

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) held its 54th session in Nairobi, Kenya, from 11 to 15 March 2024, at the kind invitation of the Governments of the Kenya and the United States of America (USA). Dr Evelyne Mbandi, Director, Food Safety and Inspection Service, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) chaired the Session, and Prof George Ooko Abong, University of Nairobi, co-chaired the Session, which was attended by \*\* Member Countries, one Member Organization and \*\* Observer Organizations. The list of participants is contained in Appendix I.

## OPENING

2. The Honourable Mithika Linturi, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Government of Kenya, opened the meeting, extending a warm welcome to all participants and expressing appreciation to the USA for their support and engagement in co-hosting this important meeting. The Cabinet Secretary highlighted that food safety was key to attaining several of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including zero hunger, health and well-being, clean water and sanitation, and responsible production; that without food safety, the SDGs would not be met and that Codex standards must continue to be the bedrock of food safety in a changing world, supporting collective efforts to end hunger and malnutrition by 2030.
3. The Honourable Nakhumicha S. Wafula, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Health of Kenya celebrated the international partnerships being fostered by this co-hosting collaboration, noting that together, we could build a future where safe and nutritious food is accessible to all, and where the health and well-being of communities are safeguarded through robust food hygiene standards.
4. The Honourable Rebecca Miano, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry of Kenya in welcoming delegates noted that co-hosting this session with the USA served as a vivid demonstration, dedication, and declaration of Kenya's commitment to global food safety and that this collaboration magnified the crucial role of strong international partnerships in elevating the standards of food consumed not only within their own borders but across the globe.
5. Dr José Emilio Esteban, Under Secretary for Food Safety, USA, in the opening ceremony underlined the importance of Codex work, saying that he believed Codex to be the most important food safety body in the world because everyone in the world was entitled to the same level of food safety.
6. Mr Steve Wearne, the Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) also addressed the meeting, noting the important contribution of CCFH to the work of CAC.
7. CCFH54 observed a minute's silence in memory of the late Dr Hajime Toyofuku, Professor, Yamaguchi University, Japan, who for many years supported the work of CCFH, and provided a leadership role in areas such as control of *Vibrio* spp. and histamine.

### Division of competence<sup>1</sup>

8. CCFH54 noted the division of competence between the European Union (EU) and its Member States, in accordance with paragraph 5, Rule II, of the Rules of Procedure of the CAC.

### ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 1)<sup>2</sup>

9. CCFH54 adopted the provisional agenda as its agenda for the Session.
10. CCFH54 also agreed to consider Agenda Items 10, 11 and 12 under Agenda Item 13 New Work/Forward Work Plan.

### MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND/OR OTHER CODEX SUBSIDIARY BODIES TO THE COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 2)<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> CRD1 (Division of competence and voting right between the European Union and its Member States)

<sup>2</sup> CX/FH 24/54/1; CRD22 (East African Community); CRD29 (Burundi)

<sup>3</sup> CX/FH 24/54/2; CRD07 (European Union, Rwanda); CRD19 (Morocco); CRD20 (African Union (AU)); CRD21 (Nigeria); CRD22 (East African Community); CRD29 (Burundi); CRD35 (United Republic of Tanzania)

11. The Codex Secretariat summarised the information provided in CX/FH 24/54/2, noting that the *Guidelines for the control of Shiga Toxin-Producing Escherichia coli (STEC) in Raw Beef, Fresh Leafy Vegetables, Raw Milk and Raw Milk Cheeses, and Sprouts* (General Section, Annex I on raw beef and Annex III on raw milk and raw milk cheeses), and the *Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production and Processing* (General Section and Annex I on Fresh Produce) had been adopted by CAC46 and published as CXG 99-2023 and CXG 100-2023 respectively. CAC46 in approving the new work proposed by CCFH had requested CCFH to carefully consider the relationship between the new guidelines related to food hygiene control measures in traditional markets for food, the General principles of Food Hygiene and the regional texts on street vended foods (This matter will be addressed under Agenda Item 8).
12. With regard to the work on the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 the Codex Secretariat advised CCFH that the first draft was open for comments until 4 April and encouraged Members and Observers to respond as well engage in the informal meetings organized at a regional level by the Chairperson and vice-Chairpersons of the Commission and the Regional Coordinators on this topic.
13. Updating on the work on food allergens in the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL), the Codex Secretariat noted that work had been adopted at step 5 and was expected to be completed this year, hence CCFH may need to consider how its text on food allergen management might need to be updated to align with the work of CCFL.
14. Noting that the 42<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS42) had completed its Revision on the *Guidelines for sampling* (CXG 50-2004) and the CCFH50 had agreed to revisit work on sampling plans for histamine at that time, the Codex secretariat indicated that CCMAS would continue to develop an information document to support implementation of CXG 50-2004 over its next one to two sessions and in this context it may be appropriate for CCFH to wait for that information before revisiting the histamine sampling plans.

### Conclusion

15. CCFH54 noted the information presented and agreed to:
  - i. encourage Members and Observers to actively contribute to the discussions in CCEXEC and CAC (e.g. sharing experience on application of the draft guidance on SoP and providing inputs on the development of Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031) and to note the encouragement to submit discussion papers or new work proposals on NFPS using existing mechanisms;
  - ii. consider the update on the food allergen work in CCFL47 under Agenda Item 13 “New work/Forward Workplan”, acknowledging that CCFH may need to follow up at its next session; and
  - iii. postpone consideration of histamine sampling plans until the work on supporting information and tools for the application of CXG 50-2004 was completed.

### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE WORK OF FAO AND WHO (INCLUDING JEMRA) (Agenda Item 3)<sup>4</sup>

16. A WHO Representative, provided a summary of some of the work undertaken by JEMRA since CCFH53, highlighting the recent JEMRA meetings, the publications on outcomes of the expert meetings on the control of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* in poultry meat and the quantitative risk assessment of *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat cold smoked fish, frozen vegetables and ready-to-eat diced cantaloupe.
17. The WHO Representative informed CCFH54 of the ongoing WHO work on traditional markets for food, indicating its particular focus was on minimizing the public health risks from live animal markets and that they considered their work to be complementary to CCFH work in this area. The WHO Representative also announced that the theme for World Food Safety Day 2024 would be “Food Safety: prepare for the unexpected” and encouraged Members and Observers to use this opportunity to engage in preparedness for managing food safety incidents.
18. An FAO Representative highlighted the outputs of the recent joint FAO/WHO scientific advice meetings addressing food allergens, noting the availability of five reports on this topic, as well as the work on viruses in foods, in responses to the prior CCFH requests. The Representative highlighted that the work on viruses to date had addressed four of the five requests for scientific advice from CCFH. The Representative also highlighted ongoing work to support low- and middle-income countries build their capacity to implement Codex standards, and to encourage and empower countries to apply risk analysis processes under a One Health umbrella to ensure food safety.

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<sup>4</sup> CX/FH 24/54/3; CRD20 (AU); CRD21 (Nigeria); CRD22 (EAC); CRD29 (Burundi); CRD35 (United Republic of Tanzania)

19. Following the presentation on the recently published GHP and HACCP Toolbox for Food Safety by FAO, which aimed to support the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CXC 1-1969), there was a request that this tool be made available in French, as this would support Members efforts in implementing CXC 1-1969. The FAO Representative confirmed that translation into the official languages of FAO was underway.
20. A Member highlighted the importance of providing tailored guidance and training to all stakeholders on good hygiene practices as it was crucial to ensure that all decision-makers and stakeholders were accommodated according to their specific circumstances.

### Conclusion

21. CCFH54 noted:
  - the information provided by FAO and WHO and expressed appreciation for the valuable work that has been undertaken since CCFH53;
  - the importance of this work in progressing the ongoing work in CCFH and scheduling new work, and that further details could be provided during the relevant agenda items; and
  - the work of FAO on the Good Hygiene Practices Toolbox and encouraged Members to liaise directly with FAO for the further implementation and development of these tools.

