

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

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Agenda Item 6

CX/EURO 22/32/6  
April 2022

## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE

Thirty-second Session

Virtual

16 – 20 May 2022

### CODEX WORK RELEVANT TO THE REGION

(Prepared by the Coordinator for Europe)

#### 1. PURPOSE

1.1. The purpose of this document is to consider Codex work relevant to the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO) with the aim of identifying the current region-specific issues related to Codex work and ways to address these issues and solve any problems identified.

#### 2. WORK ITEMS OF RELEVANCE TO THE REGION

##### ***Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025:***

2.1. The 44th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC44) noted the progress made in the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025, welcomed the preparation of a review of the first biennium of the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 for discussion at CAC45 and endorsed the mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan as amended by the 81st session of the Executive Committee (CCEXEC81). CAC44 requested FAO and WHO Members to maintain and maximise co-ordination in the development and subsequent implementation of their respective food safety strategies.

2.2. Codex Members in the European region need to coordinate efforts to implement the work plan outlining the way forward for the Strategic Plan 2022-2025. This matter will be discussed under **agenda item 7**.

##### ***Statements of Principle (SoP) concerning the role of science in the Codex decision-making process and the extent to which other factors are taken into account***

2.3. The importance of this work was highlighted by several Members who with reference to their written comments emphasized the value of completing the guidance to Chairpersons and Members of Codex to ensure the scientific basis of Codex standards development and decision making, and the extent to which other factors are taken into account to facilitate consensus in standards setting.

2.4. CAC44 welcomed the ongoing work on guidance for Chairpersons and Members on the operationalization and the consistent application of the SOP and encouraged CCEXEC to complete this work in an expeditious manner.

2.5. The second CCEXEC Subcommittee on the Application of the SoP conducted two rounds for comments. Progress for thinking across key areas that relate to operationalisation of the SoP and development of practical guidance for Chairpersons and Members has been achieved.

2.6. Codex Members in the European region will need to coordinate their contributions to the discussion and welcomed developing the practical guidance, taking into account the conclusions of the document on the 'History and implications of the fourth paragraph of the Statements of Principle' prepared by the Codex Secretariat for CCEXEC77.<sup>1</sup>

##### ***One Health Approach***

2.7. 'One Health' is an integrated, unifying approach implementing intersectoral collaboration that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals and ecosystems. The areas of work in which

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<sup>1</sup> CX/EXEC 19/77/10

a One Health approach is particularly relevant include food safety, the control of zoonosis and combatting antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

2.8. The role of Codex is a crucial for a comprehensive solution of current and emerging problems in ensuring food safety and improving their quality.

2.9. Codex Members in the European Region are invited to discuss how to further promote a one health approach in the work of Codex.

### **Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Food**

#### **Proposed draft MRLs for zilpaterol hydrochloride residues (fat, kidney, liver, bovine meat)**

2.10. At the 30th and 31st sessions of CCEURO, the committee adopted a position related to non-usage of growth promoters and the establishment of Codex MRLs for such substances as zilpaterol hydrochloride.

2.11. At the 25th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs (CCRVDF25), the Committee was unable to reach consensus and therefore did not advance the proposed draft MRL for zilpaterol hydrochloride in the Step procedure and the draft MRL for zilpaterol hydrochloride was retained at Step 4

2.12. This issue was forwarded to CCEXEC81 for recommendations and then informing CAC44 on the way forward in frame the Codex standard setting process.

- CAC44 extensively discussed several proposed conclusions from the Chairperson that were based on the CCEXEC81 recommendation.
- CAC44 could not reach agreement on any of these proposed conclusions.
- CAC44 noted that as per the advice of the Legal Office of WHO speaking on behalf of the Legal Offices of FAO and WHO, the Commission did not have all tools at its disposition to resolve this issue in the context of the current Session due to the suspension of the rule relating to voting on any matter other than elections.
- Expressing his regret for not finding an agreement on any of the conclusions, the Chairperson noted there was no dispute on the risk assessment provided by JECFA, which, in his view, was the key requirement for advancement and adoption of the proposed draft standard.
- CAC44 requested the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission to undertake informal consultations with all relevant parties to encourage and enable sustained effort to build consensus in advance of CAC45.
- CAC44 directed the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission to submit a report two months in advance of CCEXEC83 to inform its further monitoring and critical review, and then to inform further discussion at CAC45.
- CAC44 acknowledging that, even with informal consultation mechanisms, consensus might not be forthcoming and that, having exhausted all the opportunities that successive Chairpersons would then have explored all options/avenues to find consensus, requested the Codex Secretariat to ensure that all tools, including voting, are at the disposal of CAC45 to allow resolution of this issue.

2.13. Codex Members in the European region are invited to exchange views on the outcome of CAC44.

2.14. Codex Members in the European region are invited to participate in informal consultations with all relevant parties to encourage and enable sustained effort to build consensus in advance of CAC45.

