

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4(B)

CX/FL 08/36/6-ADD.2

E

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

**CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING
THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION
OTTAWA, CANADA, APRIL 28 - MAY 2, 2008**

**GUIDELINES FOR THE PRODUCTION, PROCESSING, LABELLING AND
MARKETING OF ORGANICALLY PRODUCED FOODS:
DRAFT AMENDMENT: ADDITION OF ETHYLENE
(CL 2007/34-FL & ALINORM 07/30/22 - APPENDIX IV)**

GOVERNMENT COMMENTS AT STEP 6

COMMENTS FROM:

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE MOVEMENTS (IFOAM)

**GUIDELINES FOR THE PRODUCTION, PROCESSING, LABELLING AND MARKETING OF ORGANICALLY PRODUCED FOODS:
DRAFT AMENDMENT: ADDITION OF ETHYLENE
(CL 2007/34-FL & ALINORM 07/30/22 - APPENDIX IV)**

GOVERNMENT COMMENTS AT STEP 6

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE MOVEMENTS (IFOAM):

The Codex CCFL committee agreed at the last meeting to advance the proposed draft amendment to allow the use of ethylene for bananas and kiwi fruits, which should go as amendment to Annex 1 with the wording “Ethylene may be used for ripening kiwifruit and bananas” at step 5 as ethylene met the criteria specified in Section 5 of the Codex Alimentarius Guidelines.

IFOAM supports the inclusion of ethylene in the Codex Organic Guidelines as a permitted substance for the ripening of produce. For many years IFOAM Basic Standards have permitted the use of ethylene gas for ripening (Article 6.3.6). Ethylene gas is omitted naturally during the ripening process for produce. Ethylene gas is employed in minute quantities during produce handling to trigger the ripening of fruits, particularly tropical fruits such as banana and pineapple, which are picked green for handling and transported over long distances.

IFOAM is in favour of the proposal for inclusion of ethylene for bananas and kiwi fruits, currently at step 5. If there is a documented need and request for other fruits than bananas and kiwi fruits then it might be possible to adapt the wording in Annex 1 - Principles of Organic Production, Paragraph 82 of this section at the end as follows: “Ethylene may be used for ripening of kiwifruit, bananas, or other tropical fruits.” Alternatively ethylene was proposed to be listed in Annex 2, Permitted Substances for the Production of Organic Foods, Table 4, Processing Aids, where some gases (carbon dioxide, nitrogen) are already listed for use with plant products. However IFOAM shares the concern of the delegation of USA that ethylene does not fit well in Annex 2, as the currently used commercial products are of synthetic origin and not from natural and renewable origin (which would be desirable as Brazil has mentioned).