### INFORMATION FROM THE WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (WOAH) (Agenda item 4)

22. The Representative of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) could not join the session but submitted a statement to the meeting noting that WOAH continued to follow the work of CCFH and provided the following specific comments.
23. With regard to the possible revision of the *Guidelines for the Control of Campylobacter and Salmonella in Chicken Meat* (CXG 78-2011), the Representative noted that the text included references to some Glossary terms and relevant chapters of the WOAH *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)*, and if CCFH were to begin work on the revision of these Guidelines, WOAH was willing to actively engage and also in parallel review the relevant standards within the *Terrestrial Code*, notably on pre-harvest control measures.
24. The Representative further highlighted that a revised Chapter 3.1.22 *Trichinellosis* (Infection with *Trichinella* spp.) of the WOAH *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals (Terrestrial Manual)* had been adopted at the 90th General Session (May 2023), and that a minor amendment of the corresponding Chapter 8.18. in the *Terrestrial Code* would be proposed for adoption at the upcoming General Session (May 2024). The Representative highlighted that the WOAH Code Commission did not consider that the changes in the *Terrestrial Code* and in the *Terrestrial Manual* would have an impact on the *Guidelines for the control of Trichinella spp. in meat of Suidae* (CXG 86-2015) but that the numbering of the *Terrestrial Manual* had been modified, and that consequently the references in the CXG 86-2015 may need to be updated, notably in points 3.2, 7.2.1 and 10.

### Conclusion

25. CCFH54 noted the ongoing commitment of WOAH to work with CCFH on relevant areas and requested the Codex Secretariat to ensure that any cross-references to the *Terrestrial Manual* and *Terrestrial Code* in the CXG 86-2015 be updated as appropriate and report back to CCFH.

### GUIDELINES FOR THE CONTROL OF SHIGA TOXIN-PRODUCING *ESCHERICHIA COLI* (STEC) IN RAW BEEF, FRESH LEAFY VEGETABLES, RAW MILK AND RAW MILK CHEESES, AND SPROUTS (Agenda item 5)

26. Chile, as Electronic Working Group (EWG) and Physical Working Group (PWG) Chair, speaking also on behalf of co-Chairs New Zealand, Kenya, and the USA, introduced the item, recalling that the consideration of this new work had begun at CCFH49 (2017) and that it had been discussed in each subsequent sessions. It was recalled that the guidelines included a general section and four annexes focusing on specific food commodities and CAC46 (2023) had adopted the General Section and Annex I on raw beef, as well as Annex III on raw milk and raw milk cheeses, published as CXG 99-2023.
27. The EWG/PWG Chair explained that in preparation for the PWG held prior to the plenary session, the co-Chairs had meticulously reviewed all comments received, and in addition to editorial enhancements to improve clarity and usability, substantive changes had been made to some essential paragraphs, such as recommendations on storage temperatures for fresh leafy vegetables and sprouts to mitigate the growth of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC). The EWG/PWG Chair emphasized that consensus had been reached on all revisions during the PWG, and the updated draft annexes were presented as CRD03.
28. CCFH54 considered the revised annexes contained in CRD03 section by section.

29. CCFH54 agreed with most of the revisions in CRD03 and in addition to further editorial corrections, and amendments for clarity and consistency, CCFH54 made the following comments and decisions.

**PROPOSED DRAFT ANNEX II ON FRESH LEAFY VEGETABLES (Agenda item 5.1) <sup>5</sup>**

Section 1 Objective - paragraph 5<sup>6</sup>

30. CCFH54 agreed to: i) insert the word “prevent” before “reduce” to clarify that the objective of this annex was to provide guidance to prevent or reduce the risk of foodborne illness from STEC; and ii) replace the words “for human consumption without cooking” with “to be consumed raw”.

Section 2.3 Definition for fresh leafy vegetables

31. In response to a suggestion to change the wording in the definition for fresh leafy vegetables from “intended for consumption raw” to “intended to be consumed raw,” the EWG/PWG Chair clarified that this definition was already adopted as it was included in the General Section of CXG 99-2023. The repetition of this definition in the annexes aimed to facilitate use of the document and prevent the need to refer back to the general section for definitions.
32. CCFH54 decided to maintain the definition for fresh leafy vegetables unchanged.

Section 3.1.1 Neighbouring animal farms - paragraph 12

33. Regarding the suggestion to include “poultry farms” in this paragraph, CCFH54 noted that while poultry farms were not usually associated with STEC, other facilities like slaughterhouses could serve as potential sources of infection. As a result, CCFH54 agreed to include the wording “other similar operations” in this paragraph.

Section 3.2.3 Personnel health, hygiene, and sanitary facilities - paragraph 21

34. In response to a suggestion to reduce the risk of STEC contamination by separating personnel handling animal production from those involved in fresh leafy vegetable production, CCFH54 agreed to insert the phrase “e.g., have not had prior contact with animals” into this paragraph.
35. Regarding the suggestion to implement regular health checks for all staff to detect individuals carrying STEC, the EWG/PWG Chair explained that: i) periodic health checks might not effectively identify STEC infections; ii) imposing such health checks on individuals in primary production globally could be overly restrictive; and iii) the existing requirement prohibiting individuals known or suspected to have gastrointestinal illness from entering areas where fresh leafy vegetables were handled could adequately address this concern. Consequently, CCFH54 agreed not to include the request for regular health checks.

Section 4.3 Washing fresh leafy vegetables – paragraph 29

36. One Member questioned whether all water used for cooling and washing fresh leafy vegetables should be potable water instead of fit-for-purpose water.
37. The EWG/PWG Chair clarified that, given this section was part of the pre-processing stage, which fell under primary production, the requirement for fit-for-purpose water was adequate.
38. CCFH54 agreed to maintain this paragraph unchanged.

Section 5 Processing operations – paragraph 31

39. In response to a question regarding the inclusion of cooking as an example of a processing type in this paragraph, despite cooked vegetables being excluded from the scope, the EWG/PWG Chair clarified that, based on the JEMRA report, cooking was the only effective means of eliminating STEC, and it was important to highlight this information.

Figure1: Process flow for fresh leafy vegetables

40. One Member proposed to: i) include farm site selection as the first step as the environmental factors around the farm site might have effects on the safety of the vegetables; and ii) that transportation and cooling should be merged as transportation of vegetables should be done under cold temperature.

<sup>5</sup> CX/FH 24/54/5; CX/FH 24/54/5 Add. 1 (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, European Union, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay and USA); CRD08 (Argentina, Malaysia, Rwanda and Singapore); CRD18 (Ghana); CRD19 (Morocco); CRD21 (Nigeria); CRD22 (EAC); CRD23 (India); CRD25 (South Africa); CRD27 (Senegal); Uganda (CRD28); CRD29 (Burundi); CRD35 (United Republic of Tanzania); CRD37 (Russian Federation)

<sup>6</sup> The paragraph numbers reflect the paragraph numbers in CRD03

41. The EWG/PWG Chair explained that this figure was only an example, and as indicated in the footnote the diagram was intended as a generalised process flow for fresh leafy vegetables for illustrative purposes only and steps might not occur in all operations and might not occur in the order presented in the flow diagram.

42. CFH54 agreed to maintain this figure unchanged.

Section 6. Microbiological testing – paragraph 37

43. In response to a comment that microbiological testing of fresh leafy vegetables could not verify the safety of the product, it was agreed to remove reference to “the safety of the product” in the middle of the paragraph for accuracy.

**PROPOSED DRAFT ANNEX IV ON SPROUTS (Agenda item 5.2)<sup>7</sup>**

Section 1 Objective- paragraph 6

44. CCFH54 agreed to revise the wording of this paragraph consistent with that of Annex II and the scope of Annex IV by referring to “sprouts intended to be consumed raw”.

Section 5.4 Treatment and pre-germination soak of seeds for sprouting – paragraph 52

45. CCFH54 agreed to remove "antimicrobial" from this paragraph, noting that there were alternative treatment options and that comprehensive information on treatments had already been provided in this section.

Section 5.5. Rinse after seed treatment – paragraph 53

46. CCFH54 agreed to include the wording "to remove chemical residues" at the end of the first sentence in this paragraph for clarification purposes.

Section 6. Microbiological criteria and other specifications for laboratory testing and Section 6.1 Testing of seed lots before entering production

47. As for Annex II, as microbiological testing of sprouts could not verify the safety of the product, it was agreed to remove reference to “the safety of the product” in the middle of the paragraph for accuracy.

48. CCFH54 agreed to include the following paragraphs (copied from paragraphs 63 and 67 of CX/FH 24/54/6) in Section 6 and Section 6.1, respectively, as the information was considered important due to the nature of the sprout production system.

*Testing spent sprout irrigation water or in-process sprouts collected during sprouting increases the likelihood of detecting the pathogens that may be present in seed. It also enables early detection of contamination in the production batch before products enter the marketplace. Testing spent sprout irrigation water is preferred over testing sprouts because water may pick up bacteria as it passes through the production batch, making it easier to collect a representative sample.*

*Testing of seed lots for indicator microorganisms may be used as an indicator of potential STEC contamination. If initial testing indicates the possible presence of STEC, additional testing for STEC is recommended.*

49. CCFH54 also agreed to replace the last sentence of paragraph 65 with “This may lead to STEC not being detected when present.” for improved accuracy and clarity.

