

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
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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 6

CX/GP 04/20/6-Add.1

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Twentieth Session

Paris, France, 3 - 7 May 2004

DEFINITION OF TRACEABILITY/PRODUCT TRACING OF FOODSTUFFS

GOVERNMENT COMMENTS

(Australia, Canada, Colombia, European Community, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, United States of America, Consumers International, Europabio, 49th Parallel Biotechnology Consortium)

AUSTRALIA

Australia would like to thank France for its work in leading the Electronic Working Group that has been established under the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP) to develop a definition of "Traceability/Product Tracing of Foodstuffs". Australia would also like to express its appreciation to France for providing members with the opportunity to comment on the proposed draft definition in advance of the 20th Session of the Committee.

General Comments

Australia, as the Host Government of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification (CCFICS), would like to advise that during its 12th Session in Brisbane, Australia, December 2003 it was agreed by CCFICS that it would develop a draft preliminary set of principles on traceability/product tracing, for circulation, comment and further discussion at its 13th Session to be held in Australia in December 2004. Our comments in relation to the proposed draft definition of traceability/product tracing have taken the proposed work of CCFICS into account.

Specific Comments on the Proposed Draft Definition

Whilst we appreciate the intent of the proposed draft definition as presented in CX/GP 04/20/6, we consider that the proposed wording is broader than what would normally be considered as a "definition" for the purposes of inclusion in a Codex guideline or principle. Furthermore, in Australia's view, the proposed draft definition includes a mixture of principles, scoping and operational elements that go beyond what was agreed at the last meeting of CCGP in April 2003 (ie. "The Committee concluded there was sufficient support only to proceed with the definition of "traceability/product tracing" for Codex purposes ..."¹)

Australia is of the view that any definition developed by CCGP must be able to be read in conjunction with an overarching set of principles, such as those being developed by CCFICS, or be able to be incorporated into other Codex texts (ie. commodity specific guidelines in sections relating to the need for recall, lot identification etc) as relevant committees see fit within their mandates. For example, in the last dot point "the linkages between product identification and product information", it would seem to us that this text would be more suited for inclusion in a set of principles in the context of describing the ability to identify a food and/or record the movement of that food, where it came from and to where it went.

¹ ALINORM 03/33A, para 97.

Australia would like to propose that the definition be confined to a short paragraph describing the meaning of the word(s). To this end, Australia would propose alternate wording as follows:

Traceability/Product Tracing: The ability to identify a food, the movement of the food and relevant information about that food, at the specified stage(s) of the food chain.

Specific Comments on Appendix 2 - Other Relevant Topics

Australia would like to propose that CCGP refer the comments in Appendix 2 to the Chair of CCFICS and/or the Australian Secretariat asking that the topics raised be included in further discussions in the proposed seminars/workshops to be run in conjunction with CCFICS2.

CANADA

Canada would like to thank France for leading the Electronic Working Group.

General Comments:

Canada has reviewed the input provided by Member Countries to the Electronic Working Group before finalizing the document at hand (CX/GP 04/20/5). We noticed that there were two broad types of suggestions for a definition: those limited to a basic definition *per se*; and those incorporating some substantial elements of application.

Canada's contribution to the discussion fell into the second category as it provided substantial input related to the application of traceability / product tracing which went beyond a basic definition. Canada noted with interest the contribution from the United Kingdom which suggested basing the Codex definition on the EC regulation 178/2002. The definition is simple and of value to ensure that traceability requirements can be put into effect pragmatically, taking into account the practicality of implementing traceability / product tracing in all food businesses.

It is Canada's opinion that a basic definition, as suggested by the U.K., would better serve the work of Codex. Aspects pertaining to the application of traceability / product tracing could be developed after a definition for the term is developed by CCGP and adopted by the CAC. Elements of application could be incorporated into the "principles on traceability/ product tracing" currently under development by CCFICS (paragraphs 72 and 74 of ALINORM 04/27/30).

The EC definition as per Regulation 178/2002 is "the ability to trace and follow a food, feed, food producing animal, or substance intended to be, or expected to be incorporated into a food or feed, through all stages of production, processing and distribution."

Canada finds considerable merit in examining this approach with slight amendments, as follows, to better accommodate the Codex context:

Traceability / Product Tracing is the ability to trace and track a food through all specified stages of production, processing and distribution.

