



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE
Thirty-third Session
Berlin, Germany
27 – 31 May 2024

CODEx WORK RELEVANT TO THE REGION

(Prepared by the Coordinator for Europe)

I. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1. Since the revitalization of the FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committees (RCCs) in 2016, the identification of Codex work relevant to the region has been a recurrent agenda item in all RCC sessions.
2. At the 32nd Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO32), Members highlighted the following issues related to Codex work that was ongoing at the time of the session:
 - (i) operationalization of the Statements of Principle Concerning the Role of Science in the Codex Decision-Making Process and the Extent to which other Factors are Taken into Account (SoP);
 - (ii) participation in consultations aimed at finding a consensus on proposed maximum residue limits (MRLs) for zilpaterol hydrochloride;
 - (iii) implementation of Codex texts on antimicrobial resistance (AMR);
 - (iv) webcasting Codex meetings, including sessions of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC);
 - (v) the need for a more balanced allocation of work between Codex subsidiary bodies, including through the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP); and
 - (vi) strengthening the One Health approach within Codex activities.

II. PURPOSE

3. In line with the terms of reference for RCCs, which stipulate that the Committee shall draw the attention of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) to any aspects of CAC's work of particular significance to the region, this document aims to facilitate the identification of relevant ongoing Codex work, issues related to these work items, and possible ways of addressing them.

III. WORK ITEMS OF RELEVANCE TO THE REGION

4. The information presented is based on feedback provided by Members from the region to the Coordinator for Europe, data on participation in Electronic Working Groups (EWGs), and comments by Members from the region in the CAC and its subsidiary body sessions.

A. MATTERS OF RELEVANCE DISCUSSED AT THE CODEx ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION, ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, AND THE CODEx COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Operationalization of the SoP

5. CAC46 (2023) agreed on the need to gain more experience on the application of the draft guidance, and to revisit the draft guidance in the light of the experience gained.¹

Members from the European region are encouraged to share any experience gained in the use of the draft guidance.

¹ REP23/CAC, paragraph 194.

Consultations on finding a consensus for the draft MRLs for zilpaterol hydrochloride in cattle liver, kidney and muscle

6. During July and August 2023, the CAC Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons held informal consultations with 89 Codex Members to facilitate consensus on the draft MRLs for zilpaterol hydrochloride in cattle liver, kidney and muscle. The views of 30 Member countries from the European region (59%) were shared during these consultations. CAC46 (2023) adopted the MRLs for zilpaterol hydrochloride in cattle liver, kidney and muscle at Step 8 by vote.²

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)

7. At CCEXEC84 (2023), the Codex Secretariat informed that the revised *Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne AMR* (CXC 61-2005) would be part of the survey on use and impact of Codex standards in 2024.³

Members from the European region are encouraged to take into consideration the existing Codex texts on foodborne AMR when defining and implementing their national strategies to address AMR and to use the 2024 survey to share information on their endeavours.

Webcasting

8. CAC46 (2023) noted the interest of CCEURO in webcasting sessions of CCEXEC and requested the Codex Secretariat to further explore this issue considering the existing practices in other similar FAO bodies, and to present a paper at CAC47 (2024).⁴

Members from the European region are encouraged to share their experience with webcast meetings since CCEURO32 and to actively engage in the discussion on this subject at CAC47.

One Health approach

9. CAC46 (2023) encouraged FAO and WHO to continue their fruitful collaboration when implementing the FAO Food Safety Priorities and WHO Global Strategy for Food Safety, including through the food safety element of the Quadripartite One Health Joint Plan of Action.⁵

10. In discussions at CAC45 (2022)⁶, e.g. in relation to MRLs for pesticide residues, Members from the European region stressed the need for Codex to reflect on how to ensure that the close links between human, animal and environmental health were identified and addressed in Codex work, in particular given that the statutes of CAC stipulate coordination of all food standards work.

Members from the European region are encouraged to identify possible ways of addressing the One Health approach in the frame of Codex work.

New work and work prioritization

11. CCEXEC85 (2023)⁷ recommended that the Codex Secretariat work to prepare practical guidance and engage with Members to address the challenges related to new work and work prioritization, as recommended by CCEXEC83 (2022).

Members from the European region are encouraged to identify challenges related to new work and work prioritization as well as potential solutions to facilitate the preparation of practical guidance by the Codex Secretariat.