Section 6.2 Testing of sprouts and/or spent sprout irrigation water (SSIW) – paragraph 66

50. CCFH54 agreed to replace "sprouted seeds" with "sprouts" in this paragraph.

Section 10 Retail and foodservice – paragraph 78

51. CCFH54 agreed to delete the word "contract" from this paragraph.

**Conclusion on agenda items 5.1 and 5.2**

52. CCFH54 agreed to forward the proposed draft Annex II on Fresh Leafy Vegetables and Annex III on Sprouts for adoption at Step 5/8, noting that these two annexes would be subsequently included as Annex II and Annex IV in CXG 99-2023 (Appendices II and III).

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<sup>7</sup> CX/FH 24/54/6; CX/FH 24/54/6 Add. 1 (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, European Union, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay and USA); CRD09 (Argentina, Malaysia, Rwanda and Singapore); CRD18 (Ghana); CRD19 (Morocco); CRD21 (Nigeria); CRD22 (EAC); CRD23 (India); CRD25 (South Africa); CRD27 (Senegal); CRD28 (Uganda); CRD29 (Burundi); CRD35 (United Republic of Tanzania); CRD37 (Russian Federation)

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE SAFE USE AND REUSE OF WATER IN FOOD PRODUCTION (ANNEX II ON FISHERY PRODUCTS AND ANNEX III ON DAIRY PRODUCTS) (Agenda Item 6)<sup>8</sup>**

53. The European Union (EU) as Chair of the EWG and the PWG, speaking also on behalf of the co-Chairs, Chile and the International Dairy Federation (IDF), introduced the item providing a brief history of the work, noting that the General section and Annex I of the *Guidelines for the safe use and re-use of water in food production and processing* (CXG100-2023) had been adopted by CAC46 and that the work had been underpinned by the scientific advice provided by JEMRA.
54. With reference to the report of the EWG (CX/FH 24/54/7) and the report of the PWG (CRD04), the EWG/PWG Chair highlighted the progress made and some key agreements reached including on modifications to the annex titles, changes to ensure consistency of structure across the annexes, and the addition of a new annex to address technologies, which although originating in the Annex on Milk and Milk products, was considered to be relevant to the other parts of the document as well. The EWG/PWG Chair noted that comments suggested general support for this new annex but proposed that more time was needed in the EWG for its further elaboration.
55. Recalling the report of the PWG, and the key issues outlined therein, the EWG/PWG Chair highlighted that paragraphs 34 to 65 of Annex on Milk and Milk products were cross-cutting as they addressed water fit for purpose assessment and safety management and that the PWG agreed these should also be moved to the new annex. The PWG had extensively discussed the decision tools in the Annex on Fish and Fishery Products, but the EWG/PWG Chair noted that these still required further consideration.

### **Discussion**

56. Having expressed appreciation for the work of the EWG/PWG Chair and co-Chairs and all those that participated in the work, CCFH54 agreed to consider the revised Annexes as presented in CRD04 and agreed to discuss section by section.

### **Annex II Fish and Fishery Products**

57. CCFH54 made the following comments and decisions, in addition to editorial corrections, and amendments for clarity and consistency.

#### **1. Introduction**

58. The deleted paragraph 2 was reintroduced as some Members considered it important to provide an overview of the different water sources to be considered in the fish and fisheries product sector at the outset of this Annex.
59. Paragraph 5: “a level of comprehensive risk assessment” was replaced with “an appropriate risk assessment” for clarity.

#### **2. Purpose and Scope**

60. It was noted that this section and in particular the last sentence might have to be revised pending discussion on the use of decision tools in this annex.

#### **4. Definitions**

61. Fish and Fishery Products: The text in the parenthesis after molluscs was revised for accuracy and completeness to (bivalve molluscs, gastropods and cephalopods).

#### **6. Water use**

62. Paragraph 11: Following concerns that “indigenous” in reference to microorganisms was not clear, considered other terms such as “endemic” and “autochthonous”, but for ease of understanding, CCFH54 agreed to change the term to “naturally occurring” here and through the document.
63. Paragraph 15: As “some distance” from the shore was considered to be vague and subjective, it was changed to “sufficiently distant” for clarity and at the end of the paragraph “or other objectionable substances” was added to this list of things to avoid, for inclusiveness.

#### **8. Water use or reuse fit-for-purpose assessment**

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<sup>8</sup> CX/FH 24/54/7; CX/FH 24/54/7 Add.1 (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, India, Japan, Kenya, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, USA, ICBA and IDF/FIL), CRD 04 (PWG); CRD 10 (Argentina, European Union, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand); CRD 18 (Ghana); CRD 19 (Morocco); CRD 20 (AU); CRD21 (Nigeria); CRD22 (EAC); CRD24 (IFT); CRD25 (South Africa); CRD26 (El Salvador); CRD28 (Uganda); CRD29 (Burundi); CRD31 (Guyana); CRD33 (FAO/WHO); CRD35 (United Republic of Tanzania); CRD37 (Russian Federation)

64. Recalling that this section revolved around decision tools, and that the PWG had identified a number of problems in understanding the originally proposed tools and had deleted some of them, the EWG/PWG Chair requested CCFH54 to consider some new decision tools published as CRD33 which had been prepared taking into account the comments received at the PWG, informal consultations after the PWG and in consultation with the JEMRA secretariat. CCFH54 agreed to review the four decision tools for suitability for inclusion in the annex.
65. CCFH54 generally agreed that the new tools presented in CRD33 were much improved and understandable and were in general agreement with their inclusion for further discussion and development. Delegates also provided the following additional comments and issues for clarification:
- Clarify in the titles of the figures to specifically explain that they were related to fish that were likely to be consumed raw or insufficiently cooked.
  - After the boxes that indicate low risk, high risk, add another box to indicate the water status and possible risk management action e.g., in case of low risk, the additional box would indicate that water was fit-for-purpose while in case of high risk, it would indicate that water was not fit-for-purpose and that measures needed to be taken to make it fit-for-purpose.
  - Indicate that these were examples of decision tools and not the only tools, similar to language that had been used elsewhere in CXG 100-2023 as well as in CXC 1-1969.
  - Ensure terminology in the figures was consistent with that in the main text e.g. replace “degutting” with “evisceration”, and that there is also inconsistency of terminology within the figures e.g. use “excreta” or “faeces” but not both.
  - Rephrase the text in some of the boxes to ensure the text was clear and phrased as questions.
  - In figure 2, clarify what was meant by “nearby”, review the arrows leading from question 2 to indicate whether sewage nearby meant it could enter the open system with or without rainwater; revise the “no” arrow from question 2 to question 4 on whether there is surface water run rather than question 3; and consider using “higher” risk instead of “high” risk in all figures as how high the risk might be will depend on the level of contamination.
  - Include more granularity in figure 4 to facilitate good decision making, for example by building in additional questions on whether potable water or seawater was used to make ice and in the case of seawater, whether that was collected offshore or in coastal areas, with corresponding risk level outcomes.
  - In figure 5, clarify the risk outcome of the “no” arrows from activities like fish degutting and transport on ice as currently, even though no water is involved, as these currently lead to high risk but should be changed to not applicable.

### **9. Water Safety Management**

66. Paragraph 45: There were mixed views on whether reference to Annex IV on technologies, which was currently under development, should be included and it was agreed to reconsider such cross-references throughout the text once Annex IV was further elaborated.
67. Paragraph 48: Reference to irradiation was removed so as to have consistent reference to biological, chemical and physical water treatments across paragraphs.
68. Paragraph 49: Concerns were expressed regarding a lack of clarity, in particular around microbiological testing potentially ensuring safety in cases of non-conformities, which was considered to be inaccurate. After some discussion, the paragraph was fully revised for clarity as follows:
- Implement operational monitoring, including periodic microbiological testing, of water used in the production and processing of fish and fishery products to provide insight into the performance of the water safety management process. Such monitoring can enable rapid identification of potential nonconformities and inform corrective actions, which may include additional microbiological testing of the process and/or the fish and fishery products.*
69. Paragraph 51: The first sentence was edited for clarity and in the second sentence, as an alert to the possibility of toxic compounds being formed when substances like chlorine dioxide were mixed with seawater, a footnote was added to the list of treatment agents to indicate: “attention should be paid to the possible formation of toxic compounds when adding chemical disinfectants to seawater”.
70. Paragraph 57: Several changes were made for clarity and inclusiveness referring to “limitations” rather than “disadvantages” of indicator microorganisms and also referring to naturally occurring pathogenic microorganisms rather than bacteria, so as to be also inclusive of viruses.