Rationale for Using the Modified EC Definition:

1. The proposed definition is basic as it does not elaborate on specific elements related to application. It leaves opportunities for further discussion regarding what the appropriate elements of traceability systems are (e.g., product identification, product information and appropriate linkages) and the purposes for which traceability / product tracing may be considered.
2. The definition covers both the ability to trace (i.e., the capability to establish the origin of a particular unit by reference to records held upstream) and the ability to track (i.e., the capability to follow a particular unit downstream through the supply chain).
3. The word "food" is already defined in Codex and considering the Scope of the Codex Alimentarius and the Nature of Codex Standards, it should be seen as the appropriate replacement for the phrase "food, feed, food producing animal, or substance intended to be, or expected to be incorporated into a food or feed". It is

² ALINORM 04/27/30 para 67. The Committee (CCFICS) emphasised the need to organise seminars and workshops to provide the opportunity for those countries with practical experience to exchange information with other countries on the types of systems in place, on their scope, application and coverage, to promote a better understanding of this subject.

understood that, as appropriate to the food control system, traceability / product tracing may also apply to food producing animals or other agricultural inputs which may enter the food chain, e.g., animal feed, fertilizer.

4. Addition of the word “specified” takes into account that the degree of traceability / product tracing would be dictated by the food control system and may not need to occur at all stages of the food chain.

Specific Comments on Appendix 2: Other Relevant Topics About Traceability / Product Tracing:

Canada recalls that, at its last regular Session, the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP) concluded that there was sufficient support only to proceed with the development of a definition of “traceability / product tracing” for Codex purposes and agreed to establish an open-ended electronic working group with the limited mandate of developing a draft definition (Paragraph 97 of Alinorm 03/33A). Furthermore, the drafters of the paper recognize in paragraph 1 of Appendix 2 that the elements brought forward “contribute almost nothing” to the specific need of the working group but chose to keep the Appendix 2 and to add new material “unrelated to the working group’s concerns”. For these reasons, Canada recommends removal of Appendix 2 from this document.

COLOMBIA

First, we would like to acknowledge the work by the group co-ordinated by France

The reference for our remarks or questions is the document called “Appendix 1 to the CX/GP 04/20/6” in Spanish.

- Does the point on raw materials used include other substances such as additives or co-adjuvants that might be used in product processing?
- In the proposed draft definition, why is there no reference to the different types of good practices, including in agriculture, veterinary drug use, supply, storage, distribution or other related areas?
- The part on “**the linkages between product identification and product information**” could be interpreted in different ways so we suggest that the document be much clearer on the scope of this expression.
- Last, we would like to make clear that *rastreabilidad* and *trazabilidad* in the Spanish version (traceability) are synonyms.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The European Community congratulates the French Secretariat of the CCGP to have succeeded in synthesizing in this draft definition of traceability/product tracing, all the various received contributions. This draft definition, more detailed than the definition of traceability in the EC legislation, gives good visibility of the concept and can overall be supported by the European Community.

The European Community would like to cooperate positively in the development of this definition by making the following comments:

First sentence

The EC considers that the implementation of measures falls under the scope of the application of legislative acts, and should be avoided in a definition. The EC suggests replacing “The implementation of measures” by “The possibility”.

In paragraph 26 of document CX/GP 04/20/5, it is indicated that the title of the working document was amended to emphasize that the intended scope of the definition of traceability/product tracing in Appendix 1 is limited to foodstuffs. The EC considers that the reference in the first sentence of the definition laid down in Appendix 1 is not consistent with this objective because the word “food chain” does include feed used for food producing animals. According to the “*General Food Law*” of the EC legislation, the food chain covers all stages of production, processing and distribution of food and also feed produced for, or fed to, food-producing animals. For this reason, if the scope of the discussion is limited to food the word “food chain” may be misleading for some countries. The EC suggests adding a foot note after “food chain” as follows:

(1) For some countries, the word “food chain” includes feed used for food producing animals.

Identification

A “unique mean” for identification is an efficient tool to implement traceability. In the Codex context, it has to be borne in mind that too sophisticated traceability systems could create too heavy burdens for small and medium sized business. The EC suggests adding after the word “unique means” the terms “as simple as possible”.

Information

In order to take into account the needs to identify specific characteristic of the product, for example “Organic products” or “Halal products” the EC suggests changing the second bullet point as follows:

- *How it was produced and/ or changed/processed, if appropriate.*

In the French version of the draft definition, the word “origin” is used in the third bullet point under Product information. This word does not appear in the English version. The term “origin” has already been defined by the “Committee of Origin” within the WTO. Its use in the Codex definition of traceability could introduce some confusion and should be avoided. The EC suggests using the word “provenance” instead of “origin” in the French version, the English version being unchanged.

