

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

Agenda Item 2

CX/FH 06/38/2  
October 2006

## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE

#### Thirty-eighth Session

#### MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND/OR OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES TO THE FOOD HYGIENE COMMITTEE

#### 1. DECISIONS OF THE 28<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (Rome, Italy, 4 – 9 July 2005)<sup>1</sup> (ALINORM 05/28/41, PARAS 87-88)

##### *Recommended International Code of Practice for the Processing and Handling of Quick Frozen Foods*<sup>2</sup>

The Commission noted that work on quality provisions of the Code had been carried out by correspondence, coordinated by the US Secretariat. The Commission also noted that all the quality provisions in square brackets had been removed although a few pending comments of this nature still needed to be addressed. The Commission further noted that some provisions involving both quality and safety aspects required further work or clarification to enable finalization of the quality provisions. In this regard, some countries expressed concern as regards the application of DAP (Defect Action Point) analysis vis-à-vis HACCP system.

The Commission **endorsed** the recommendation of the Executive Committee<sup>3</sup> to return the Code to Step 3 for circulation, comments and finalization by correspondence as per those quality provisions identified in the sections containing provisions addressing both safety and quality, with a view to its adoption at Step 5 at the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission. It was **agreed** that the Codex Secretariat would cooperate with the US Secretariat in the preparation of the Circular Letter inviting comments at Step 3. Subsequent work on the Code would be transferred to the Committee on Food Hygiene for finalization of hygiene/safety provisions. (See also Section 2.2 below).

#### PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARDS AND RELATED TEXTS ADOPTED AT STEP 5 (ALINORM 05/28/41, PARA 71)

The Commission **adopted** the following Proposed Draft Standards and Related Texts at Step 5 submitted by the Food Hygiene Committee at Step 5 and advanced them to Step 6:

<sup>1</sup> Full report of the 28th Session of the Commission is available from: <http://www.codexalimentarius.net>

<sup>2</sup> ALINORM 05/28/6-Add.1

<sup>3</sup> ALINORM 05/28/3A, paras. 19-21

- Draft Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-Eat Foods;
- Draft Principles and Guidelines for the Conduct of Microbiological Risk Management; and
- Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Eggs and Egg Products.

The Commission noted that technical comments raised during the session would be referred to the relevant Committees for their consideration. The Commission encouraged members and observers that have submitted comments in writing or orally at the session to submit these comments at Step 6 of the Procedure.

The above documents would be discussed by the Committee at Step 7.

## **2. DECISIONS OF THE 29<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

### **2.1 GENERAL DECISIONS OF THE 29<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (Geneva, Switzerland, 3 – 7 July 2006)<sup>4</sup>**

The Commission **adopted** a number of amendments to the Rules of Procedure and other amendments to the Procedural Manual, including the splitting of the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants into the Committee on Food Additives and the Committee on Contaminants in Foods and establishing new Task Forces. It also adopted other texts and standards elaborated by the Codex Committees and Task Forces. A complete list of these texts and details of their consideration could be found in ALINORM 06/41 which is available from: <http://www.codexalimentarius.net>

The 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission endorsed the proposal of the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee to recommend to Codex Committees and Task Forces:

- To prioritize work when the agenda of the Committee includes many items of work;
- To invite all Chairpersons, or host countries for adjourned committees, to provide their comments on the items of work that have been under consideration for more than five years; and
- To inform the Executive Committee and the Commission of the proposed timeframe for completion of all items that have been approved as new work prior to 2004 (ALINORM 06/29/41, para. 8 and ALINORM 06/29/3, paras. 64-65)

The Committee is therefore invited to propose a timeframe for all items under consideration in the Step Procedure while considering them at the current session.

### **2.2. DECISIONS OF THE 29<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION THAT HAVE IMPLICATIONS TO THE WORK OF THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE (CCFH) (ALINORM 06/29/41, Paras 116-119)**

#### ***Proposed Draft Recommended International Code of Practice for the Handling and Processing of Quick Frozen Foods<sup>5</sup>***

The Commission noted that different procedures had been applied for the revision of the Code since 1999, the latest allocating work by correspondence on the quality provisions, including Defects Action Points Analysis (DAPs), to the US Secretariat assisted by the Codex Secretariat with a view to the finalization of the hygienic/safety provisions by the Committee on Food Hygiene following adoption at Step 5 by the Commission.