71. Paragraph 58: “control” was replaced with “monitoring” for accuracy.
72. Table 1: Discrepancies between this table and the output of the JEMRA meeting were identified and it was agreed to align the information within Table 1 with the JEMRA report and to ensure that both the risk ranking and resistance to chlorine columns of the table were referenced in the text or otherwise removed.
73. While making substantial progress on the Annex, CCFH54 agreed further deliberations were needed within an EWG to further develop Section 8 and complete the work.

### **Annex III Milk and Milk Products**

74. CCFH54 agreed with most of the revisions to the Annex in CRD04 and in addition to further editorial corrections, and amendments for clarity and consistency, CCFH54 made the following comments and decisions.

#### Primary production and transport from the farm

75. Paragraph 10: One Member highlighted that udder washing as indicated in this paragraph was not recommended in the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Milk and Milk Products* (CXC 57-2004) and this was a potential inconsistency. The EWG/PWG chair explained that this was inserted at the request of several Members and noted that it specifically referred to situations when udder washing might be recommended (e.g. dirty udder), rather than saying it was always recommended and therefore did not contradict CXC 57-2004.

#### Dairy Manufacturing Plant

76. Paragraph 23: The language was simplified to refer to “competent authorities” rather than “relevant competent authorities, in most cases the municipality”, as competent authority was clearly defined and did not need further qualification. For consistency throughout the document, it was agreed to refer to competent authorities without further qualification.
77. Paragraph 23 bis<sup>9</sup>: The wording “must” was replaced with “should” for consistency with other Codex texts.

#### Technologies for recovery and treatment of water

78. Paragraph 29: In response to a comment that the examples included in parentheses did not provide any clarity in terms of uncertain microbiological quality, they were revised to read “for example in the case of no microbiological testing, when testing indicates poor quality or when the RO system is unvalidated”.
79. Paragraph 30: This was deleted as it was considered unnecessary.
80. Paragraph 32: One Member expressed concern that this paragraph indicted that pathogenic microorganisms were known to be present in reuse water, but disinfection treatment only needed to be undertaken when required and it was proposed to remove “when required”. Others noted that there was a lot of effort ongoing in industry to minimise the formation of biofilms which can harbour pathogens; that biofilm formation happened very slowly; and that it could be more appropriate to indicate that operations “may” contain microorganisms rather than they were known to contain microorganism. CCFH54 agreed to replace “known” with “may” to improve clarity of the paragraph.

#### Water fit-for-purpose assessment and water safety management

81. Noting that CCFH54 agreed that paragraphs 32 to 64 were transferred from this annex to a new annex addressing cross cutting issues, an Observer proposed that one deleted point related to having a back-up fit for purpose water supply in case the re-use water system failed was a critically important point and should be maintained in the annex. While the EWG/PWG Chair noted that this was not unique to this annex there was no objection to retaining it in the annex and the following was inserted in the section on the Dairy Manufacturing Plant immediately after paragraph 26

*A back-up fit-for-purpose water supply such as an external potable water source that can be used in case a reuse water treatment system is not effective or functioning properly should be available.*

#### Examples of fit-for-purpose water applications in dairy plants

82. Paragraph 36: In response to a question as to whether microbiocidal treatments included heat, it was clarified that it was a broad term that refers to a treatment that kills microorganisms and therefore could include a heat treatment and should not be confused with an antimicrobial treatment. CCFH54, noting the agreement on the term in English, agreed that the other language versions should be reviewed carefully to ensure a consistency of terminology.

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<sup>9</sup> Numbering according to CRD04



83. **Figure 1:** Responding to a comment on the meaning of the two question marks (??) which appeared in this figure the EWG/PWG chair explained that question marks referred to the fact that the number of generations of recirculation of water that may occur was unknown, and that this was further explained in the footnote. To improve clarity, it was agreed to replace the question marks with “xx” and to also include reference to “xx” in the footnote.
84. **Figure 2:** As pure water was not defined in these guidelines, it was agreed to remove the term from this figure and simply refer to “water going to tanks”, since the term was only used to clarify that none of the other substances from the previous step e.g. acid, were going on to the next stage.
85. **Paragraph 44:** Responding to a request for a clarification on the meaning of human pathogens, it was explained that this referred to agents which were pathogenic to humans and not pathogens of human origin and “human pathogens” was replaced with “agents pathogenic to humans” for clarity.
86. **Paragraph 46:** “Identification” was replaced with “assessment” as a more accurate term to indicate the consideration of pH, turbidity etc.
87. CCFH54 agreed that there were no outstanding issues remaining in this Annex.

#### **Annex IV**

88. CCFH54 agreed with the proposal of the PWG regarding a new annex that would capture both new technologies and information removed from Annex III related to water-fit-for-purpose assessment and water safety management as these were relevant to all commodity-focussed annexes as well as the general guidelines. CCFH54 did consider whether it may be more appropriate to divide this content between two different annexes, noting both options could work, but finally agreed to proceed with one cross-cutting annex.

#### **Conclusion**

89. CCFH54 agreed to:
- Forward the draft Annex III on Milk and Milk Products (Appendix IV) to CAC47 for adoption at step 5/8 and subsequent inclusion in CXG 100-2023;
  - Return the draft Annex II on Fish and Fishery Products to step 2/3 for further elaboration in particular of Sections 2 and 8, noting the general agreement on all other sections in Annex II, followed by and circulation for comments at Step 3; and
  - Establish an EWG chaired by the EU and co-chaired by Morocco, Honduras, Mauritania, India and IDF and working in English only (comments can also be provided in French and Spanish), with the following terms of reference:
    - Revise Annex II on Fish and Fishery products, focusing on Section 8 and Section 2, incorporating the figures from CRD33 and revising the text in line with comments received during CCFH54, noting that comments on other sections may also be considered;
    - Further develop Annex IV related to water fit-for-purpose assessment, safety management, and technologies for recovery and treatment of water for reuse, taking into account written comments and discussions at CCFH54 and the agreement to move paragraphs 34 to 65 of Annex III to Annex IV ;
    - Consider and propose, if needed, revisions to the General Section and other Annexes of CXC 100-2023 by introducing a cross-reference to Annex IV;
    - Consider and propose, if needed, possible examples on the use of technologies most relevant for Annexes to CXG 100-2023; and
    - Prepare an EWG report for submission to the Codex Secretariat at least 3 months in advance of CCFH55.
90. A PWG chaired by the EU and co-chaired by Honduras, India, Mauritania, Morocco, and IDF, working in English, French and Spanish, may be held in conjunction with CCFH55 to consider all comments received and prepare a revised proposal for consideration by the plenary.
91. CCFH54 further agreed to request CCEXEC86 and CAC47 to extend the timeline for completion of this work until CCFH55, noting the substantial progress made on this document and the identification of the need for an additional annex to complete these guidelines.
92. CCFH54 also noted the intention of Honduras to convene a workshop to test and validate some of the decision tools developed in the course of this work on the *Guidelines for the safe use and reuse of water in food production and processing* and the related annexes, and would welcome the support of JEMRA in this regard.

**PROPOSED DRAFT REVISION ON THE GUIDELINES ON THE APPLICATION OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF FOOD HYGIENE TO THE CONTROL OF PATHOGENIC *VIBRIO* SPECIES IN SEAFOOD (CXG 73-2010) AT STEP 4 (Agenda item 7)<sup>10</sup>**

93. Japan, as EWG and Virtual Working Group (VWG) Chair, speaking also on behalf of Chile as co-Chair, introduced the item. It was noted that CCFH53 had decided to initiate the revision of *the Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Pathogenic Vibrio Species in Seafood* (CXG 73-2010) and established an EWG. After CCFH53, the EWG conducted one round of consultation, followed by a VWG meeting on February 26, 2024.
94. The discussions within the VWG mainly focussed on: i) defining seafood, treated/partially treated, and clean water; ii) addressing water issues; and iii) establishing facility temperature requirements. The outcomes of the VWG discussions were documented in CRD02. Prior to discussion at CCFH54, further revisions were made to CRD02 in response to the discussions of alignment of texts with CXC 1-1969 (Agenda Item 9) and additional comments from Members and Observers (e.g., CRD 32). These revisions aimed to align the document structurally with CXC 1-1969, considering that the technical content of CXC 1-1969 had been considered from the start of the revision process. Revisions to the technical content included:
- Removal of “seaweed” from the definition of “seafood”;
  - Revision of the definition of “partially treated”
  - Inclusion of the definition of “Water fit for purpose” from CXG100-2023 to the “Definition” section, and changing “clean water” in paragraphs 34, 35 and 76 of CRD02 to “Water fit for purpose”; and
  - maintaining option 1 (i.e. 10°C/ to limit growth of pathogenic *Vibrio* spp.) in paragraph 63 of CRD02.
95. The EWG/VWG Chair clarified that all these revisions had been incorporated in CRD36.

