

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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Comments of African Union

AGENDA ITEM 4 - FINAL ADOPTION OF CODEX TEXTS: CX/CAC 19/42

ALIGNMENT OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS (CXC 52-2003) WITH HISTAMINE CONTROL GUIDANCE REP19/FH PARA. 38, APPENDIX II, STEP 8

Background

The histamine control guidance developed by CCFH was adopted by CAC41. At the 50th session, the committee was to identify an appropriate place for the control guidance in CXC 52-2003, and to consider whether the inclusion of the new guidance would require amendment of other sections of CXC 52-2003, which contain technical guidance on histamine. The Committee agreed with the proposed alignment by the EWG with minor editorial changes, and a change proposed by Norway in a salt fish step.

Position: African Union supports the placement of the proposed histamine control guidance in Code of Practice of Fish and Fishery Products (CXC 52-2003).

Rationale: The amendments and editorial corrections in CXC 52-2003 will provide consistency with the histamine control guidance adopted by CAC41.

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR DRIED OR DEHYDRATED GARLIC REP19/SCH PARA. 47, APPENDIX IV, STEP 8

Background: The CCSCH considered the proposed draft standard section by section, aligned its provisions with the draft CCSCH layout template and relevant sections of existing CCSCH Standards, made editorial corrections and took the following decisions:

- i. Section 2 - Product definition:
- ii. Section 3 – Composition:
- iii. Other sections: to align provisions on food additives, contaminants, hygiene, weights and measures, labelling and methods of analysis and sampling in accordance with the decisions taken with regard to the draft standard for dried or dehydrated ginger (see Appendix III), and in addition: deleted the hygienic requirements for packaging to avoid duplication with existing Codex texts; and inserted methods for “insect fragments” and “mold damage” under Section 9.
- iv. Annex I: The Committee discussed and agreed on all values and deleted a superfluous footnote.
- v. Annex II: The Committee discussed and agreed on parameters, inserting “Excreta, mammalian”, and agreed on all values.

Noting that all outstanding issues had been resolved, the CCSCH agreed to forward the proposed draft standard for dried or dehydrated garlic to CAC42 for adoption at Step 5/8

Position: African Union supports adoption of the proposed draft standard for dried or dehydrated garlic.

Rationale: Garlic is one of the most widely traded spices in the world. Having international standard for this product will contribute to safe trade in dried or dehydrated garlic.

PROPOSED DRAFT SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE IDENTITY AND PURITY OF FOOD ADDITIVES ARISING FROM THE 86TH JECFA MEETING REP19/FA PARA. 26, APPENDIX III PART A AT STEP 5/8

Background: CCFA51 agreed to forward the following full specifications for food additives to CAC42 for adoption at Step 5/8 following JECFA evaluations.

- a) 5 food additives specifications designated as full (FAO JECFA Monographs 22, Rome, 2019)
- b) 24 new specifications for flavouring agents (FAO JECFA Monographs 22, Rome, 2018)
- c) 3 Flavouring agents considered for revision of specifications only

- d) consequential amendment to the list of codex specifications of food additives (CXM 6-2018) removal of Red 2 G and to change the name for INS 160a(iv) from “Carotenes, beta-, algae” to “β-carotene-rich extract from Dunaliella salina”

Position: African Union supports the recommendations.

Rationale: Scientific evaluations conducted by JECFA indicated no adverse health effect of the additives

REVISION OF THE CLASS NAMES AND THE INTERNATIONAL NUMBERING SYSTEM FOR FOOD ADDITIVES (CXG 36-1989) (PROPOSED DRAFT) REP19/FA PARA. 149 (I), APPENDIX IX PART, ONGOING WORK, AT STEP 5/8

Background: At CCFA51 an in-session working group on INS made recommendations on: removal of four additives from the INS; changes to Functional Classes and Technological Purposes for Additives in the INS; assignment of an INS Number to β- carotene- rich extract from Dunaliella salina hence revision in section 3 and 4

- a) Deletion of INS names and numbers ie. 128 Red 2G and 1411 Distarch glycerol
- b) Changes to the functional classes and technological purposes for Methacrylate copolymer, basic INS No. 1205 from glazing agent to carrier or encapsulating agent.
- c) Change of name of carotenes algae to β-carotene- rich extract from Dunaliella salina INS 160a(iv)

Position: African Union supports the proposed draft revisions.