---

<sup>4</sup> Full report of the 29th Session of the Commission is available from: <http://www.codexalimentarius.net>

<sup>5</sup>ALINORM 06/29/6-Add.1.

The Commission noted that the extensive work done by correspondence on the quality provisions, including DAPs Analysis, did not succeed in resolving a few outstanding issues, i.e. whether certain quality provisions could better identified as hygienic/safety provisions and the inclusion of DAPs Analysis in the Code. In this respect, several delegations indicated that application of DAPs Analysis was unnecessary and burdensome to the industry while the actual quality provisions in addition to the application of the HACCP system were sufficient to ensure both quality and safety of the product.

After an exchange of views on how to move forward with the development of the Code, the Commission **agreed** to establish an *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental Codex Task Force on the Processing and Handling of Quick Frozen Foods under Rule XI.1.b(i) of the Rules of Procedures of the Commission to finalize the Code within a period of two years time with one session of the Task Force. The Commission noted that the agreed Terms of Reference, as presented in Appendix X to this report, would allow the Task Force to discuss and finalize both quality and safety provisions of the Code without having to receive endorsement on the safety provisions by the Committee on Food Hygiene unless the Task Force decided otherwise. The Delegation of the United States expressed the view that if the Task Force was unable to finalise the Code in one meeting, the Commission should consider discontinuing work in the Code.

The Delegation of Thailand expressed its interest in hosting the Task Force subject to availability of funds. The Delegation of the United States indicated that, subject to funding, it would assist Thailand in the practical operation of the Task Force. In order to solve as many outstanding issues as possible before the physical meeting of the Task Force would take place, it was agreed that a Circular Letter be issued requesting comments on the Code now returned to Step 3. The Delegations of Thailand and the United States would revise the Code by correspondence based on the comments submitted at the present session of the Commission and in response to the CL in order to prepare a revised document that would serve as a basis for the discussion at the session of the Task Force.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING FROM OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES**

#### **3.1 56<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (ALINORM 05/56/3A, PARAS 90-92)**

##### ***Elaboration of Risk-based Standards for Microbiological Hazards: Enhancing the Process***<sup>6</sup>

The Member for South West Pacific introduced a proposal which had been prepared by New Zealand describing the need and approach for enhanced elaboration of risk-based microbiological standards by the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH). According to the proposal the development of “global” microbiological risk assessments was a complicated and resource-intensive task. For this reason, progress has been slow to date in the Codex Committee for Food Hygiene and no standards based on the work of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meetings on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA) had been set. The absence of Codex standards in this area and the application of different national standards could cause tension between trading partners and disrupt trade.

In their written submission, New Zealand proposed to enhance the standard setting process in this area. One means to speed up the work consisted in having for each work topic a champion country to steward the development of the standard between Committee sessions while ensuring transparency of the process through relevant documentation.

The Executive Committee welcomed the proposal and recommended that the Commission invite the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene to discuss the document in detail.

This matter would be discussed on Agenda Item 10 (a) Other Business and Future Work.

---

<sup>6</sup> CAC/28 LIM 14 (Submission from New Zealand)

### 3.2 CODEX COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES (ALINORM 06/29/33, PARAS 45-57)

#### *Management of the Work of the Committee on Food Hygiene*

The Committee recalled that its last session had considered the document forwarded by the 37<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Food Hygiene on the “Proposed Process by which the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene will Undertake its Work” for advice and agreed to request legal advice from the Legal Counsels of FAO and WHO on the texts proposed. The first part of the document addressed internal working procedures of the Committee while the Annex referred to the interaction between the CCFH and the expert bodies of FAO/WHO.

The Secretariat indicated that the amendments proposed in Annex 1 of the working document were intended to avoid repetition of general requirements that already existed in the Procedural Manual and to ensure consistency with general texts such as the Working Principles for Risk Analysis. The Secretariat also recalled that, as mentioned in the last session of the CCGP, the provisions concerning the interaction between the CCFH and JEMRA might be considered in a document describing the risk analysis policies of the Committee.

The Delegation of the United States, referring to the views of the Chairperson of the Committee on Food Hygiene, expressed general concern that the amendments proposed might prevent the Committee from applying improved working procedures, and pointed out that many provisions were specific to the CCFH and had been included to clarify and facilitate its tasks. The Delegation also stressed the need for effective communication and interaction between CCFH and JEMRA, and between CCFH and other Codex Committees as appropriate and noted that this aspect could be addressed in a specific document at a later stage.