**Discussion**

96. CCFH54 considered the revised text contained in CRD36 section by section.
97. CCFH54 agreed to: i) use the wording “naturally occurring” instead of “autochthonous” in paragraphs<sup>11</sup> 7 and 13 to be aligned with the term used under agenda item 6; ii) change the wording “can” to “should” in paragraph 11; and iii) remove the wording “seaweed” from paragraph 12.
98. CCFH54 agreed with most of the revisions in CRD02 and in addition, to editorial corrections and amendments for clarity and consistency, CCFH54 made the following comments and decisions.

**Issues related to water**

99. CCFH54 conducted an extensive discussion on this matter.
100. Regarding the definition of “clean water” and “water fit for purpose”, Members expressed divergent views:
- the definition of clean water was redundant as it was covered by the definition of “water fit for purpose,” and there was no clear distinction between the two terms;
  - the definition of clean water should be retained as it was different from the definition of water fit-for-purpose and both definitions had served their respective purposes effectively;
  - a definition of clean seawater should be introduced; and
  - the current definition of clean water already covered clean seawater.
101. In response, the EWG/VWG Chair clarified that the definitions of “clean water” and “water fit for purpose” were adopted from published Codex texts, noting that the definition of “water fit for purpose” introduced the concept of a risk-based approach which was not captured in the definition for clean water. Clean water was consistently referenced throughout the document, whereas “water fit for purpose” was deliberately employed in specific sections to prevent repetitive mentions of potable water. It was underscored that clean water and water fit for purpose served distinct roles and were utilized in different contexts within the document.

<sup>10</sup> CX/FH 24/54/8; CX/FH 24/54/8 Add.1 (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, European Union, Iraq, Japan, Kenya, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zambia and ICUMSA); CRD02 (Report of the VWG meeting on the proposed draft revision on CXG 73-2010); CRD11 (Argentina, Singapore and Thailand); CRD18 (Ghana); CRD19 (Morocco); CRD20 (AU); CRD22 (EAC); CRD23 (India); CRD25 (South Africa); CRD28 (Uganda); CRD29 (Burundi); CRD32 (USA); CRD35 (United Republic of Tanzania); CRD36 (Further revised revision on CXG 73-2010); CRD37 (Russian Federation)

<sup>11</sup> The paragraph numbers thereafter reflect the paragraph numbers in CRD36

102. Views on the types of water suitable for storage and handling of seafood aboard fishing vessels intended for raw or partially treated consumption were expressed as follows:
- Referring to water fit for purpose was too vague and did not give clear risk management guidance, and in certain contexts it was necessary to recommend use of a specific water type such as potable water, clean water, or clean seawater; and
  - Priority should be given to potable water, with clean water serving as an alternative if potable water is not feasible or readily available.
  - Clean water was a readily understood term compared to water fit for purpose.
  - Referring to water fit for purpose was more appropriate as it highlighted that irrespective of the water source available, efforts must be made to that water used in a specific context did not impact the safety of the food.
103. One Member highlighted that the purpose of developing the *Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production and Processing* (CXG 100-2023) was to introduce a risk-based approach to the safe use of water, taking into consideration differences in water availability and accessibility. It was further noted that Annex II on Fish and Fishery Products, currently under development, would be the appropriate document in which to address guidance on the use of different water types (e.g. clean water, potable water etc).and alignment with the water fit for purpose concept. to avoid inconsistencies across food hygiene texts.
104. Some Members supported the proposal that with the adoption CXG 100-2023, water-related provisions in all texts should be aligned with those in the Guidelines to ensure a consistent approach.
105. Others were of the view that it was not sufficient to cross-reference CXG 100-2023 or simply refer to water fit for purpose, expressed concerns that replacement of all references to water type with water fit for purpose did not provide sufficient risk management advice.
106. The FAO representative explained that JEMRA had made efforts to define suitable water across various contexts and introduced the concept of "fit for purpose." Water fit for purpose accurately describes the specific requirements for intended uses such as handling and storage, noting that the quality of water required for these different steps may well be different.
107. Suggestions to retain the original term "clean water" or use the wording "water fit for purpose (in this case, at least clean water)" as a compromise solution were also considered, but no consensus was reached.
108. The Codex Secretariat recalled the longevity of discussions on water terminology in CCFH, that CXG 100-2023 had been developed in response to past challenging discussions and noting that work on Annex II of CXG 100-2023 on Fish and Fishery Products was ongoing, encouraged Members to actively engage in those discussions to also consider and address the issues on water terminology which were arising in the revision of this document.
109. In view of the difficulty in reaching consensus on this matter, CCFH54 agreed with the Chairperson's proposal to place square brackets around all water-related wording and focus the discussion on other aspects of the document.

### **Guidelines – Main body**

#### Introduction

110. Footnote 1: *V. harveyi* was removed as this was primarily a fish pathogen rather than a human pathogen.

#### Section 1.2 *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* – paragraph 9

111. For clarify, CCFH54 agreed to replace this paragraph with the following:

*Virulent strains are seldom detected in the environment or foods. In contrast to strains from clinical cases that will always possess these virulence factors, the probability of detection of environmental or food strains, including seafoods, which possess virulence markers will be very low as most do not contain known virulence markers and their distribution within seafood and across growing areas is not homogeneous. In addition, current selective media cannot distinguish colonies of virulent strains from those of avirulent strains. Given this limitation, failure to detect virulent strains in the environment or in foods does not mean there is no risk to consumers.*

#### Section 1.3 *Vibrio cholerae* - paragraph 14

112. For clarity, CCFH54 agreed to replace this paragraph with the following:

*Epidemic cholera can be spread by factors such as: infected travellers and the food trade. These factors, but also climate change, may increase the probability of an epidemic in the newly established environments. Detection frequencies of cholerae strains of V. cholerae from legal food trade are very low and have seldom been implicated in cholera outbreaks*

Section 1.4 Vibrio vulnificus - paragraph 18

113. CCFH54 agreed to delete the wording "other bivalve molluscs" from the last sentence of this paragraph to avoid duplication.

Section 1.4 Vibrio vulnificus - paragraph 20

114. A Member noted that while the last sentence was scientifically accurate, there were doubts about the feasibility of sustaining oyster survival under saline conditions exceeding 30 ppt, and questioned whether this level of technical detail was necessary for these Guidelines.
115. CCFH54 agreed to remove the last sentence from this paragraph.

Section 3 Scope – paragraph 25

116. In response to a proposal to incorporate additional *Vibrio* spp, including both pathogenic and opportunistic strains, the EWG/VWG Chair clarified that this issue had been extensively discussed and it had been decided to include only the three pathogenic *Vibrio* species.
117. CCFH54 agreed to maintain this paragraph unchanged.

Section 4 Use – paragraph 26

118. CCFH54 agreed to remove the words "particularly Annex II on Fishery Products" from this paragraph.

Section 6 Definitions – paragraph 26

- Refrigeration

CCFH54 agreed to incorporate the term "and maintaining" into the definition.

- Partially treated

CCFH54 agreed to include steam and blanching as examples.

Section 9.2.4 Temperature – paragraph 63

119. CCFH54 agreed to revise the last sentence as "The facility should be capable of controlling product temperature to ensure that product temperature during processing of raw seafood at a temperature of 10°C or lower" since there were multiple control measures beyond ambient temperature control.
120. In response to a proposal to add type E after *Clostridium botulinum*, CCFH54 noted that Type A also had been detected in shellfish. Consequently, CCFH54 agreed not to specify the Type of *Clostridium botulinum*.

Section 9.3.1 General – paragraph 69

121. CCFH54 agreed to revise this paragraph as the following:

*Areas where refrigeration is necessary should be equipped with a calibrated thermometer.*

Section 10.1 Awareness and responsibilities – paragraph 71

122. CCFH54 agreed to remove the words "institutional establishment," "special," and "various fishing techniques" from this paragraph to enhance clarity and replace the term "industry" with "FBOs".