Rationale: Red 2G does not have a JECFA ADI and as such, all provisions for Red 2G in the step process in GSFA would be discontinued

PROPOSED DRAFT ML FOR CADMIUM FOR CHOCOLATES CONTAINING OR DECLARING, REP19/CF PARA. 56, APPENDIX III, STEP 5/8

Position: African Union does not support adoption of ML of 0.3 mg/kg for chocolate products containing or declaring <30% total cocoa solids on a dry matter.

Cadmium contamination in food is a concern in many countries. The metal can accumulate in the kidneys leading to irreversible tubular renal dysfunction. Although JECFA indicated that cadmium in cocoa and cocoa based products could not pose a health concern, it still estimated a PMTDI for cadmium of 25 µg / kg bw per month. Cadmium content based on in the data from Africa used for the analysis of occurrence of cadmium in chocolates (<30% of total cocoa solids) ranged from 0.01 - 0.02 mg/kg. The low levels of cadmium in chocolate from Africa, reflects the use of good agricultural and manufacturing practices.

AGENDA ITEM 5 - ADOPTION OF CODEX TEXTS AT STEP 5: CX/CAC 19/42/5

PROPOSED DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE ON FOOD ALLERGEN MANAGEMENT FOR FOOD BUSINESS OPERATORS, REP19/FH PARA. 56, APPENDIX III, STEP 5

Background: CCFH49 agreed to start new work on management of food allergens, with Australia, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States as co-leads. At CCFH50, Australia introduced the revised proposal prepared by the co-chairs based on written comments received from EWG. The main issues addressed were:

- thresholds for allergens,
- allergen risk assessment methods
- the use of precautionary allergen labeling (e.g., “may contain”).

Position: African Union supports:

- the use of precautionary level for allergen management
- request for scientific advice from FAO/WHO related to thresholds and risk assessment to support decisions for allergen management

Rationale: The use of precautionary allergen labeling is appropriate particularly when it is not considered as replacement for implementation of measures necessary to prevent or minimize the presence of undeclared allergens. The proposed code establishes the principles of allergen identification and sources of risk rather than providing prescriptive guidance. This will allow flexibility in its implementation and practices.

PROPOSED DRAFT GUIDANCE FOR THE LABELING OF NON-RETAIL CONTAINERS: REP19/FL PARA 31 -66, STEP 5

Background: These Guidelines apply to the labelling of non-retail containers of food, including the information provided in the accompanying physical documents or by other means, and the presentation thereof (excluding food additives and processing aids) , not intended to be offered directly to the consumer

Position: African Union supports adoption of the proposed draft guidance but recommends the amendment of the definition of “food business” to include “harvesting” the definition will read as follows:

“Food Business” means an entity or undertaking, carrying out one or more activity (ies) related to any stages of production, **harvesting** processing, packaging, storage and distribution (including trade) of food.

Rationale: The food value chain does not always start with farmed produce (production), but could start with raw materials that are harvested from the wild e.g. Baobab fruits and Shea nuts. A case which is common in Africa.

DRAFT PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE ASSESSMENT AND USE OF VOLUNTARY THIRD PARTY ASSURANCE (VTPA) PROGRAMMES, REP19/FICS PARA. 53, APPENDIX III, STEP 5

Background: According to the scope and objective of the document, the proposed guidelines are intended to assist competent authorities in the effective assessment and transparent use of reliable voluntary third party assurance, information/data in support of their NFCS objectives.

Position: Whilst not objecting to the advancement of the standard at step 5, African Union associates with the concerns raised by several African countries on the draft principles and guidelines for the assessment and use of voluntary Third Party Assurance (vTPA) programmes.

African Union notes that Third Party Assurance programmes, are essentially private standards and do not take into account the unique circumstances of producers in developing countries. AU is concerned that adoption of vTPA programs could potentially result in multiple certification systems at the national level. Moreover, questions still remain about the legitimacy of these vTPA programme, as they are not developed in an inclusive manner. African Union is of the opinion that integrating vTPA programmes into governmental food control schemes will only create additional layer of control that will affect producers especially from developing countries and could lead to trade barriers. AU therefore reiterates, that vTPA should in no way replace official government inspection programs.

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR DRIED OREGANO, REP19/SCH PARA. 30(I), APPENDIX II, STEP 5

Background: Turkey chaired the EWG for the development of the proposed draft standard. The Committee noted that consensus had been reached on all provisions except those parameters in square brackets, which required further consideration by the Committee. The Committee considered the proposed draft standard section by section; made editorial corrections and further amendments for alignment with the draft CCSCHE layout template and existing CCSCHE Standards. The committee also agreed to forward the provisions on food additives, labelling and methods of analysis and sampling to the appropriate committees for endorsement. The Committee agreed to forward the proposed draft Standard for dried Oregano to CAC42 for adoption at Step 5.