The Delegation of Austria, speaking on behalf of the Member States of the European Community present at the session, recalled that a global review was currently taking place on the structure and mandate of Codex committees and that the process might lead to operational changes regarding the work of the Committee. The Delegation also supported the amendments proposed by the Secretariat in the working document.

In section 4(v), the Delegation of Chile stressed the importance of ensuring adequate geographical balance and representation of developing countries in the working group on priorities.

The Delegation of the United States pointed out that the original text proposed to hold the working group on priorities on the day preceding the session in order to facilitate the participation of developing countries. After some discussion, the Committee agreed to retain this provision and noted that the text allowed the CCFH enough flexibility to convene the working group as required.

In paragraph 9, the Delegation of the United States proposed to reinsert some of the original text in order to clarify the process and the role of the working group on priorities to prepare proposals for consideration by the plenary session. The Committee agreed to retain paragraph 9 as originally drafted with some minor amendments to reflect that the Committee had the possibility to decide on a case-by-case basis how to prioritise its work at each session and to establish a working group for that purpose.

The Committee agreed to delete the provisions in paragraphs 12 to 14 as they were already covered by the general provisions on new work in the Procedural Manual.

The Delegation of Belgium pointed out that further clarification would be required as to how scientific advice could be sought from scientific bodies other than JEMRA, such as ICMSF.

#### **Annex: Iterative Process between the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene and FAO/WHO for the Conduct of Microbiological Risk Assessment**

Several delegations expressed the view that interaction with JEMRA was the responsibility of the Committee and should not be delegated to a Working Group, in application of the Guidelines for Physical Working Groups and the Working Principles for Risk Analysis and therefore supported the amendment proposed in the working document. The Delegation of Japan, sharing the concern expressed by the Delegation of the United States as host country of CCFH, expressed the view that the Committee should be able to delegate its responsibility to a working group, if the modalities of

interaction between the Committee and expert bodies had been determined by the Committee and if transparency was ensured in the process.

The Committee recommended that the Committee on Food Hygiene consider the development of a document explaining its policies in the application of risk analysis, that might include interaction between the CCFH and JEMRA, for possible inclusion in the Procedural Manual.

The Committee agreed to return the document, as amended at the present session and presented in Appendix V, to the Committee on Food Hygiene for further consideration.

The Committee noted that there was no impediment for CCFH to start implementing an appropriate process for prioritization of new work proposals as far as such process was consistent with the Codex procedures in place.

The Committee is invited to finalize the document while addressing the comments provided by the Codex Committee on General Principles (see paras above and Appendix to this document).

### **3.3 CODEX COMMITTEE ON FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS (ALINORM 07/30/18, PARAS 91, 111)**

#### *Endorsement of Hygiene Provisions in the Codex Standards and Codes of Practice*

In accordance with its Terms of Reference and established practice the Committee on Food Hygiene is invited to endorse the **hygiene provisions** of standards and codes of practice when they have achieved Step 5 status in the Codex Elaboration Procedure.

Governments and interested international organizations are invited to consider and take a decision on the suitability for endorsement of the **hygiene provisions** in the following draft texts, which were distributed to Member governments:

- The Proposed Draft Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products (Section 10.4 and 10.5 Quick Frozen Coated Fish and Fishery Products and Section 11 Salted Fish) at Step 5/8 (ALINORM 07/30/18, Appendix II);
- Proposed Draft Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs at Step 5 (ALINORM 07/30/18, Appendix V).

The Committee is invited to indicate whether the texts are:

- suitable for endorsement;
- suitable for endorsement with amendments; and
- not suitable for endorsement, giving reasons.

The above texts are available for downloading in English from the following website:

<http://www.codexalimentarius.net>

### **3.4 CODEX COMMITTEE ON PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES (CCPFV)**

#### *Microbiological specifications for sterilized products (ALINORM05/28/27, para. 70)*

While considering the proposed draft Codex Standard for Canned (Preserved) Tomatoes, in Section 6.2 relating to compliance of the product with microbiological criteria, the Committee agreed to request the advice of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene on whether or not sterilized products such as preserved tomatoes needed to comply with such requirement.