Section 13.2.2.1 Washing and processing – paragraph 80

123. Noting the discussion on whether potable running water or clean water should be used and considering that the second sentence was provided as an example, CCFH agreed to delete it.

Section 14.4 Consumer education – bullet point 8 of paragraph 109

124. One Member suggested deleting this bullet point due to the challenges associated with implementing the requirement to use separate utensils and equipment for raw and cooked seafood.
125. CCFH54 noted that this section pertained to consumer education and agreed to insert the wording "or clean between" to offer additional options.

Section 14.4.1 Special attention to susceptible subpopulations – bullet point 3 of paragraph 109

126. CCFH54 agreed to remove this bullet point as it was not directly relevant to foodborne illness, noting a paragraph had been included in the introduction section to highlight the risk association with transmission of pathogenic vibrio through open wounds.

Section 20.3 Types of analytical methods – paragraph 120

127. CCFH54 agreed to include the phrase "in some circumstances" in this paragraph.

***Guidelines - Annex on the control measures for vibrio parahaemolyticus and vibrio vulnificus in bivalve molluscs***

Section 8.1 Environmental hygiene control – paragraph 16

128. CCFH54 agreed to remove the words "having jurisdiction" from this paragraph as all competent authorities possess jurisdiction.

Section 8.3 Handling, storage and transport - paragraph 18

129. CCFH54 agreed to delete the phrase "where stricter parameters are applied to the former" due to the removal of post-harvest processing.

**Conclusion**

130. CCFH54 agreed to forward the proposed draft revision on the *Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Pathogenic Vibrio Species in Seafood* (CXG 73-2010) to CAC47 for adoption at Step 5, noting that all references to water remained in square brackets (Appendix V).

131. CCFH54 also agreed to revisit this text as soon as Annex II on Fish and Fishery Products of the *Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production and Processing* (CXG 100-2023) was completed.

**PROPOSED DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR FOOD HYGIENE CONTROL MEASURES IN TRADITIONAL MARKETS FOR FOOD (Agenda Item 8)<sup>12</sup>**

132. Kenya, as chair of the EWG, speaking also on behalf of Bolivia and Nigeria as co-chairs, recalled that the new work on this topic recommended by CCFH53 had been approved by CAC46. In introducing the work undertaken since CCFH53, Kenya highlighted that the draft guidelines had been informed by the regional guidelines/codes of practice related to street-vended foods; that there had been broad Member and Observer engagement in their development; and that they had undergone two rounds of review in the EWG. Kenya noted that that some of the key decisions of the EWG were to retain the title as originally proposed and to develop a unique structure rather than align with CXC 1-1969 so as to adequately address some of the characteristics of traditional markets for foods.

133. With reference to the request of CAC47 to carefully consider the relationship between these new guidelines and the regional guidelines/codes of practice, feedback in response to CL 2024/11/FH indicated that there was general agreement that these guidelines should be complimentary to the existing texts. Kenya noted that a revised version taking into consideration written comments received had been published as CRD6; that in their view there was agreement on most aspects of the guidelines, noting that two key issues for discussion were the extent to which the guidelines should address live animals in markets and how water should be characterized in the text. Kenya proposed that CRD06 be used as the basis for discussion.

**Discussion**

134. A general discussion indicated the importance of developing these guidelines with Members and Observers sharing a range of views as follows:
- It was important to advance these guidelines to avoid having a vacuum in Codex texts when it came to traditional markets for food.
  - Once adopted such guidance could be revised as new information became available.
  - Specific food safety challenges existed in traditional markets for foods and the guidelines, such as the ones under development, provided an important framework to begin addressing these.

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<sup>12</sup> CX/FH 24/54/9; CX/FH 24/54/9 Add 1 (Australia, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, European Union, Iraq, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Thailand, Togo, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, and Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Studies, ICUMSA, World Food Programme); CRD 06 (EWG); CRD 12 (Argentina, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Rwanda, GAIN); CRD 18 (Ghana), CRD 19 (Morocco); CRD 20 (AU); CRD 21 (Nigeria); CRD 22 (EAC); CRD23 (India); CRD 25 (South Africa); CRD 27 (Senegal); CRD28 (Uganda); CRD 29 (Burundi); CRD 30 (Philippines); CRD 31 (Guyana); CRD 35 (United Republic of Tanzania)

- The proposed draft guidelines were complementary to the existing regional texts and aligned with the overall objective of the general principles for food hygiene.
- There were organizations willing to support implementation of these guidelines once adopted including the related capacity development.
- The guidelines had huge potential to improve global food safety outcomes, and this was in line with the Codex strategic goal to deliver impact through the recognition and use of Codex standards.
- It's estimated that over 70% of consumers in the African and Asian regions source food for household consumption from these markets, while these same regions experience very high rates of foodborne disease, hence it was critical that they are addressed in Codex texts.
- The guidelines would help market actors to identify and practice better food handling and market management, with the goal of significantly reducing consumer exposure to food safety risks within traditional markets.
- There was a need for continued investment in improving food safety in traditional markets, and this involved upgrading market infrastructure, improving the supply chain, and providing education and training to vendors and consumers.
- Traditional markets existed around the world and played an important role when it came to access to food from both domestic and cross-border supply chains.

135. The WHO Representative explained that WHO was in the process of developing a guideline on traditional markets for food that would focus on the mitigation of public health risks arising from the human-animal interface in food markets including live animals. The Representative noted that the development process was science-based, included systematic reviews and public consultation and was expected to span two years and once available, the Codex guideline could be reviewed and updated as appropriate.

136. Noting overwhelming support to advance the guidelines, CCFH54 agreed to use CRD06 as the basis for its discussions and consider the text paragraph by paragraph. In addition to editorial corrections, and amendments for clarity and consistency, CCFH54 made the following comments and decisions.

#### Title

137. There were suggestions to revise the title to refer to traditional food markets to align with other international texts. The Representative from WHO clarified that the current text was in line with WHO terminology. It was further noted that traditional food markets lacked clarity and could be understood to be the type of food marketed. The title was retained as originally proposed.

#### Introduction

138. The wording "in the framework of a one health approach" was added to the end of the introduction for the purpose of acknowledging that efforts to improve food safety should be understood within the broader perspective of a one health approach, which emphasizes the integration of human, animal, and environmental health.

#### Objectives and Scope and Use

139. One Member while agreeing that the guidance should not apply to markets selling live animals, noted that nevertheless traditional markets may also sell live animals, which may represent an important risk for food contamination and proposed to include a recommendation in the guidance to avoid such contamination e.g. the separation of vending areas. The EWG chair considered that this aspect was addressed in section 4.3 and no further changes were made.

#### Definitions

140. Food Grade: "and serving" was added to the end of the definition to reflect the complete food chain.

141. Food Vendor: following a proposal to remove this definition and just use the term "food business operator" (FBO) throughout the text, the need to distinguish those who only sold food (food vendors) compared to those that may also have a role prior to sale of food (FBO), such as processing/preparation was reiterated as requirements in relation to training and education needs etc would vary. Food vendor was retained in the text.

142. Traditional markets for food: examples of types of traditional markets were added as follows to the end of the definition to improve clarity on the scope of the guidelines as follows: "Examples include but are not limited to street food markets, local markets, public markets, community markets, municipal markets, open-air markets, wet markets and farmers' markets."

143. Market Authority: CCFH54 revised the definition as follows for improved clarity and completeness. “The entity or person responsible for the administration of the traditional market which may include market committees and associations of food business operators”.

#### General requirements

144. 4.1.2: “and/or locality” was added to the end of the sentence to indicate that risk factors could be specific to a particular locality as well as type of operation.
145. 4.1.7: to better reflect the role of competent authorities the sentence was revised to replace “food safety controls” with “and enforce regulatory measures”
146. 4.1.10: to increase flexibility “where applicable” was added at the beginning of the sentence.
147. A new section 4.4.5 was added to illustrate the role of a One Health approach in minimizing the potential risks from wild animals in the market setting.

#### Food business operators

148. 5.2.1: “clothing” was added to the sentence after “clean” to reflect the importance of the behaviour of wearing clean clothing as part of food safety practices.
149. 5.2.6: the recommendation was strengthened to indicate that smoking and chewing gum should not be allowed due to related food safety concerns.
150. 5.3.3: noting a proposal to define community health workers, to ensure there was clarity on the type of skills such workers would need to provide training, CCFH54 noted that since the text indicated to include these “as appropriate” there was sufficient flexibility on whether they were involved or not according to the local context and hence a definition was not needed.
151. 5.4.1: “should” was replaced with “may” to provide more flexibility.
152. 5.5.2: “as appropriate to support food safety” was added at the end to ensure that record keeping did not become overburdensome especially for small FBOs.