### **Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues**

2.15. CAC44 approved the proposed priority lists of pesticides for evaluation by JMPR as proposed by Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR52).

2.16. Members of the CCEURO region need to provide data in view of the demands for the establishment of the Codex schedules and priority lists of pesticides for evaluation by JMPR.

### **Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)**

2.17. CAC44 adopted the revised *Code of Practice (COP) to minimize and contain foodborne AMR* and the Guidelines on integrated monitoring and surveillance of foodborne AMR.

2.18. Codex Members in the European region are invited to take into consideration these standards and to further develop their policies against AMR.

2.19. Acknowledging the importance of a One Health approach to addressing AMR, the role of Codex, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) in developing coherent texts to support efforts to address AMR, and in line with the conclusion of CCEXEC81, CAC44 encouraged Members to advocate that IPPC prioritize the development of guidance on the use of antimicrobial agents for phytosanitary purposes.

2.20. Codex Members in the European region supported the final adoption of the Code of Practice as it was a significant advance taking into account scientific developments and a One Health approach. However, they introduced a number of reservations to those principles and provisions for which they were of the view that Codex should have adopted a more stringent approach.

### **E-commerce**

2.21. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated an expansion of internet sales/e-commerce. The e-commerce landscape will likely be of a long-term nature, as consumers adapt to new purchasing habits and also in light of the possibility of new waves of the epidemic and other possible challenges.

2.22. The 45th Session of the Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL45) started new work on proposed draft guidelines on internet sales / e-commerce and established an electronic working group (EWG) to progress this work. Adoption of the Guidelines will help countries in the European region to address food safety concerns via increasing the awareness level of consumers. Codex Members in the European region play an active role in the current ongoing work of EWG.

2.23. Codex Members in the European region will need review the proposed draft guidance on the food information requirements for pre-packaged foods to be offered via e-commerce and consider whether it can be advanced to Step 5

### **Balance between Codex subsidiary bodies**

2.24. In 2021, the 32nd Session of Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP32) recommended the adoption of the Procedure for committees working by correspondence, which were adopted by the CAC44. It was further highlighted that some issues, for instance the operationalization of the SoP (see above), because of their overarching nature, should be discussed within the Codex wider membership. CCEXEC80 and CCEXEC81 also discussed the report of the sub-committee on “Codex and the pandemic”, which analysed the challenges and possible evolutions of Codex in the post-pandemic era.

2.25. Codex Members in the European region should take an active part to these strategic issues and encourage a more balanced allocation of work between Codex subsidiary bodies, as appropriate.

### **Ongoing standard setting work of relevance to the region**

Table 1 provides an overview of other topics of special interest to Members in the European region.

**Table 1: Non-exhaustive list of ongoing Codex work of potential interest to CCEURO**

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>TOPICS OF INTERESTS TO THE CCEURO REGION</b>
CCFICS	Guidance on the prevention and control of food fraud
	Guidelines on recognition and maintenance of equivalence of National Food Control Systems (NFCS)
CCFL	Labelling information provided through technology
	Allergen labelling
CCPR	Priority lists of pesticides for evaluation by JMPR
	National registrations of pesticides
	Compounds of low public health concerns that could be exempted from the establishment of Codex maximum residue limits for pesticides (CXLs) (Biopesticides)
	Management of unsupported compounds without public health concern scheduled for periodic review by JMPR
	Engagement of JMPR in parallel reviews of new compounds
CCR/DF	Priority list of veterinary drugs for evaluation/re-evaluation by JECFA
	Joint EWG between CCR/DF and CCPR for consideration of compounds with dual uses by both committees and the possible harmonization of MRLs
CCCF	Maximum levels for total aflatoxins in certain cereals and cereal-based products including foods for infants and young children
	Maximum levels for lead in certain food categories
CCFO	Proposed draft revision to the <i>Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils</i> (CXS 33-1981)

COMMITTEE	TOPICS OF INTERESTS TO THE CCEURO REGION
	Review of the list of acceptable previous cargoes on fats and oils - Appendix 2 of CXC 36-1987
CCFH	Guidelines for the control of STEC in raw beef, fresh leafy vegetables, raw milk and raw milk cheeses and sprouts
	Proposed Draft Guidelines for the Safe Use and Re-Use of Water in Food Production
CCFA	<i>General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) (CXS 192-1995)</i>
	Proposed draft revision to the <i>Class Names and International Numbering System for Food Additives (CXG 36-1989)</i>
CCNFSDU	Finalization of the Review of the <i>Standard for Follow-up Formula (CXS 156-1987)</i>
	General Principles for the Establishment of NRVs-R for persons aged 6 - 36 months
	Development of nutrient profiling for labelling

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. CCEURO is invited to consider the above information and discuss the issues as proposed in paragraphs 2.6, 2.9, 2.13, 2.14, 2.16, 2.18, 2.23, 2.25 and Table 1.

3.2 Based on the above, CCEURO is invited to make recommendations for consideration by the Commission.