The Committee is invited to give an advice to the CCPFV on the above subject matter.

## APPENDIX

## MANAGEMENT OF THE WORK OF THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE

## The Proposed Process by which the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene will undertake its work

Purpose

1. The following guidelines are established to assist the CCFH to:
  - Identify, prioritize and efficiently carry out its work, and
  - Interact with [other Codex Committees, Task Forces, and] FAO/WHO and their scientific bodies as the need arises.

Scope

2. These guidelines apply to all work undertaken by the CCFH and encompass: guidelines and procedures for proposing new work; criteria and procedures for considering the priorities for proposed and existing work; procedures for implementing new work; [the approach to interaction of CCFH with other Codex Committees and/or Task Forces on items of mutual interest;] and a process by which CCFH will obtain scientific advice from FAO/WHO.

Process for Considering Proposals for New Work

3. To facilitate the process of managing the work of the Committee, CCFH ~~will~~ **may** establish an *ad hoc* Working Group for the Establishment of CCFH Work Priorities (“*ad hoc* Working Group”) at each Session, **in accordance with the Guidelines on Physical Working Groups.**

4. The Codex Committee on Food Hygiene will, normally, employ the following process for undertaking new work.

- i. A request for proposals for new work and/or revision of an existing standard will be issued in the form of a Codex Circular Letter, **if required.**
- ii. [~~New work and/or revision of an existing standard may be proposed by the Committee on its own initiative, by another Codex subsidiary body upon referral to CCFH or by an individual member or members.~~]
- iii. Proposals for new work received in response to the Codex Circular Letter will be transmitted to the **Host of the** *ad hoc* Working Group **as well as the CCFH Chair** ~~by the Host~~ **government Country** and Codex Secretariats.
- iv. The ~~Chair~~ **Host** of the *ad hoc* Working Group will collate the proposals for new work in a document that will be distributed by the Codex Secretariat to Codex members and observers for review and comment within a specified time frame.
- v. The *ad hoc* Working Group will meet **as decided by the Committee, normally** on the day ~~before~~ **prior to the opening plenary** session of CCFH to develop recommendations for consideration by the Committee during the CCFH session. The *ad hoc* Working Group will review the proposals for new work along with comments submitted. It will verify the completeness and compliance with the prioritization criteria of the proposals for new work and make recommendations to the Committee on whether the proposals for new work should be accepted, denied, or returned for additional information.

If accepted, a recommendation will be provided on the priority of the proposal for new work compared to pre-established priorities. The priority of the proposals for new work will be established using the guidelines outlined below, taking into account the ‘Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities’<sup>7</sup>. Proposals for new work of lower priority may be delayed if resources are limiting. Proposals for new work of lower priority not recommended may be reconsidered at the next CCFH session. If the *ad hoc* Working Group recommends that a proposal for new work be “denied” or “returned for revision,” a justification for this recommendation will be provided.

---

<sup>7</sup> Codex Procedural Manual, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition.

- vi. At the CCFH session, the *ad hoc* Working Group Chair will introduce the recommendations of the *ad hoc* Working Group to the Committee. The CCFH will decide whether a proposal for new work and/or revision of an existing standard is accepted, returned for revision, or denied. If accepted, a project document<sup>8</sup>, which may include amendments agreed upon by the Committee, will be prepared by the CCFH and submitted to the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) with a request for approval of the proposed new work.

### Proposals for New Work

~~5. — As specified in the Codex Procedural Manual, work undertaken by the CCFH should fall within its Terms of Reference, should be consistent with the strategic plan and the general procedures established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, and should meet the Codex Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities.~~

6. **In addition to the provisions applying to proposals for new work in the Procedural Manual**, the proposals for new work shall be in written form and consistent with, and include the specified elements of the project document required for approval of new work by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. ~~The proposals for new work will~~ **should** include a Risk Profile<sup>9</sup>, as appropriate. The proposals for new work should indicate the specific nature or outcome of the new work being proposed (e.g., new or revised code of hygienic practice, risk management guidance document).

7. The proposals for new work will typically address a food hygiene issue of public health significance. It should describe in as much detail as possible, the scope and impact of the issue and the extent to which it impacts on international trade.