#### Location, design, layout and structures

153. 6.3.1: noting that some markets may be very small and have limited structure, some Members considered it was important to bring more flexibility to this paragraph and recognized that not all structures needed to be approved by competent authorities but simply reviewed. Others indicated the importance of maintaining approval. In this context both review and approval were included. In addition to competent authorities, the text was also revised to indicate that market authorities or FBO organizations could also undertake these tasks as necessary.
154. 6.3.6: to avoid being prescriptive on market structures, reference to being roofed was removed and replaced with “appropriate features/facilities” to minimise effects of extreme weather.
155. 6.3.11: an extensive discussion on type of water that should be referred to in this paragraph concluded that reference be made to potable water only, with a cross-reference to CXG 100-2023 where such water was defined, noting that this definition was broad and did not preclude disinfection of the water. Reference to running was also removed, as potable water may be provided in different ways. Changes were also made in other parts of the text for consistency with these decisions.
156. 6.5 The title was changed to include water as well as sanitation and therefore better reflect the content of the section. It was noted that there might be some duplication in this section with earlier text but given the focus of this section, it was considered important to reiterate guidance related to water.
157. 6.5.2.4: Bins was replaced with “receptacles and/or containers” to be more inclusive and the same change was made through the document as needed for consistency.
158. 6.5.3: “sufficient” was added to indicate that toilets and sanitary facilities should be adequate considering market size.

#### Food preparation

159. Title: it was proposed that “control of” should be added in front of the words in this title as that was what the section addressed as opposed to preparing food. However, it was noted that the overall title of the guidelines was about “control” and changes to this title would then have to be considered for all other subtitles. It was therefore agreed to retain as written.
160. 7.1.7: For consistency with 5.5.2, “as appropriate to support food safety” was added at the end of the sentence.



161. 7.2.1: “and disinfected when necessary” was included in addition to keeping equipment clean, with “when necessary” added in recognition that not all equipment may need to be disinfected, for example if it was going to be heated before or during use.
162. 7.3.1: “as required” was added at the end to improve flexibility.
163. 7.3.2: “When feasible” was replaced by “when appropriate” as disinfection of fruit and vegetables should be based on the need to implement such a risk management measure, not whether it was possible or not.
164. A new paragraph was inserted after 7.3.7 on the management of fats and oils used for frying, noting that these not only presented food quality but also food safety concerns.

*Oil and grease used frying should be replaced on a regular basis whenever there is an apparent change in physical/chemical characteristics, such as dark colour, intense foaming, smoke formation, or sensory changes, such as aroma and taste.*

165. 7.4 "Observe" was replaced with "comply with" to enhance accuracy.
166. All remaining sections were agreed as presented in CRD06. A proposal to expand the responsibilities in section 8 on consumers to competent and market authorities was considered but it was agreed that the intent of this section was to identify the role consumers could play and hence it was retained as written.
167. CCFH54 noted that there were no outstanding issues on the document.

### Conclusion

168. CCFH54 agreed to forward the proposed draft guidelines for food hygiene control measures in traditional markets for food to CAC47 for adoption at Step 5/8 (Appendix VI).
169. Following adoption of this text by CAC47, and recalling the recent revision of CXC 1-1969, CCFH54 requested the relevant FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees to review their respective texts on street vended foods to ensure consistency with CXC 1-1969 and the guidelines for food hygiene control measures in traditional markets for foods and consider the necessary follow-up action (e.g., revision).

### ALIGNMENT OF CODEX TEXTS DEVELOPED BY CCFH WITH THE REVISED *GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF FOOD HYGIENE (CXC 1-1969)* (Agenda item 9)<sup>13</sup>

170. The United Kingdom presented the item and recalled that CCFH53 had tasked them with preparing a document for CCFH54 to initiate work and propose options for aligning Codex food hygiene texts with the revised *General Principles of Food Hygiene (CXC 1-1969)*. In response to this request, the United Kingdom drafted a document (CX/FH 24/54/10), which outlined three alignment options: option 1 for simple alignment, option 2 for full structural alignment, and option 3 for full structural and technical alignment. The document also included a worked example to illustrate the alignment requirements and considerations for prioritization and feasibility of the work. CL 2024/12-FH was distributed to collect comments, which were then analyzed by the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom made the following recommendations:
- Prioritizing the work, dividing it, and integrating it into the future work plan;
  - Establishing a standing working group to consider how to prioritize the alignment of existing texts, divide the work, and collaborate with the Chairperson of the EWG on updating the future work plan;
  - Adopting a hybrid approach to alignment: aligning texts undergoing technical revisions or part of the forward work plan within existing EWGs to Option 3 and aligning remaining texts not part of the forward work plan through a dedicated Alignment Working Group to Option 2; and
  - Considering the age of the text as a possible mechanism for prioritizing alignment. For instance, texts like the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Moisture Foods (CXC 75-2015)* modified in 2018, and the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (53-2003)* modified in 2017, could be given priority.

### Discussion

171. Members expressed their appreciation to the United Kingdom for preparing this comprehensive document and generally agreed with the recommendations put forward by the United Kingdom.

<sup>13</sup> CX/FH 24/54/10; CX/FH 24/54/10 Add.1 (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, European Union, Iraq, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, USA and ICUMSA); CRD13 (Argentina, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand); CRD18 (Ghana); CRD19 (Morocco); CRD20 (AU); CRD21 (Nigeria); CRD22 (EAC); CRD23 (India); CRD24 (IFT); CRD25 (South Africa); CRD28 (Uganda); CRD29 (Burundi); CRD31 (Guyana); CRD35 (United Republic of Tanzania); CRD37 (Russian Federation)

172. Members expressed a range of views as follows:
- The hybrid approach was an appropriate way forward;
  - Option 3 should be applied to all Codex texts developed by CCFH as it offered the most comprehensive solution to current misalignments and inconsistencies with the revised CXC 1-1969;
  - The application of full structural and technical alignment with CXC 1- 1969 for all texts undergoing development or revisions should be included in the terms of reference of the respective EWGs;
  - EWGs taking on new work proposals should have the flexibility to choose either option 2 or option 3, rather than being limited to option 3; and
  - It was important to avoid duplication of work and a relationship between the proposed EWG on alignment and new work/forward work plan should be established, to better inform the forward work plan.
173. In response to a question regarding the formal procedures for agreement on changes to texts following structural alignment, with CXC 1-1969, the Codex Secretariat clarified that any alignment work would need to be reviewed and agreed by CCFH before submission for adoption by CAC.
174. Regarding the alignment of *Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Pathogenic Vibrio Species in Seafood* (CXG 73-2010) with CXC 1-1969, CCFH54 agreed that this matter should be considered under agenda item 7, taking into consideration the work that had already been undertaken in revising the guidelines.

### Conclusion

175. CCFH54 agreed to:
- prioritize the work on alignment and integrate it into its work plan;
  - adopt a hybrid approach to alignment as follows:
    - texts undergoing technical revision or are included in Part 1 of the Forward Workplan be structurally aligned with CXC 1-1969 by the relevant EWGs and that the EWGs also align the technical content as necessary with CXC 1-1969. This task should also be reflected in the Terms of Reference for the relevant EWGs; and
    - texts in Part 2 of the Forward Workplan that require alignment (See Appendix VII), are structurally aligned with CXC 1-1969 by an alignment EWG.
176. CCFH54 further agreed to establish an EWG on alignment, chaired by China and co-chaired by the United Kingdom and the European Union, working in English. The EWG should:
- initiate the structural alignment work starting with the most recently modified texts listed in Appendix VII and establish a timeframe for completing alignment with the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CXC 1-1969). The alignment work should:
    - include a review of the texts for suitability for full structural alignment with CXC 1-1969;
    - structurally align the texts with the Main Headings of CXC 1-1969;
    - provide simple cross-references to CXC 1-1969 where there is no existing text in the document being aligned;
    - include cross reference to sections 16-19 (HACCP) which were not present in earlier versions of CXC 1-1969;
  - identify any aspects that prevent or create particular challenges for structural alignment, for example, a unique structure, age of text, outdated text etc. and where feasible provide recommendations on how these might be addressed, for consideration by CCFH55;
  - liaise with the working group on the new work/forward work plan; and
  - submit a report with the proposed aligned texts and any challenges encountered and possible recommendations on next steps. This report should be submitted to the Codex Secretariat three months prior to CCFH55.

