	Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH)		
Host	The United States of America	Chairperson	Dr Evelyne Mbandi
Session reported on	CCFH55	15-19 December 2025	
Next session	CCFH56	16 - 20 November 2026	
Report	<a href="#">REP26/FH</a>		

## B. Status of work items (Overview)

Existing work item(s) for decision by the Commission (adoption, revocation, discontinuation)							
Topic	Job number	Target year	Recommendation of the committee	Status of endorsement (where applicable)	Scientific advice (Available, on track, delayed, or N/A)	Reference	Explanatory notes (if any)
1. Consequential amendments to the <i>Code of practice on food allergen management for food business operators</i> (CXC 80-2020)	-	-	Adoption	-	-	REP25/FH, paragraph 12, Appendix II	To align CXC 80-2020 with the relevant provisions in the <i>General standard for the labelling of prepackaged foods</i> (CXS 1-1985), noting that additional work will be required upon completion of the work on precautionary allergen labelling (PAL) by CCFL.
2. Annex II on Fish and fishery products and Annex IV on Water fit-for-purpose assessment, safety management, and technologies for recovery and treatment of water for reuse of the <i>Guidelines for the safe use and reuse of water in food production and processing</i> (CXG 100-2023)	N05-2020	CCFH55	Adoption at Step 5/8		-	REP25/FH, paragraph 55i, Appendix III	With the completion of these two annexes, the entire <i>Guidelines for the safe use and reuse of water in food production and processing</i> (CXG 100-2023) has now been finalized.
3. Amendments to the General Section and Annexes I and III of the <i>Guidelines for the</i>	-	-	Adoption		-	REP25/FH, paragraph	Consequential amendments to include cross-references to

<i>safe use and reuse of water in food production and processing</i> (CXG 100-2023)						55ii, Appendix IV	Annex IV in the General Section and in Annexes I and III of CXG 100-2023.
4. Amendments to the <i>Guidelines for the control of Taenia saginata in meat of domestic cattle</i> (CXG 85-2014), the <i>Guidelines for the control of Trichinella spp. in meat of Suidae</i> (CXG 86-2015) and the <i>Guidelines on the application of general principles of food hygiene to the control of foodborne parasites</i> (CXG 88-2016)	-	-	Adoption			REP25/FH, paragraphs 17, 72i, Appendix V	Amendments to align with <i>General principles of food hygiene</i> (CXC 1-1969). Additional revisions to CXG 86-2015 have also been made to ensure consistency with the updated World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Terrestrial Manual and Terrestrial Code.
5. Revised <i>Guidelines for the control of Campylobacter and Salmonella in chicken meat</i> (CXG 78-2011)	N08-2024	CCFH56	Adoption at Step 5/8			REP25/FH, paragraph 109, Appendix VI	
6. Revised <i>Guidelines on the application of general principles of food hygiene to the control of Listeria monocytogenes in foods</i> (CXG 61-2007)	N09-2024	CCFH57	Adoption at Step 5/8			REP25/FH, paragraph 144i, Appendix VII	

**Chairperson's comments on specific work items(s) from the above in light of the purpose of the critical review**

Significant accomplishments were made at CCFH55 in advancing documents for final adoption to CAC49. The commitment and collaboration of the delegates in updating guidelines based on available data and current science to enhance food safety and promote fair trade is commendable.

**Topic 1:** The consequential amendments to CXC 80-2020 will align CXC 80-2020 with the relevant provisions in the *General standard for the labelling of prepackaged foods* (CXS 1-1985). This is a helpful step in ensuring consistency with the updates from CCFL regarding food allergens and ensures there will be no disruptions in trade while CCFH awaits the completion of the work on precautionary allergen labelling (PAL) by CCFL in order to further update CXC 80-2020.

**Topic 2:** The finalization of Annex II and Annex IV of CXG 100-2023 is significant, since the entire CXG 100-2023 has now been finalized. Specifically, the completion of Annex II allows CCFH to continue its work on the revision of the *Guidelines on the application of the general principles of food hygiene to the control of pathogenic Vibrio species in seafood* (CXG 73-2010), which was paused at the previous session awaiting the conclusion of this work. In addition, completion of this annex will be notified to the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products, which may wish to consider whether to update the *Code of practice for fish and fishery products* (CXC 52-2003) or other texts in light of CCFH's new text.