8. The proposal for new work may also:

- address an issue that affects progress within CCFH or by other committees, **provided it is consistent with the mandate of CCFH**;
- facilitate risk analysis activities; or
- establish or revise general principles or guidance. The need to revise existing CCFH texts may be to reflect current knowledge and/or improve consistency with the *Recommended International Code of Practice: General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003).

### Prioritization of Proposals for New Work

9. The Committee will prioritize its proposals for new work at each CCFH meeting **if required**. This will be carried out by the Committee after consideration of the recommendations from the *ad hoc* Working Group. The *ad hoc* Working Group will consider the priority of proposals for new work taking into account the current workload of the Committee, ~~The recommendations will include a prioritization of proposals for new work that meet the~~ **and in accordance with the “Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities”** criteria specified by the CAC and if necessary, additional criteria specified in a Terms of Reference ~~the *ad hoc* Working Group~~ to be prepared by the Committee ~~to~~. If CCFH resources are limited, proposals for new work or existing work may need to be delayed in order to advance higher priority work. A higher priority should be given to proposals for new work needed to control an urgent public health problem.

~~10. The *Ad hoc* Working Group will also assess and provide recommendations to CCFH on the need for cross-committee interactions (see below).~~

~~11. If the proposed new work will benefit from the acquisition of additional expert scientific advice such as an international risk assessment, the need for obtaining the advice from FAO/WHO should also be considered in prioritizing work (see below).~~

### Process for Commencement of Proposals for New Work within CCFH

<sup>8</sup> The elements of a project document are described in the Codex *Procedural Manual*, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition.

<sup>9</sup> Definition of a risk profile is “the description of the food safety problem and its context” (Codex *Procedural Manual*, 14<sup>th</sup> Edition). The elements of a risk profile are provided in the Proposed Draft Principles and Guidelines for the Conduct of Microbiological Risk Management.

12. ~~Upon approval of the proposal for new work and/or revision of an existing standard by the CAC, the work will be undertaken through the Codex Step Procedure as provided for in the Codex *Procedural Manual* “*Procedures for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts*”.~~

13. ~~An electronic or physical working group may be established to assist the Committee to undertake the work. Working groups established by the Committee will follow the criteria established by CAC.<sup>10</sup>~~

14. ~~As necessary and appropriate, CCFH work will request a risk assessment or other expert scientific advice from FAO/WHO using the procedure outlined below.~~

### **Obtaining Scientific Advice**

15. There are instances where progress on the work of the Committee will require an international risk assessment or other expert scientific advice. This advice will be typically be sought through FAO/WHO (e.g. through JEMRA, *ad hoc* expert consultations), though in certain instances such advice may be requested from other specialized international scientific bodies (e.g. ICMSF). When undertaking such work, the Committee should follow the structured approach given in the Codex *Principles and Guidelines for the Conduct of Microbiological Risk Management* (under development). ~~The Committee will also keep in mind~~ **and** the Codex *Working Principles for Risk Analysis for Application in the Framework of the Codex Alimentarius*<sup>11</sup>.

16. In seeking an international risk assessment to be conducted by FAO/WHO (e.g., through JEMRA), CCFH should consider and seek advice on whether:

- i. Sufficient scientific knowledge and data to conduct the needed risk assessment are available or obtainable in a timely manner. (An initial evaluation of available knowledge and data will typically be provided within the Risk Profile.)
- ii. There is a reasonable expectation that a risk assessment will provide results that can assist in reaching risk management decisions related to control of the microbiological hazard without unduly delaying the adoption of the needed microbiological risk management guidance.
- iii. Risk assessments performed at the regional, national and multinational levels that can facilitate the conduct of an international risk assessment are available.

17. If the Committee decides to request that a microbiological risk assessment or other scientific advice be developed, the Committee will forward a specific request to FAO/WHO, the risk profile document, a clear statement of the purpose and scope of the work to be undertaken, any time constraints facing the Committee that could impact the work, and the case of a risk assessment, the specific risk management questions to be addressed by the risk assessors. The Committee will, as appropriate, also provide FAO/WHO with information relating to the risk assessment policy for the specific risk assessment work to be undertaken. ~~While CCFH establishes its own priorities it is recognized that any requests to FAO/WHO for scientific advice including risk assessments will be subject to FAO/WHO work prioritization criteria as agreed at the 55<sup>th</sup> session of CCEXEC.~~ FAO/WHO will evaluate the request according to their criteria and subsequently inform the Committee of its decision on whether or not to carry out such work together with a scope of work to be undertaken. If FAO/WHO respond favorably, the Committee will encourage its members to submit their relevant scientific data. If a decision is made by FAO/WHO not to perform the requested risk assessment, FAO/WHO will inform the Committee of this fact and the reasons for not undertaking the work (e.g., lack of data, lack of financial resources).

