



Dear colleagues,

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss the work on allergen labelling at the two virtual working group sessions on 9 and 10 May 2023. The sessions will be run in English, French and Spanish.

In preparation for these sessions we would like to draw your attention to some important documents. Firstly the 'Quick Start Guide for Codex Meetings' and the 'Guidance for Participants to Virtual Sessions of Codex Subsidiary Body Meetings'. Both can be found at the following link:



[ENGLISH](#) | [SPANISH](#) | [FRENCH](#)

These documents include useful information on how to participate in the sessions including ensuring you have the most up to date version of [Zoom](#), using the interpretation function, how to identify yourself, how to make an intervention, and who can intervene. We advise you to read these documents in advance for the smooth running of the session and to ensure you are able to participate fully.

In particular, we request you:

- please use a USB headset with integrated microphone, or better, not the PC mic
- please turn on your video when taking the floor, internet connection permitting

The essential documents for this discussion are:



[CX/FL 23/47/5](#)  
[FOOD ALLERGEN LABELLING](#)

[CX/FL 23/47/5 Add 1.](#)

[Comments in response to CL 2023/06/OCS-FL](#)

Declaration of foods or ingredients known to cause hypersensitivity (referred to as allergen labelling) is intended to provide consumers with access to clear and accurate information on the presence of allergens (or substances) in foods, so that they can make safe food choices. This is particularly significant given the potential life-threatening consequences for food allergic individuals, and that the prevalence of conditions is increasing in many parts of the world. The work under discussion will help to clarify the provisions relevant to allergen labelling in the *General Standard for Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985) - hereafter "the Standard", to develop guidance on precautionary allergen or advisory labelling, to provide clear and consistent allergen information for consumers, and increase harmonization to facilitate trade.

Globally the prevalence of food allergies is increasing, including in developing countries. Given the serious nature of food allergies, the health consequences, and the increasing complexity of the food supply chain, the current allergen labelling provisions in the Standard are considered to lack sufficient clarity and detail for industry in how allergens should be presented on food labels to ensure consumer protection. There is also global variation in national/regional standards for allergen labelling which impacts on harmonization and trade.

We can now benefit from the scientific advice provided through the series of [FAO/WHO Expert Meetings](#). We had a successful webinar to introduce us to the outcomes of these expert meetings and you can [watch and listen to it again here](#).

The electronic working group has made great strides on the food allergen work and we hope to do the same in the virtual working group. In order to achieve this, we will focus on the revisions to the *General Standard on the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods* with the intent of recommending that this document advance in the Step procedure.

We look forward to fruitful and constructive discussions and are confident that we can count on your cooperation to achieve this.

*Electronic Working Group Chairpersons*

**Australia, United Kingdom and United States of America**