Information on controls carried out on the products is useful but not always necessary. The EC suggest adding the words “if appropriate” or “if relevant” in order to introduce some flexibility.

Identification /Information

The word “renseignements” in the French version of the last bullet point should be replaced by “informations”, the English version being unchanged.

APPENDIX 1

PROPOSED DRAFT DEFINITION OF "TRACEABILITY/PRODUCT TRACING" OF FOODSTUFFS

"The ~~possibility implementation of measures~~ possibility to ensure, at any stage of the food chain³, that the path of a food and the relevant information about it are known, including:

- product identification, a unique means, as simple as possible, to identify a food or batch thereof
- product information :
 - the raw materials used,
 - if appropriate, how it was produced and changed ~~if appropriate~~,
 - where and when it came from and where and when it was sent (one step backward and one step forward)
 - the controls, which the product has been subject to, if relevant
- the linkages between product identification and product information.

This information is ~~These information are~~ generated for the purpose of food safety and/or of fair practices in food trade, and may be used, as appropriate, by industry, government and other third-party. It are is recorded by each business involved and ~~are~~ stored, during an appropriate timeframe, in a way making fast and easy retrieval possible."

MEXICO

General Comments on the Definition

The suggested definition comprises some elements that should not be included because they refer to the way traceability is implemented by companies and not to the definition of the concept.

³ For some countries, the word « food chain » includes feed used for food producing animals

For instance, the expression “one step backward and one step forward” as well as the text referring to information recording and storage by businesses are points that should not be included in the definition.

In the same way, the definition should not refer to the way that traceability will be implemented by industry or the governments and should allow for the implementation of different alternatives.

APPENDIX I

Specific Comments on the Definition:

- First bullet – Product identification should not require a unique means to identify a food but rather a combination of different means: name, brand, description, presentation, batch number, recipient identification and embarkation details (for imported foodstuffs). (In this respect, see the Appendix to the Guidelines for the Exchange of Information in Food Control Emergency Situations (CAC/GL 19-1995) and the Appendix to the Guidelines for the Exchange of Information Between Countries on Rejection of Imported Food. (CAC/GL 25-1997)]. We suggest taking “a unique means to identify a food or batch thereof” out of the document. If not, then the elements that could be used to identify a food should be listed.
- In the third subsection of the second bullet, we suggest the following alteration “where ~~and when~~ it came from and where ~~and when~~ it was sent as well as the dates that make it possible to determine the location of the foodstuff at any given moment. (~~one step backward and one step forward~~)”
- Last paragraph: take out the second clause and refer to information recording in a more general way.

In compliance with the above remarks, the text in English would be drafted as follows:

“The implementation of measures to ensure, at any stage of the food chain, that the path of a food and the relevant informations about it are known, including:

- The facts enabling product identification, ~~a unique means to identify a food or batch thereof~~ (name, brand, description, presentation, batch number, and so on)
- product information:
 - the raw materials used
 - how it was changed (if appropriate)
 - where ~~and when~~ it came from and where ~~and when~~ it was sent as well as the dates making it possible to determine the location of the foodstuff at any given moment (~~one step backward and one step forward~~)
 - the controls, which the product has been subject to, and
- the linkages between product identification and product information.

These informations and information recording are generated for the purpose of food safety and / or of fair practices in food trade, and may be used, as appropriate, by industry, government and other third-party. ~~They are recorded by each business involved and are stored, during an appropriate timeframe, in a way making fast and easy retrieval possible~~”.

General Comments on Appendix II

Concerning the second recommendation to the CCGP (paragraph 28), it should be pointed out that during the 12th meeting of the CCFICS in December 2003, an agreement was reached to draft a working document that would include a preliminary set of principles on traceability. It was also decided that the principles would be submitted to members’ comments and the ensuing discussion would lay the groundwork for drafting another document that will be discussed at the 13th meeting of the CCFICS in December 2004.

We consider that a means of advancing in the definition of criteria or principles for the practical implementation of traceability would be to develop guidelines on its use as a means of risk management, an issue where there is a consensus. We also suggest that the use of traceability for other purposes be addressed later, underscoring the priority set by CODEX on drafting standards on food safety and public health.