Virtual sessions of CAC and subsidiary bodies

12. At CCGP33 (2023), the Codex Secretariat confirmed that the Codex Rules of Procedure would continue to be interpreted in a manner that includes virtual sessions of CAC Subsidiary Bodies. With respect to sessions of CAC, CCGP33 deferred the review of the Rules of Procedure and requested FAO and WHO to inform CCGP34 on their possible plans to amend their rules of procedure to include virtual meetings of their Governing Bodies. CCGP33 further emphasized the importance of flexibility in working modalities for Codex meetings.⁸

² REP23/CAC, paragraphs 123 and 148; CX/EXEC 23/85/7.

³ REP23/EXEC1, paragraph 114.

⁴ REP23/CAC, paragraph 190.

⁵ REP23/CAC, paragraph 220.

⁶ REP22/CAC, paragraphs 79 and 84.

⁷ REP23/EXEC2, paragraph 92.

⁸ REP23/GP, paragraphs 71-80.

Members from the European region are invited to take note of the outcome of CCGP33 and encouraged to share lessons learnt on the use of the new working modalities employed by CAC and its subsidiary bodies with the Coordinator for Europe to inform future discussions on the “model for future Codex work” (CX/EXEC 23/85/3, Appendix II) - a living document which CCEXEC85 (2023) agreed to periodically review.

Standard for Fruit Juices and Nectars

13. CAC46 (2023) agreed to establish an EWG under CAC to consider the proposal to amend the *General Standard for Fruit Juices and Nectars* (CXS 247-2005) regarding the Brix levels for *Vitis labrusca* and hybrids thereof and to submit a report to the Codex Secretariat for consideration by CCEXEC87 and CAC47 (2024).⁹

Members from the European region that registered experts to the EWG under CAC are encouraged to submit comments on the proposed amendments in preparation of the consideration of the issue by CCEXEC87 and CAC47.

B. MATTERS OF RELEVANCE DISCUSSED IN TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

14. The following non-exhaustive list of ongoing Codex work of potential relevance to CCEURO is based on feedback provided by Members to the Coordinator for Europe, participation in EWGs, and comments made by Members in informal coordination meetings organized by the Coordinator for Europe for sessions of CAC subsidiary bodies since 2023.

Table 1. List of ongoing Codex work of potential interest to CCEURO

COMMITTEE	NEXT SESSION FOLLOWING CCEURO33	TOPICS OF INTERESTS	STATUS
CCPR	CCPR55, 3-6 June 2024	Priority lists of pesticides for evaluation by JMPR	Recurrent process. CAC46 approved the new priority list (6 new compounds, 17 new uses and other evaluations, 5 compounds for periodic review evaluations, and 3 reserved ones).
		National registrations of pesticides	Recurrent process. A Circular Letter (CL) was issued with a deadline of 15 February 2024 to inform the national registrations database. An EWG has assessed comments and prepared its report for CCPR55.
		Management of unsupported compounds without public health concern scheduled for periodic review by JMPR	Recurrent process: An EWG has assessed comments and prepared its report for CCPR55 in line with the agreed CCPR management procedure.
		Operational procedures of CCPR and JMPR	JMPR in Sept. 2023 considered possibilities for enhancement. An EWG has assessed comments of JMPR and prepared its report including priorities for enhancement for CCPR55.
CCFICS		Prevention and control of food fraud	Returned to Step 2 by CCFICS26. An EWG is assessing comments and preparing revised

⁹ REP23/CAC, paragraph 172.

	CCFICS27, 16-20 September 2024		proposed draft guidelines for CCFICS27.
		Traceability	CAC46 approved new work. An EWG is assessing comments on potential revisions to the <i>Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification Systems (CXG 60- 2006)</i>
CCNFSDU	CCNFSDU44, 2-6 October 2024	Establishment of NRVs-R for persons aged 6 - 36 months	At Step 6. A CL was issued with a deadline 15 October 2023. An EWG will present a report for consideration by CCNFSDU44.
		Nutritional Composition of foods and beverages made from plant-based and other alternative protein sources	A CL on proposals for new work and emerging issues was issued with a deadline in June 2024. A discussion paper on a proposal for new work may be presented at CCNFSDU44.
CCRVDF	CCRVDF27, 21 October 2024	Priority list of veterinary drugs for evaluation/re-evaluation by JECFA	Recurrent process. CAC46 approved the new priority list (14 compounds of which 4 for extrapolation)
		Compounds with dual uses by CCRVDF and CCPR and the possible harmonization of MRLs	Recurrent process. Since 2021 the joint CCPR/CCRVDF EWG is identifying issues affecting both committees and recommending ways to address them.
CCFL	CCFL48, 27 October 2024	Allergen labelling	At Step 6. A CL was issued with a deadline on 19 April 2023. An EWG will present a report for consideration by CCFL48
		Guidelines on the use of technology to provide food information	At Step 6. A CL was issued with a deadline on 14 April 2024. An EWG will present a report for consideration by CCFL48.
		Sustainability labelling claims	Project document stage. An EWG is assessing comments to identify areas where CCFL could provide guidance.
		Labelling of alcoholic beverages	Discussion paper stage. CL was issued with a deadline of 14 April 2024. WHO will present a discussion paper based on responses received.
CCCF	CCCF18, First half of 2025	Maximum levels for lead in certain food categories	EWG presented its report in January 2024 which was considered at CCCF17 in April 2024.
		Reduction of ciguatera poisoning	EWG presented its report in January 2024 which was considered at CCCF17 in April 2024.