Position: African Union supports adoption of the proposed draft standard for dried oregano

Rationale: Establishing international standard for dried oregano will contribute to safe trade of this commodity.

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR DRIED ROOTS, RHIZOMES AND BULBS — DRIED OR DEHYDRATED GINGER, REP19/SCH PARA. 39(I), APPENDIX III, STEP 5

Background: This work was led by Nigeria. The Committee considered the proposed draft standard section by section, making editorial corrections and the amendments on.

- i. Section 2 Product definition
- ii. Section 8 Labelling,
- iii. Section 9.1 Methods of analysis
- iv. Annex I, Annex II

The Committee recommended the proposed draft standard for dried roots, rhizomes and bulbs — dried or dehydrated ginger for adoption at Step 5 by CAC42

Position: African Union supports adoption of the proposed draft standard for dried or dehydrated ginger.

Rationale: Dried roots, rhizomes and bulbs – dried or dehydrated ginger are important agricultural commodities world-wide and especially in Africa (Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Togo, Senegal, Ghana, Cameroon etc). Having international standard for this product will contribute to and facilitate safe trade.

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR DRIED BASIL, REP19/SCH PARA. 66(I), APPENDIX V, STEP 5

Background: This work was chaired by Egypt. The committee recommended forwarding the proposed draft standards for dried basil to CAC42 for adoption at Step 5 after agreement on the various sections of the proposed draft standard.

Position: African Union supports adoption of the proposed draft standard for dried basil.

Rationale: Dried basil is an important spice that is traded widely with significant economic importance to Africa in particular. Having international standard for this commodity will contribute to and facilitate safe trade.

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR DRIED FLORAL PARTS – DRIED CLOVES, REP19/SCH PARA. 88(I), APPENDIX VI, STEP 5

- **Background:** The committee agreed on the requirements in the various sections of the proposed draft standard including the Scope, Styles, Essential composition and quality factors,
- Other sections, Annex I – Chemical characteristics for dried floral parts (Cloves), Annex II – Physical characteristics for dried floral parts (Cloves). The provisions on food additives, labelling and methods of analysis have also been endorsed by the relevant committees.

Position: African Union supports adoption of the proposed draft standard for dried cloves.

Rationale: Dried cloves are an important spice that is traded widely with significant economic importance to Africa in particular. Having international standard for this commodity will contribute to and facilitate safe trade.

AGENDA ITEM 7 - PROPOSAL FOR NEW WORK: CX/CAC 19/42/8

New work on development of guidelines for the control of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) in beef, unpasteurized milk and cheese produced from unpasteurized milk, leafy greens, and sprouts, REP19/FH Para 76, Step 2/3

Background: According to FAO/WHO JEMRA report on STEC commissioned by CCFH47 (2015), STEC poses significant public health burden worldwide as well as the risk management challenges and trade. During CCFH 50, United States and Panama co-chaired the PWG on CCFH Work Priorities and introduced the discussion paper and project document submitted by the United States, Chile and Uruguay on “Control of Shiga Toxin-Producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) in Beef, Unpasteurized Milk and Cheese produced from Unpasteurized Milk, Leafy Greens, and Sprouts as new work.

The Committee agreed to establish an EWG chaired by Chile and the United States to prepare draft guidelines for consideration at the next session

Position: African Union supports new work on STEC and agrees that beef and leafy greens should be considered the first priority commodities due to public health burden and impact on global trade.

Rationale: The STEC guidance document will complement already existing codex guidance (e.g. control of salmonella in meat) to enable countries better manage microbiological contamination of food with STEC.

Proposals for New Work on Internet Sales/e-Commerce: REP19/FL para 86 - 66

Background: This work has been necessitated by the need to provide international guidance on labelling aspects of e-commerce/internet sales due to the fact that globally, there is a growth and increasing diversification of e-commerce/internet sales. However there is no international guidance.

Position: African Union supports approval for new work on guidance for Internet Sales/e-Commerce.