On another subject, to draw up concrete agreements we consider that the issues pertaining to the different alternatives for implementing traceability should remain as an option for the governments. The same holds

for any principles or guidelines that the CODEX may develop; they should focus on the results that could be reached by implementing traceability.

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand thanks France for leading the Working Group on this subject and welcomes this opportunity to comment on the draft definition.

Comments on Appendix I: Proposed Draft Definition of Traceability/product tracing of foodstuffs

New Zealand has reviewed the draft definition contained in document CX/GP 04/20/6 and has a number of concerns in relation to the proposed definition. We believe that the draft definition goes beyond a simple definition and incorporates comments/elements that are more to do with application of traceability. We also have concerns that the draft definition includes statements that relate to criteria or justification for application of traceability. New Zealand is in favour of a simple definition that describes, as concisely as possible, what traceability/product tracing is about.

New Zealand would like to propose the following alternative definition as a basis for further discussion:

“Traceability/product tracing is the ability to trace or track a food through specified stages of production, processing and distribution in order to be able to determine from where it came from and where it was sent”

Comments on Appendix II: Other Relevant topics about Traceability/Product Tracing in Foodstuffs

With regard to the issues set out in Appendix II, New Zealand believes that the issues listed go well beyond the mandate of the Committee. The 18th session of the Committee clearly noted that there was consensus only to proceed with the development of a definition. For this reason we do not see any reason for including these matters for consideration at this stage.

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa would like to confine our comments to the definition as proposed since this was the mandate of the electronic working group.

South Africa firmly supports the development of a definition for product tracing as this will allow everyone in Codex to have a common understanding of the terminology being used. We believe that the current definition of traceability/product tracing is unduly broad and contains elements which are concerned more with means of implementation. Furthermore a distinction needs to be made between tracing for food safety purposes (the need should be justified through science-based risk assessment on a case-by-case basis) and that for product authenticity purposes.

We are in favour of the term “product tracing” for the purposes of tracing food products and its ingredients. This term has already been adopted by consensus in the Ad hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Biotechnology and is receiving increased acceptance within Codex.

It is our opinion that product tracing can serve as a useful tool for risk management purposes, is not a “stand-alone” activity and must be seen within the broader context of food control.

Thus in view of the above, we are unable to support the current draft definition and propose the following definition:

“Product tracing is a risk management tool for the purpose of following the path of a product or its ingredients along specified points in the food chain by means of appropriate record-keeping.”

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

General U.S Comments:

The United States continues to believe that the term “product tracing” is the appropriate terminology to employ for the concept of the tracing of food. Distinctions between the terms “traceability” and “product tracing” have never been elucidated in any Codex committee. Nevertheless, the Codex Ad-Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Foods Derived from Biotechnology reached consensus on the use of the term “product tracing”. Subsequently, the U.S. considers this the appropriate term to be used within Codex.

The U.S. considers that “product tracing” is primarily a risk management tool, i.e., a tool that may be used within a broader food control system.

Product tracing requirements must have clear justification with respect to food safety and/or ensuring fair practices in food trade. The scope of application and specifications regarding each element of a product tracing system should be considered on a case-by-case basis according to the objective(s) of the food control system within which product tracing is implemented.

The use of product tracing within a food control system must be consistent with the provisions of the WTO SPS and TBT Agreements. If product tracing systems are required, they should, as appropriate to the application:

- Be science based.
- Be consistent with fair trade practices criteria.
- Be subject to equivalence determinations.
- Be no more trade restrictive than necessary.

Decisions on whether a mandatory product tracing system should be implemented should be based on whether such an approach is necessary to achieve the objectives of the food control system. Certain other considerations may apply to product tracing, including, for example, that product tracing be:

- Outcomes based;
- Cost effective;
- Practical; and,
- Enforceable.

U.S. Comments on the Proposed Draft Definition (Appendix 1):

CX/GP 04/20/6, APPENDIX 1:

PROPOSED DRAFT DEFINITION OF "TRACEABILITY/PRODUCT TRACING" OF FOODSTUFFS

"The implementation of measures to ensure, at any stage of the food chain, that the path of a food and the relevant informations about it are known, including:

- product identification, a unique means to identify a food or batch thereof
- product information :
- the raw materials used,
- how it was changed (if appropriate),
- where and when it came from and where and when it was sent (one step backward and one step forward)
- the controls, which the product has been subject to, and
- the linkages between product identification and product information.

