



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME  
CODEX COMMITTEE ON CONTAMINANTS IN FOODS**

**Seventh Session  
Moscow, Russian Federation, 8 - 12 April 2013**

**MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION  
AND/OR OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES/TASK FORCES**

**A. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 35<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**

**MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

**Standards and related texts adopted at Steps 8 and/or 5/8**

1. The Commission adopted the following:

- Risk Analysis Principles Applied by the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods and the revised definition for contaminant;<sup>1</sup>
- Revision of the Code of Practice for Source Directed Measures to Reduce Contamination of Food with Chemicals and agreed to include a footnote to the term “feed” in paragraph 4 of the Code to make it clear that the ALARA Principle (“as low as reasonably achievable”) applied to maximum levels of contaminants from feed as carry-over into food of animal origin which were relevant to public health in accordance with the use of this Principle in the General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed. The note would read as follows: The General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (CODEX STAN 193-1995) limits application of the “as low as reasonably achievable” concept to feed to those contaminants that can be transferred from feed to food of animal origin and thereby can be relevant for public health;<sup>2</sup>
- Maximum level for melamine in food (liquid infant formula)<sup>3</sup>; and
- Maximum level for total aflatoxins in dried figs including sampling plan<sup>4</sup>.

**Approval of new work for the elaboration of new standards and related texts**

2. The Commission approved the following new work:

- Code of Practice for Weed Control to Prevent and Reduce Pyrrolizidine Alkaloid Contamination in Food and Feed;
- Revision of the Maximum Levels for Lead in Fruit Juices, Milks and Secondary Milk Products, Infant Formula, Canned Fruits and Vegetables, Fruits and cereal Grains (except buckwheat, canihua and quinoa) in the General Standard for Contaminants in Food and Feed;
- Annex for Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxins and Ochratoxin A in sorghum to the Code of Practice for Prevention and Reduction of Mycotoxin Contamination in Cereals (CAC/RCP 51-2003);
- Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Ochratoxin A contamination in Cocoa;
- Code of Practice to Reduce the Presence of Hydrocyanic Acid in Cassava and Cassava Products;
- Maximum Levels for Hydrocyanic Acid in Cassava and Cassava Products; and
- Levels for Radionuclides in Food.<sup>5</sup>

3. Further information on the discussion on the Maximum levels for hydrocyanic acid in cassava and cassava products and on the levels for radionuclides in food can be found in REP12/CAC, paras 140-145.

<sup>1</sup> REP12/CAC, paras 20 and 21-24, Appendix II

<sup>2</sup> REP12/CAC, paras 48-49, Appendix III

<sup>3</sup> REP12/CAC, Appendix III

<sup>4</sup> REP12/CAC, Appendix III

<sup>5</sup> REP12/CAC, para. 137 and Appendix VI.

**MATTERS FOR ACTION****Definition of “contaminant”<sup>6</sup>**

4. When considering the adoption of the revised definition of “contaminant”, a delegation requested clarification as to whether the revised definition excluded substances intentionally added to feed and whether residues of veterinary drugs in food of animal origin as carry over from feed (i.e. medicated feed) would be included in the revised definition. The Delegation also suggested a review of the Section on contaminants in the Format of Commodity Standards may be needed, with the revision of the definition.

5. The Commission noted that the Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods had the responsibility for feed additives when establishing maximum residue limits for veterinary drugs in food of animal origin arising from the addition of veterinary drugs to feed (i.e. medicated feed).

6. The Commission adopted the revised definition of “contaminant” as proposed by the Committee and endorsed by the Committee on General Principles. In addition, as part of the ongoing editorial revision of the GSCTFF, the Commission requested the Committee to look into relevant sections of the General Standard e.g. Section 1.1 (Scope) and 1.2.2 (List of substances that meet the definition of contaminant) to fix any possible discrepancy in relation to the revised definition and the issue of feed additives/feed additive residues.

7. The Committee is invited to consider this matter under Agenda Item 13.

**B. MATTERS ARISING FROM CODEX COMMITTEES RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE****EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION****Proposals for the Elaboration of New Standards and Related Texts<sup>7</sup>**

8. The 67<sup>TH</sup> Session of the Executive Committee noted that the CCCF had put forward seven proposals for new work and discussed whether there was a need for specific recommendations related to the overall workload and the possibility to manage it, taking into account that some items of work in that Committee had not been completed according to the target date in addition to several discussion papers on other matters already scheduled for consideration at the next session. It was also noted that some new items would require extensive work such as the review of several maximum levels for lead.

9. Some members expressed the view that it was the responsibility of each committee to manage its work and that the CCCF had demonstrated its efficiency in addressing important food safety issues. The Chair recalled that it was the role of the Executive Committee to consider the monitoring of work progress and the workload of committees in the overall perspective of the critical review.

10. After some discussion, the Executive Committee noted the importance of the work carried out by the CCCF and recommended approval of all work items proposed, encouraging the Committee to continue managing its heavy workload in an efficient manner.

11. The Committee is invited to note this recommendation.

**COMMITTEE OF FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS (CCFFP)****Review of Guideline Levels for Methylmercury**

12. The CCFFP noted that the Committee on Contaminants in Foods would be discussing the review of the guideline levels for methylmercury in fish and predatory fish at its next session. The Committee agreed that should new work be undertaken by CCCF in this regard, CCFFP should be kept informed and consulted on the work.<sup>8</sup>

13. The Committee is invited to note this request under Agenda Item 16.

**COMMITTEE OF FATS AND OILS (CCFO)****Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils (CODEX STAN 33-1981)<sup>9</sup>**

14. In response to the CCCF that halogenated solvents could be considered as processing aids, the CCFO clarified that halogenated solvents should be considered as contaminants because they were no longer used for the production of olive pomace oils.