Rationale: The proposal aims to develop a text that will provide Governments, the food Industry and consumers with clear and transparent guidance on the labeling of foods sold through the internet sales/e-commerce. This will contribute to ensuring food safety, protecting consumers from food fraudulent practices and promoting fair trade globally

Revision to the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods: allergen labelling and guidance on precautionary allergen or advisory labelling, REP19/FL para 91 – 97

Background: CCFL45 supported the new work due to the fact that among others, currently there is a need:-

- i. to clarify the listed food and ingredients known to cause hypersensitivity and update the current list to include new food and ingredients that have been found to cause hypersensitivity as well.
- ii. to provide more technical specifications for the food industry on how allergens should be presented on food labels to ensure consumer protection. Noting that the current allergen labelling provisions in the standard are considered to lack useful clarity and details for Industry.
- iii. to look into and review allergen labeling information guidance, aiming at making it more clear and understood by consumers. Noting that currently there is an increase in the use of precautionary or advisory labelling and “free from” claims that lead allergen labelling not always clear and not understood by the consumer.

Position: African Union supports approval of the Project document on allergen labelling and guidance on precautionary allergen advisory labelling

Rationale: The proposal aims to review and clarify the provisions relevant to allergen labelling in GSFLPF and provide consistent allergen information for consumers. Noting that it will help to ensure food safety, protect a consumer from consuming food/ingredients of which they might be allergic to; and promote fair trade

Project document for new work on the consolidation of Codex Guidelines related to equivalence, REP19/FICS Para 32 (ii) and (iii) (b), Appendix II, Step 2/3

Background: The proposed draft guidance on the use of systems equivalence includes a significant number of concepts that overlap or duplicate existing Codex Guidelines, especially the Guidelines on the Judgment of Equivalence of Sanitary Measures Associated with Food Inspection and Certification Systems (CAC/GL 53-2003) and the Guidelines for the Development of Equivalence Agreements Regarding Food Imports and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CAC/GL 34-1999).

Position: African Union supports consolidation of all guidelines related to equivalence.

Rationale: The consolidation is necessary to remove overlapping documents on equivalence. This could potentially prevent confusion especially where countries have to consult several documents in the process of equivalence determination.

REVISED FOOD-ADDITIVE PROVISIONS OF THE GSFA IN RELATION TO THE ALIGNMENT OF THE THIRTEEN STANDARDS FOR MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS (RIPENED CHEESE), TWO STANDARDS FOR SUGARS, TWO STANDARDS FOR NATURAL MINERAL WATERS, THREE STANDARDS FOR CEREALS, PULSES AND LEGUMES AND THREE STANDARDS FOR VEGETABLE PROTEINS, REP19/FA PARA. 57 (II)A, APPENDIX VI PART B1-B3

Background: An EWG, chaired by Australia and co-chaired by the United States of America and Japan, and working in English only was established to consider:

- i. the alignment of the following commodity standards listed in the forward workplan: with the assistance of IDF, the following milk and milk commodity standards including finishing the cheese standards: CXS 208-1999, CXS 221-2001, CXS 250-2006, CXS 251-2006, CXS 252-2006, CXS 273-1968, CXS 275-1973, CXS 278-1978 and CXS 283-1978; plus additional commodity standards CXS 19-1981, CXS 33-1981, CXS 210-1999, CXS 211-1999, CXS 256-2007, CXS 326-2017, CXS 327-2017, CXS 328-2017 and CXS 329-2017;
- ii. Consider how future divergence of the GSFA and the commodity standards can be avoided as the commodity committees amend or develop new food-additive provisions; and
- iii. Revise the food additive section of the commodity standards as indicated CRD2 Annex 1 Part A to include tamarind seed polysaccharide (INS 437) under the appropriate functional class header with a maximum use level (ML) of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP)

Position: African Union supports approval of this new work.

Rationale: The work is necessary to ensure alignment of the food additives provisions of commodity standard with the GSFA as the single authoritative reference document for food additives.

DEVELOPMENT OF A CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE REDUCTION AND PREVENTION OF CADMIUM CONTAMINATION IN COCOA BEANS, REP19/CF, APPVIII

Background: This work is part of the effort to reduce and prevent cadmium in cocoa beans.

Position: African Union recommends approval for new work to develop a code of practice for the reduction and prevention of cadmium contamination in cocoa beans

Rationale: Cocoa is a valuable commercial crop that contributes to the economies of several developing countries including Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Cameroon and other cocoa-producing

African countries. Cadmium levels in cocoa has attracted attention and the CAC has already adopted MLs for cadmium in certain categories of chocolates and cocoa-derived products. The Code of Practice (COP) will provide guidance to Member States and the cocoa production industry on the prevention and reduction of cadmium contamination in cocoa beans during production and post-harvest processing: fermentation, drying and storing.