These informations are generated for the purpose of food safety and/or of fair practices in food trade, and may be used, as appropriate, by industry, government and other third-party. They are recorded by each business involved and are stored, during an appropriate timeframe, in a way making fast and easy retrieval possible."

The United States believes that it is important for CCGP to develop a definition for product tracing and to complete this exercise quickly to facilitate ongoing work in other Codex committees. However, the U.S. has significant concerns about the proposed definition, as it is overly broad and contains elements that are more appropriate as guidance on the application of product tracing. A definition should be a succinct statement, providing a precise meaning for the term.

The definition proposed by the Secretariat appears to have been derived from ongoing work by the working group of the Codex Committee on Food Import/Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS), which has discussed "elements" of product tracing. The elements remain under discussion and not all elements are necessary or appropriate for all tracing situations. Guidance on application should be developed in separate documents.

Regarding the chapeau statement, the U.S. finds it overly broad and unclear. If the statement is intended to mean that all required information regarding a food (and by implication the ingredients of a food) is to be

available at each and every step of the food chain, the U.S. cannot support the statement and further suggests that it is unnecessary. Additionally, “implementation of measures” implies that product tracing would always entail mandatory requirements, which is not the case.

The U.S. agrees product tracing should involve the ability to identify a food through information about that food. However, the amount and type of information required should be determined by the objective of the food control system in which product tracing is being implemented. Further, what constitutes a “unique means” is unclear and would require further discussion.

The U.S. does not believe that information on raw materials used, on how a product was changed, or on controls which the product has been subject to are elements of all product tracing systems. None of these elements should be included in the definition. Requirements for this type of information would be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Clearly there must be linkage between product identification and product information, but the U.S. questions whether a vague reference to “linkages” is necessary in the definition. The concept can be embedded within the definition without making specific reference to “linkages”.

The final paragraph of the proposed definition is explanatory text that is unnecessary in a definition and should be deleted.

Given the above comments, the United States proposes the following definition for product tracing:

Product Tracing: The ability to trace the movement of a food (or, as appropriate, feed or food producing animal) so that at a specified point in production, processing and distribution it is possible to determine from where (and when) the food came and to where (and when) it was sent.

U.S. Comments on “Other Relevant Topics (Appendix 2)”: The United States notes that the second bullet point of paragraph 28 calls upon the Committee “*to decide on the best way to address the others concerns expressed in the written comments and during the discussion (cf. Appendix 2).*” However, the U.S. draws the Committee’s attention to paragraph 5 - (“*The Committee concluded that there was sufficient support only to proceed with the development of a definition of “traceability/product tracing” for Codex purposes and agreed to establish an open-ended electronic working group under the direction of the Delegation of France to develop a draft for the consideration of the next regular session of the Committee.*”). Therefore the U.S. believes that discussion of Appendix 2 is outside the mandate of the Committee as established through the consensus of the Committee. Information in Appendix 2 could be used to inform the work of other Codex Committees, particularly work on-going in the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Certification and Inspection Systems.

CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL

General Comments

Consumers International [CI] commends the participants to the open-ended electronic working group under the direction of the delegation of France on their hard work and having a draft definition of traceability/product tracing for the consideration of the CCGP.

CI also wishes to state that it generally accepts the definition and hopes that Members would equally find it acceptable and move much more expeditiously not only towards its adoption as a definition but also towards its application and implementation within Codex. This is particularly critical now that many of the Codex Member States who are also Parties to, or are in the processes of becoming Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, will be required to provide more detailed information on some of their products.

Specific Comments on the Proposed Definition

CI is of the opinion that the word '*path*', in the first line of the definition, should be changed to '***movement and changes in***' since it could be misconstrued to mean only the **movement of** thereby leaving out the **changes in food and food products**, of which information is equally vital for the purpose of traceability/product tracing.

In bullet point four (4), CI suggests that the term '***and what***' replaces the word '*it*' in the sentence for enhanced clarity. The sentence could therefore read:-

- How ***and what*** was changed (if appropriate),

In the first sentence of the last paragraph of the definition, CI suggests that the words '*... food safety and/or of fair practices in food trade*' be changed to '***protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in food trade***' so that the wording is consistent with the wording in Article 1 of the Statutes of Codex. Further in the same sentence, CI suggests that all the words that follow thereafter be replaced by the following text; '***for use by governments and other parties as appropriate.***' The reason for this is that 'governments' are the foremost envisaged prime users of this information as they are the responsible authorities with regard to the implementation of Codex hence the need to specify them first and then the other parties. The whole sentence, with the inserted amendments, should therefore read as follows:-

'These informations are generated for the purpose of protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in food trade for use by governments and other parties as appropriate.'