		Foresight on emerging issues in food and feed safety relevant to contaminants	Recurrent process. A CL was issued with a deadline on 25 March 2024. Responses together with information from FAO and WHO was considered at CCCF17 in April 2024.
CCFA	CCFA55, First half of 2025	<i>General Standard for Food Additives</i>	Recurrent process. A CL was issued with a deadline of 15 January 2024. The report of a PWG that reviewed the replies to the CL was considered by CCFA54 in April 2024.
		<i>Class Names and International Numbering System for Food Additives (CXG 36-1989)</i>	Recurrent process: A CL was issued with a deadline in September 2023. The report of an EWG that reviewed the replies to the CL was considered by CCFA54 in April 2024.
		Baker's yeast	Project document stage. A discussion paper on the development of a new standard was considered by CCFA54 in April 2024.
CCMAS	CCMAS44, May 2025	Database and E-book	Proposal to develop a database for <i>Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CXS 234-1999)</i> and e-book applications for the <i>General Guidelines on Sampling (CXG 50-2004)</i> was discussed at CCMAS43 in May 2024.
CCSCH	CCSCH8, Second half of 2025	Standard for Dried Floral Parts – Saffron	Adopted at Step 8 by CAC45 (2022) pending endorsement of the labelling provisions by CCFL.
CCFO	CCFO29, February 2026	Olive oils and olive pomace oils	At Step 5/8. CCFO28 agreed to send draft revised standard to CAC47 for adoption, but established an EWG to collect and assess additional global scientific data and information for olive oil to be considered at CCFO29.
		Calanus oil/ fish oils	At Step 5/8. CCFO28 agreed to send the inclusion of Calanus oil to the <i>Standard for Fish Oils (CXS 329-2017)</i> to CAC47 for adoption.
		Reduction of trans-fatty acids or elimination of PHOs	Project document stage. CCFO28 agreed to send the proposal for new work on the proposed revisions to Codex standards on fats and oils to reduce trans-fatty acid intake for approval by CAC47 and established an EWG to prepare the work for CCFO29.

CCFH	CCFH55, October 2025	Control of STEC in raw beef, fresh leafy vegetables, raw milk and raw milk cheeses and sprouts	At Step 5/8. CCFH54 agreed to send the inclusion of the proposed draft annexes on fresh leafy vegetables and sprouts in the <i>Guidelines for the Control of Shiga Toxin-Producing Escherichia Coli (STEC) in Raw Beef, Fresh Leafy Vegetables, Raw Milk and Raw Milk Cheeses</i> (CXG 99-2023) to CAC47 for final adoption.
		Safe use and re-use of water in food production	At Step 5/8 (Draft annex on Milk and Milk Products). CCFH54 agreed to send the inclusion of this draft annex in the <i>Guidelines for the safe use and re-use of water in food production and processing</i> (CXG 100-2023) to CAC47 for final adoption. Returned to Step 2/3 (Draft annex on Fish and Fishery Products). CCFH54 established an EWG to assess comments and prepare the revised proposed annex for CCFH55. The EWG will also prepare a new annex on water fit-for-purpose assessment, safety management, and technologies for recovery and treatment of water for reuse.
		Traditional markets	At Step 5/8. CCFH54 agreed to send the proposed draft guidelines to CAC47 for final adoption.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

15. CCEURO33 is invited to discuss the issues raised in paragraphs 5-13 and Table 1 and make recommendations for consideration by the Commission.