15. Regarding the section on halogenated solvents (Section 5.3) in the Standard, the Committee agreed to retain the section as there could still be contamination with such substances from other sources and request the CCCF to include the provisions for halogenated solvents in the GSCTFF so that the section on contaminants in the standard could be fully aligned at a later stage.

16. The Committee is invited to consider this request. The section on contaminants from the Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils is reproduced in the Appendix to this document.

<sup>6</sup> REP12/CAC, paras 22-24.

<sup>7</sup> REP12/EXEC2, paras 18-20.

<sup>8</sup> REP13/FFP, para. 9.

<sup>9</sup> REP13/FO, paras 32-33.

**Standard for Fish Oils<sup>10</sup>**

17. The CCFO agreed to ask the CCCF to include the current level for arsenic and lead in the GSCTFF under the proposed draft Standard for Fish Oils and at the same time to ask the CCCF to re-evaluate the level of lead and arsenic in fish oils, taking into account the notes for arsenic in the GSCTFF. When re-evaluating the level for arsenic, the CCCF should consider whether total arsenic or inorganic arsenic is more appropriate for fish oils as the form of arsenic occurring in fish oils is mainly the organic methylated form, with a low acute toxicity.

18. The Committee is invited to consider this request.

**COMMITTEE OF METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING (CCMAS)****Maximum Level for Total Aflatoxins in Dried Figs including Sampling Plans<sup>11</sup>**

19. The Committee agreed to endorse the sampling plan with an amendment to replace > 20 with > 120 for concentration range for RSD<sub>R</sub> and to replace RSD<sub>r</sub> with RSD<sub>R</sub> in recommended value for precision or relative standard deviation RSD<sub>r</sub> in Table 2.

**Proposed draft Maximum Levels for Arsenic In Rice<sup>12</sup>**

20. The CCCF had agreed to request CCMAS to identify suitable methods of analysis for the determination of inorganic arsenic in rice in order to assist the Committee in the establishment of MLs.<sup>13</sup>

21. In considering this request, several delegations informed CCMAS that some international collaborative studies for inorganic arsenic in rice were in progress in Japan and the European Union and national studies in the Republic of Korea and that some methods of analysis had been validated by collaborative study in a country.

22. The CCMAS agreed to request CCCF to select appropriate methods of analysis for the provision, taking into account the results of these studies, and forward them to CCMAS for endorsement.

23. The Committee is invited to consider the request under Agenda Item 14.

**FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (CCLAC)**

24. The Committee noted two issues of vital importance for the provision of scientific advice, namely data generation and/or its submission for the establishment of Codex maximum residue limits for pesticides in minor crops of interest to the region and maximum levels for cadmium in cocoa and cocoa products.

25. In view of the concern of Ecuador and 19 other countries in the region over the lack of maximum cadmium levels for cocoa and cocoa products, several delegations expressed the need for assistance from FAO, WHO and the Trust Fund in order to generate and/or submit data to the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) so that the Committee on Contaminants in Foods can establish maximum levels for cadmium in cocoa and cocoa products. These delegations indicated that no maximum levels for cadmium have been established in their national legislation, so that the availability of data for submission to JECFA should be checked. Many countries expressed their interest in participating in a regional pilot project run with the assistance of FAO, WHO and the Trust Fund so that the CCCF can establish worldwide representative maximum levels for cadmium in these products.

26. The Committee noted that the region is one of the main producers of cocoa, accounting for more than 12 percent of the total world production of cocoa and more than 90 percent of the production of fine cocoa. The Committee encouraged delegations to look for available data in their countries and if possible to share this information with other interested countries in the region in order to facilitate submission of data to JECFA.

27. The Committee noted the possible implementation of a regional pilot project on cadmium contamination in cocoa and cocoa products.

28. The interested countries in the region present at the meeting therefore agreed to work together to assemble the available information in order to submit it to JECFA by the deadline. They also agreed to request clarification from JECFA regarding the information requested and to make a forceful request for more time so that they can make a greater contribution in terms of data, inasmuch as they are the world's main cocoa producers.

29. The Committee agreed to request FAO and WHO to assist countries of the region in the generation of data with the objective of conducting risk assessments to establish maximum residue limits for pesticides and veterinary drugs and maximum levels for contaminants and food additives. For such purposes, the region proposed to develop a regional pilot project in the areas of minor crops and cadmium contamination in cocoa and cocoa products.<sup>14</sup>

30. The Committee is invited to note the above information under Agenda Item 19.

<sup>10</sup> REP13/FO, para. 64.

<sup>11</sup> REP13/MAS, paras. 50-52.

<sup>12</sup> REP13/MAS, paras. 7-8.

<sup>13</sup> REP12/CF, paras. 59-65.

<sup>14</sup> REP13/LAC, paras. 116-124.

**Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils (CODEX STAN 33-1981)****5. Contaminants****5.3 Halogenated solvents**

Maximum content of each halogenated solvent	0.1 mg/kg
Maximum content of the sum of all halogenated solvents	0.2 mg/kg