18. The Committee recognizes that an iterative process between risk managers and risk assessors is essential throughout the process described above and for the adequate undertaking of any microbiological risk assessment and the development of any microbiological risk management guidance document or other CCFH document(s). The iterative process is described in Annex I.

19. The FAO/WHO will provide the results of the microbiological risk assessment(s) to the Committee in a format and fashion to be determined jointly by the Committee and FAO/WHO. As needed, the FAO/WHO

---

<sup>10</sup> Criteria developed for adoption by the Commission. See report of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCGP, ALINORM 05/28/33, Appendices V and VI.

<sup>11</sup> Codex *Procedural Manual*, 15<sup>th</sup> edition.



will provide scientific expertise **to the Committee** ~~at Committee session or working group~~, as feasible, to provide guidance on the appropriate interpretation of the risk assessment.

20. Microbiological risk assessments carried out by FAO/WHO (JEMRA) will operate under the framework contained in the *Principles and Guidelines for the Conduct of Microbiological Risk Assessment* (CAC/RCP 020-1999).

**Providing for Cross-Committee Interaction to Conduct CCFH Work**

~~21. It is noted that there are already some mechanisms in place to facilitate cross-committee interactions through the regular agenda item, Matters Referred, from the CAC and other Codex Committees. It is also noted that the Codex Committee structure and mandates of Codex Committees and task forces is being subjected to external review. The outcome of this review may affect the interaction of CCFH with other Codex Committees. The need for guidance to facilitate interaction between CCFH and other committees will be further considered after the CAC responds to this external review.~~

## Annex I

### **ITERATIVE PROCESS BETWEEN THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE AND FAO/WHO FOR THE CONDUCT OF MICROBIOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT**

[The Codex Committee on Food Hygiene recognizes that an iterative process between risk managers and risk assessors is essential for the adequate undertaking of any microbiological risk assessment and the development of any microbiological risk management guidance document or other CCFH document(s). In particular, dialogue between the Committee and FAO/WHO is desirable to thoroughly assess the feasibility of the risk assessment, to assure that risk assessment policy are clear, and to ensure that the risk management questions posed by the Committee are appropriate.] If FAO/WHO agrees that the requested risk assessment proposed in the Risk Profile is feasible and will be undertaken, a series of planned interactions between the FAO/WHO JEMRA and the Committee ~~or its Working Group established to develop the risk management guidance document~~ should be scheduled to assure effective interaction. In certain instances when the subject matter would benefit from additional interaction with other Codex Committees or other FAO/WHO risk assessment bodies, these committees should be included into the iterative process.

[It is essential that communications between these entities are timely and effective.] ~~Any intermediary (i.e., Working Group) assigned by the Committee to serve as a liaison with the FAO/WHO (JEMRA) will need to report the progress and facilitate decision making in both a timely and effective manner so that progress in the development of a risk assessment (and the CCFH work products derived from it) is not unduly delayed.~~

[The Committee ~~and/or its liaison (i.e., the Working Group)~~ is likely to receive questions from FAO/WHO or the designated risk assessment body (e.g., JEMRA) relating to the requested microbiological risk assessment(s). The questions may include those needed to clarify the scope and application of the risk assessment, the nature of the risk management control options to be considered, key assumptions to be made regarding the risk assessment, and the analytical strategy to be employed in the absence of key data needed to perform the risk assessment. Likewise, the Committee ~~and/or its liaison (i.e., the Working Group)~~ may pose questions to FAO/WHO or their designation (JEMRA) to clarify, expand, or adjust the risk assessment to better address the risk management questions posed or to develop and/or understand the risk management control options selected. Timely, appropriate responses are needed for these interactions.]

The Committee may elect to discontinue or modify work on a risk assessment if the iterative process demonstrates that: 1) completion of an adequate risk assessment is not feasible; or 2) it is not possible to provide appropriate risk management options. However, FAO/WHO may decide to continue the work if it is considered necessary to meet the needs of their member countries.