**Topic 3:** Finalization of Annex II and Annex IV also enabled amendments to the General Section and Annexes I and III of CXG 100-2023. The completion of these items concludes nearly ten years of hard work by CCFH to provide countries with science- and risk-based guidelines to assess the fitness of purpose for water from different sources in food production and processing to ensure food is safe.

**Topic 4:** The alignment work in CCFH critically contributes to ensuring our texts are consistent with our general principles and this greatly facilitates user-friendliness and implementation of CCFH texts. Additional revisions to CXG 86-2015 were also made to ensure consistency with the updated World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Terrestrial Manual and Terrestrial Code.

**Topics 5 and 6:** The revision of CXG 78-2011 and CXG 61-2007 were completed ahead of schedule and partially aligned with focus being on current science. Both were diligently reviewed and extensively discussed by CCFH55, and thanks to robust participation in the working groups and being based on up-to-date scientific advice from JEMRA, I am confident that the revised texts are ready for adoption by CAC and will significantly contribute to consumer safety. There was strong consensus to advance these two items to step 5/8 for final adoption.

#### Secretariat's comments

The completion of Annex II and Annex IV of the *Guidelines for the safe use and reuse of water in food production and processing* (CXG 100-2023) is an important landmark by CCFH and marks the completion of Codex work on water reuse with regard to microbiological hazards. However, when it comes to water reuse, the accumulation of chemicals in water may also present a risk for food safety. In order to provide Members with a guidance that covers all aspects of food safety when it comes to water reuse, it may be appropriate for CCEXEC and CAC to note the gap with regard to chemical hazards and the need for Codex to address this gap as water reuse becomes more important in meeting water needs.

CCFH is undertaking critical work to ensure its texts are aligned with the latest version of the *General principles of food hygiene* (CXC 1-1969) as well as CXG 100-2023. Coordinating committees are also working to align relevant texts such as those on street-vended foods with the most recent text developed by CCFH. However, there are also Codes of hygienic practice or related that have been developed by other committees such as CCFFP and CCPFV, some of which have not been reviewed for many years and need to be reviewed to determine if they are still needed or require updating. CAC could provide direction in this regard.

Monitoring						
Topic	Job number	Target year	Status (Step)	On track for completion?	Reference	Explanatory notes (if any)
11. Review and revise as appropriate the text in square brackets in the revision of the <i>Guidelines on the application of the general principles of food hygiene to the control of pathogenic Vibrio species in seafood</i> (CXG 73-2010), following the completion of Annex II on Fish and Fishery Products of CXG 100-2023	N02- 2023	CCFH55	6/7	Yes		This work was on hold pending the completion of Annex II of CXG 100-2023
12. Revision of <i>Guidelines on the application of general principles of food hygiene to the control of viruses in food</i> (CXG 79-2012)	N07-2024	CCFH57	2/3	Yes	REP26/FH, paragraph 89ii	