**REVISION OF THE GUIDELINES ON THE APPLICATION OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF FOOD HYGIENE TO CONTROL OF VIRUSES IN FOOD (CXG 79-2112) (Agenda Item 10)<sup>14</sup>**

177. This item was considered under Agenda Item 13.

**DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE REVISION OF *GUIDELINES FOR THE CONTROL OF CAMPYLOBACTER AND SALMONELLA IN CHICKEN MEAT* (CXG 78-2011) (Agenda Item 11)<sup>15</sup>**

178. This item was considered under Agenda Item 13.

**DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE REVISION OF *GUIDELINES ON THE APPLICATION OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF FOOD HYGIENE TO THE CONTROL OF LISTERIA MONOCYTOGENES IN FOODS* (CXG 61-2007) (Agenda Item 12)<sup>16</sup>**

179. This item was considered under Agenda Item 13.

**OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE WORK (Agenda Item 13)<sup>17</sup>**

180. The USA, as the Chair of the PWG, presented the recommendations of the PWG (CRD05), highlighting some of the factors that had been considered in reviewing the forward work plan including the availability scientific advice and the time until CCFH55, as well as the information available in each of the discussion papers and project documents (Agenda Items 10, 11 and 12). Based on the discussions during the PWG, it was noted that two of the project documents, one concerning the revision of the *Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Viruses in Food* (CXG 79-2012), and the other regarding the revision of *Guidelines for the Control of Campylobacter and Salmonella in Chicken Meat* (CXG 78-2011), had been revised and published as CRD34.

181. The PWG noted that the three proposals had been reviewed and were determined as having the same importance in terms of public health and trade impact and the PWG supported work on all three items.

182. CCFH54 considered the recommendations of the PWG, noted that with the progress made at CCFH54 there was sufficient space on the agenda to take forward all three new work proposals and made the following comments and decisions.

**New work**

Revision of the *Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Viruses in Food* (CXG 79-2012)

183. Canada, also on behalf of the Netherlands, introduced the revised project document (CRD34) and noted that the main aspects to be covered by the new work included: expansion of the scope to address HEV and emerging food vehicles such as frozen berries or prepared foods; revisions of interventions along the food chain; addition information on virus detection in food; any new considerations following the review of the various risk assessment models and also proposed to organize the annexes to cover the various commodities based on the latest JEMRA scientific advice (i.e., shellfish, prepared and ready-to-eat foods, fresh and frozen produce, pork and wild game meat). Canada highlighted the revisions to the project document in response to comments received during the PWG and further noted that four of the requests for scientific advice had already been addressed by JEMRA and that the response to the fifth request was still pending from JEMAR. There were no additional scientific advice requests at this time.

184. CCFH54 supported the new work and agreed:

- to forward the revised project document to CAC47 for approval as new work (Appendix VIII);
- to establish an EWG, chaired by Canada and co-chaired by the Netherlands, working in English (comments in French would also be accepted), subject to approval of Commission, to:

<sup>14</sup> CX/FH 24/54/11; CRD 14 (Argentina, European Union, Singapore, Thailand), CRD 18 (Ghana), CRD 19 (Morocco); CRD 20 (African Union (AU)), CRD 21 (Nigeria), CRD 22(East African Community); CRD25 (South Africa); CRD28 (Uganda); CRD29 (Burundi); CRD35 (United Republic of Tanzania)

<sup>15</sup> CX/FH 24/54/12; CRD 15 (Argentina, European Union, Thailand); CRD 18 (Ghana), CRD 19 (Morocco); CRD 20 (African Union(AU)), CRD 21 (Nigeria), CRD 22(East African Community); CRD25 (South Africa); CRD28 (Uganda); CRD29 (Burundi); CRD35 (United Republic of Tanzania); CRD37 (Russian Federation)

<sup>16</sup> CX/FH 24/54/13; CRD 16 (Argentina, European Union, Singapore, Thailand); CRD 18 (Ghana), CRD 19 (Morocco); CRD 20 (African Union(AU)), CRD 21 (Nigeria), CRD 22(East African Community); CRD25 (South Africa); CRD28 (Uganda); CRD29 (Burundi); CRD35 (United Republic of Tanzania); CRD37 (Russian Federation)

<sup>17</sup> CX/FH 24/54/14; CRD 17 (Thailand); CRD 20 (AU); CRD 22 (East African Community); CRD24 (IFT); CRD25 (South Africa); CRD28 (Uganda); CRD29 (Burundi); CRD35 (United Republic of Tanzania )

- prepare the proposed draft revisions for circulation for comments at step 3 and consideration at CCFH55; and
  - undertake a full alignment of the text with CXC1-1969, as necessary.
185. The report of the EWG should be submitted to the Codex Secretariat at least three months before CCFH55 for circulation for comments at Step 3.

Revision of Guidelines for the Control of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* in Chicken Meat (CXG 78-2011)

186. The USA introduced the discussion paper, also on behalf of Brazil, Honduras and New Zealand and highlighting the importance of this work considering the level of foodborne disease associated with *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*, the importance of chicken meat and the continued growth of the industry. The USA noted that the proposed new work would address pre-harvest and post-harvest intervention, practical intervention, methods of microbiological monitoring and pathogen characterization. Noting some concerns that had been expressed by inclusion of molecular methods, the USA noted that while these would be considered it was also important that the document was forward looking and considered recent developments. Finally, the USA highlighted that the scientific advice from JEMRA to support this work was already available. There were no further requests for scientific advice at this time.
187. CCFH54 supported the new work and agreed:
- to forward the revised project document to CAC47 for approval as new work (Appendix IX);
  - to establish an EWG, chaired by the USA and co-chaired by Australia, Brazil, Denmark, Honduras, and India, working in English (comments in Spanish would also be accepted) , subject to approval of Commission, to:
    - prepare the proposed draft revisions for circulation for comments at step 3 and consideration at CCFH55; and
    - undertake a full alignment of the text with CXC1-1969, as necessary.

188. The report of the EWG should be submitted to the Codex Secretariat at least three months before CCFH55 for circulation for comments at Step 3.
189. One Member proposed that comments in French should also be accepted. However, the USA clarified that, it did not have the capacity or expertise among the Chair and co-Chairs, to ensure accurate interpretation of comments in French and the Chairperson reminded CCFH54 that when the document was circulated at Step 3, comments could be provided in English, French and Spanish.

Revision of Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Foods (CXG 61-2007)

190. Canada, also on behalf of France and the USA, introduced the revised project document (CRD34) and noted that the new work would consider control measures throughout the production-to-consumption, microbiological monitoring methods and consumer practices. Canada noted that JEMRA had already undertaken expert meetings on the topic and that there was sufficient scientific advice available to begin this work. There were no further requests for scientific advice at this time.
191. CCFH54 supported the new work and agreed:
- to forward the revised project document to CAC47 for approval as new work (Appendix X);
  - to establish an EWG, chaired by the USA and co-chaired by Canada, China and France, working in English (comments in French would also be accepted), and, subject to approval of Commission, to:
    - prepare the proposed draft revisions for circulation for comments at step 3 and consideration at CCFH55; and
    - undertake a full alignment of the text with CXC1-1969, as necessary.
192. The report of the EWG should be submitted to the Codex Secretariat at least three months before CCFH55 for circulation for comments at Step 3.
193. CCFH54 noted that the three EWGs may undertake informal virtual meetings of the EWG to facilitate their discussions and PWGs for these new work items would not be possible at CCFH55.

Food allergens

194. CCFH54 noted that the suggestion from CCFL47 to ensure consistency between the *Code of Practice on Allergen Management for Food Business Operators* (CXC 80-2020) and their new provisions on food allergen in the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985) in the future and suggested that a Member may wish to prepare a discussion paper ahead of CCFH55, based on the outcomes of CCFL48.

**Forward Workplan**

195. CCFH54 agreed to:
- endorse the report of the PWG and revised forward work plan (Appendix XI);
  - establish a PWG on CCFH Work Priorities, chaired by the USA, to be held in conjunction with CCFH55, working in English, French and Spanish;
  - request the Codex Secretariat to issue a Circular Letter requesting proposals for new work with a deadline of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 as per normal practice; and
  - encourage Members to submit any new discussions papers/new work proposals (e.g. on food allergens) in response to the Circular Letter.

**DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION (Agenda Item 14)**

196. CCFH54 was informed that CCFH55 would be held towards the end of 2025 in the USA with the final arrangements subject to confirmation by the host Government in consultation with the Codex Secretariat.