In the last sentence of the paragraph, CI suggests that the word '*business*' be changed to '***party***' so as to ensure that all food, including those that are intended for donations are included.

EUROPABIO

In response to the request for comments on the "Definition of Traceability/Product Tracing of Foodstuffs" (CX/GP 04/20/6) EuropaBio would like to submit the following comments to the proposed text:

Appendix 1: proposed draft definition of "Traceability/Product Tracing of Foodstuffs"

"The implementation of measures to ensure, at any stage of the food chain, that the path of a food and the relevant information about it are known, including:

- *product identification, a unique means to identify a food or batch thereof*
- *where and when it came from and where and when it was sent (one step backward and one step forward) **and***

on a case by case basis as specified in appropriate guidelines or regulations:

- *product information*
- *the raw materials used,*
- *how it was changed (if appropriate),*
- *the controls, which the product has been subject to, and*
- *the linkages between product identification and product information.*

*These information ~~are~~ **would only be** generated for the purpose of food safety and/or of fair practices in food trade. They are recorded by each business involved and are stored, during an appropriate timeframe, in a way making fast and easy retrieval possible."*

EuropaBio considers that the 'list' of relevant information should be structured in such a way as to take into consideration the type of product being traced. In fact not all criteria listed could be systematically applicable to every product. The establishment of a double level of information would result in a more efficient and accurate tracing process.

Furthermore EuropaBio considers that the information to be provided under this definition should be used only within the scope of CODEX Alimentarius.

49P (49TH PARALLEL BIOTECHNOLOGY CONSORTIUM)

The 49th Parallel Biotechnology Consortium is pleased to submit these comments on the revised definition of Traceability/Product Tracing prepared by the French Secretariat on the basis of previous input by Members and Observers. We are generally pleased to see the changes that have been made.

However, we believe the document needs to reflect more of the activities that have occurred in other fora in the “Background” section. In particular, the deliberations and outcomes of the CCFICS *Second* Working Group on T/PT held in September 2004 (adopted by CCFICS this past December) should be included. Another major development on this topic was the work done by the Parties to the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol under Article 18, during the last week of February at their first meeting, in Kuala Lumpur. According to the United Nations Environmental Program:

Under the new system, all bulk shipments of genetically engineered crops intended for food, feed or processing (such as soybeans and maize) are to be identified as "may contain LMOs" [for the next 19 months]. The accompanying documentation should also indicate the contact details of the importer, exporter or other appropriate authority.

Over the next year an expert group will further elaborate the documentation and handling requirements for these bulk agricultural shipments. Key issues still to be resolved include the percentage of modified material that these shipments may contain and still be considered GMO-free and the inclusion of any additional detailed information. A decision on these matters will be considered at the next meeting of the treaty's Parties, to be held in 2005.

Agreement has also been reached on more detailed documentation requirements for those GMOs (such as genetically engineered seeds and fish) that are meant to be introduced directly into the environment. The documentation accompanying such GMOs should specify the common, scientific and commercial names of the modified organism, the transformation event code or unique identifier code, any handling and storage requirements, contact details in the case of emergency, and how the GMO is to be used.

The relevance of the CBP discussions is that, for a major category of foodstuffs, decisions are being made on the details of an actual tracing system that correspond closely to the elements suggested in the new CCGP text—unique identifiers, specific changes and transformations of the food, etc.

We would suggest a few changes in the definition proposed, however.

- 49 P believes that how a food is changed or transformed is always relevant, and so we urge elimination of the parenthetical “if appropriate”;
- We suggest that the first line of text actually use the words of the Codex mandates—“and/or of preventing unfair practices in the food trade” and that the word “purpose” be made plural;
- In the third line, pluralizing “parties” would read more smoothly;
- In the same line, the term “business” is too narrow, since governmental agencies, consumer groups, etc. may at times be parties to a food’s path (such as when foods are distributed by schools, charities, etc). We suggest that a broad term such as “party” be utilized;
- For clarity, we suggest that “making” in the last line be replaced by “that enables” and that the word “possible” at the end of the sentence be eliminated.