#### For information



Topic	Reference	Explanatory notes (if any)
13. Consider using a harmonized definition for ready-to-eat (RTE) foods across its hygiene texts as well as its potential inclusion in CXC 1-1969 in view of the concerns raised on different definitions for RTE foods across Codex hygiene texts and request that the Codex Secretariat prepare a background document on definitions of RTE foods in food hygiene texts to support the above discussion at CCFH56.	REP26/FH, paragraph 144	
14. Continue the alignment exercise for CXC 47-2001, CXC 48-2001, CXC 33-1985	REP26/FH, paragraphs 72ii, iii, 148	
15. Prepare a discussion paper and a project document for the revision of the Code of practice on food allergen management for food business operators (CXC 80-2020)	REP26/FH, paragraph 151	This is closely related to the ongoing work in CCFL on Precautionary Allergen labelling and the preparation of the discussion paper will be dependent on the progress made by CCFL
16. Revise the proposal on the revision of the <i>Code of practice for the processing and handling of quick frozen foods</i> (CXC 8-1976)	REP26/FH, paragraph 161ii	While this issue raises specific issues with regard to quality as well as safety, the task force that developed the Codex of practice of this issue.
17. Scientific advice from JEMRA, including: (i) conducting a risk assessment on spore-forming pathogens, including <i>Clostridium botulinum</i> and <i>Bacillus cereus</i> , in powdered infant formula; (ii) updating the existing risk assessment and scientific advice on environmental pathogens, and providing other relevant scientific advice on control measures for powdered infant formula; and (iii) developing the risk assessment tool in support of the revised <i>Guidelines on the application of general principles of food hygiene to the control of viruses in food</i> (CXG 79-2012).	REP26/FH, paragraphs 168, 89iii	
18. Forward workplan and work prioritization process	REP26/FH, paragraphs 170, 171iii, Appendix VIII	CCFH55 had insufficient time to fully review the forward workplan and noted limitations in its work prioritization process. The forward workplan and the prioritization process will be reviewed by the PWG to be held in conjunction with CCFH56.
<b>Chairperson's comments on specific issues for monitoring and information in light of the purpose of the critical review</b> CCFH55 undertook efforts to think critically about its forward workplan and ensure aligns with the continued alignment exercise and forthcoming needs for scientific advice. Of note, CCFH demonstrated Codex's responsiveness to the urgent global need for a new risk assessment on spore-forming pathogens in infant formulae, as well as an updated risk assessment on environmental pathogens and related scientific advice for control measures in infant formulae by requesting scientific advice from JEMRA with the goal of undertaking new and future work in this regard.		

Following the completion of Annex II on Fish and Fishery Products (CXG 100-2023), CCFH will review and revise as appropriate text containing references to water in the revision of the *Guidelines on the application of the general principles of food hygiene to the control of pathogenic Vibrio species in seafood* (CXG 73-2010). Significant work went into reaching consensus on risk-based water terminology for the Annex II, and it will be important to be consistent with the Annex II when the updates to the water references are made in CXG 73-2010.

With additional scientific advice from JEMRA, CCFH will continue to work on revising the *Guidelines on the application of general principles of food hygiene to the control of viruses in food* (CXG 79-2012).

During the review of the revisions to the *Guidelines on the application of general principles of food hygiene to the control of Listeria monocytogenes in foods* (CXG 61-2007), CCFH55 discussed the updated definition of RTE food at length especially in light of the potential implications for other food hygiene texts. CCFH55 decided to request the Codex secretariat prepare a background document on definitions of RTE foods in food hygiene texts with a view toward considering using a harmonized definition for RTE foods in food hygiene texts in future.

#### **Secretariat's comments**

The issue of the safety of powdered infant formulae (PIF) is a very topical issue currently. The outbreak and recall that was ongoing at the time of CCFH was expanded and since then another huge recall of these products has been underway, linked to contamination with cereulide, a toxin produced by *Bacillus cereus*. The possible source of the toxin in the PIF is the ingredient arachidonic acid oil (ARA), an omega-6 fatty acid, where it may have been contaminated during the fermentation that produced the AHA. Some Observers are also proposing that the safety of PIF be considered by the WHA. Hence, timely scientific advice by FAO and WHO to facilitate any necessary revision of the *Code of hygienic practice for powdered formulae for infants and young children* (CXC 66-2008) will be important to ensure Codex is addressing critical and emerging issues.

#### **C. Chairperson's comments on the overall work of the committee in light of the purpose of the critical review**

CCFH55 was a success due to the commitment of the delegates and the work completed by the working groups prior to the plenary session. The timely scientific advice provided by JEMRA and guidance from both the Codex and CCFH Secretariats were instrumental in having a productive 55th session of CCFH. This committee completed work that is relevant to other Codex committees and had comprehensive, forward-looking discussions that demonstrated conscientiousness with regard to aligning texts, harmonizing definitions, and efficient and effective use of resources when it comes to requesting scientific advice and undertaking new work.