



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

**FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NORTH AMERICA AND THE SOUTH WEST  
PACIFIC**

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**COMMENTS AND INFORMATION ON NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEMS, CONSUMER  
PARTICIPATION IN FOOD STANDARDS SETTING AND THE USE OF CODEX STANDARDS  
AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL**

(replies to CL 2009/28-NASWP of Australia, New Zealand and Solomon Islands)

**Question 1: Strengthening National Food Control Systems**

**AUSTRALIA**

**(i) Updated structure and organisation of official services responsible for food control**

Food safety issues in Australia are managed at the national level by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and its associated agency - the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS); and by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) and its associated agency - Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ).

The Food Regulatory System in Australia is a cooperative bi-national arrangement between the Australian and New Zealand Government and Australian States and Territories. Australia has a food regulatory system that protects and enhances public health and safety across the whole of the food chain. The system is based upon a partnership between government, consumers and industry. The food regulatory system separates the responsibility of policy development, standards setting and the implementation and enforcement of standards set for food between government agencies.

The Department of Health and Ageing is responsible for development of food regulation policy, research and investigations to provide sound data on foodborne illness. Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is responsible for the establishment of food standards taking into account the best available scientific evidence and good regulatory practice. In respect of imported food, AQIS enforces the Food Standards Code and is responsible for imported product at the border.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) has responsibility for industries that span the food supply chain, from agriculture to food processing.

There have been a number of structural changes within DAFF since the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of the Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific (CCNASWP). The most significant change is the creation of the Biosecurity Services Group which has integrated the functions of the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service; Biosecurity Australia; the biosecurity parts of Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health division; and the Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit. The new structure will lead to better service delivery along the biosecurity continuum (pre-border, border and post-border) and improved biosecurity risk management. Codex Australia is located within the Export Standards Branch, Food Division of the Biosecurity Services Group working alongside the market access and policy sections in order to provide effective representation on all trade matters.

More information on Australia's food regulatory system is available at <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/>

**(ii) Updated legislation and regulations on food safety and quality including import/export matters****Food Regulatory System**

A number of policy guidelines have been considered by the Australia New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council (Ministerial Council) over the past two years. The Ministerial Council is primarily responsible for the development of domestic food regulatory policy and the development of policy guidelines for setting domestic food standards. It has the capacity to adopt, amend or reject standards and to request that these be reviewed.

The following policy issues were considered by the Ministerial Council:

- *Policy Guideline on the Addition of Substances other than Vitamins and Minerals*

In May 2008, the Ministerial Council endorsed a Policy Guideline that provides guidance on the addition of substances other than vitamins and minerals to food. Ministers agreed that the Policy Guideline should apply to new applications or proposals and should not trigger a review of existing permissions in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code).

- *Review of the intent of Part 2.9 of the Food Standards Code (Special Purpose Foods)*

In October 2009, the Policy Guideline on the intent of Part 2.9 - Special Purpose Foods of the Food Standards Code was endorsed by the Ministerial Council. This Guideline concludes the review of Part 2.9 of the Food Standards Code and clarifies that Part 2.9 of the Code is used for those foods that are prepared for at-risk groups whose dietary requirements cannot always be satisfied by a normal diet.

- *Maximum Residue Limits*

Standard 1.4.2 – Maximum Residue Limits of the Code lists the maximum levels of agricultural and veterinary chemical residues permitted in food. Under Australian State, Territory and Commonwealth Government food legislation (subject to some exceptions for food from New Zealand), there must be no detectable residues in a food where a limit is not listed in Standard 1.4.2. As well as maximum residue limits (MRLs) recommended by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, FSANZ may consider specific limits for inclusion in the Code, such as Codex or trading partner MRLs where appropriate. FSANZ may approve such limits where the relevant food is imported and the residues are safe in the context of the Australian diet and result from the legitimate use of chemical products.

The following policy guidelines are being developed for consideration by the Ministerial Council:

- *Policy Guidelines for the Regulation of Infant Formula Products*

Policy Guidelines for the regulation of infant formula products are under development to provide guidance on the composition and labelling of infant formula products. The Guidelines will provide guidance for Standard 2.9.1 - Infant Formula Products of the Food Standards Code. This Standard applies to all infant formula products whether in powder, liquid concentrate or 'ready to drink' forms.

- *Policy Guideline on Front of Pack Labelling*

In October 2009, the Ministerial Council endorsed a "Policy Statement" which outlines its views on food labelling which could be used to guide consumers to healthier food options. The statement will be provided to the Food Labelling Review Panel for consideration and at the same time it will be provided to Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) to inform their input into the Food Labelling Review and any subsequent actions that might result from the Review.

- *Policy guideline on food safety management in Australia*

In October 2009, the Ministerial Council agreed that the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) would undertake the review in accordance with an agreed Terms of Reference and the Ministerial Council's *Principles and Protocols for the Development of Food Regulation Policy Guidelines*.

- *Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) updated policy*

In October 2009, the Australian Government made changes to the imported food policy settings regarding bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) for beef and beef products. The change (effective 1 March 2010) will allow countries that have had cases of BSE to apply for assessment of eligibility to export their beef or beef products to Australia.

As part of this application, FSANZ will undertake a risk assessment, consistent with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) methodology, to determine a risk category for the country. The risk assessment may include verification of country control measures which would require Australian officials to undertake an in-country inspection. The findings of the risk assessment and of any in-country inspection will be provided to relevant government departments, and to the applicant.

The Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, on 8 March 2010, requested Biosecurity Australia to conduct a formal regulated import risk analyses (IRA) for beef from all countries except New Zealand.

The IRAs will assess the animal quarantine concerns associated with the importation of beef and beef products derived from cattle, buffalo and bison and will include meat, bone, offal, natural intestinal casings, and bone-derived gelatine and collagen. The IRA process will run in parallel with the BSE food safety risk assessment by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ).

The regulated IRAs are expected to take a maximum of 24 months to complete. The process provides opportunities for stakeholder engagement and consultation and includes the release of draft IRA reports for 60 days public comment. The process also includes a review by the Eminent Scientist Group, a body independent of Biosecurity Australia.

### **The Joint Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code**

Major areas of new work have continued in the area of Primary Production and Processing standards and the development of standards in accordance with the policy guidelines received from Ministerial Council.

#### *Primary Production and Processing Standards*

These Standards will complement other existing food safety standards that apply to the manufacturing, processing and retail sectors of the food supply chain. Work has been completed on the Primary Production and Processing Standard for Poultry Meat (Poultry Standard) this will be considered by the Ministerial Council in May 2010.

Work has commenced on Primary Production Standards for Eggs; Raw Milk Products (including raw drinking milk and raw milk cheese); Seed Sprouts; and Meat and Meat Products.

#### *Genetically modified food commodities*

Pre-market assessment of genetically modified (GM) food commodities is ongoing. To date, forty-eight safety assessments have been undertaken, with forty-two of these lines approved and six still under assessment. Approved GM commodities include corn, cotton, canola, soybean, potato and sugarbeet. Predominantly, the modifications are to agronomic characteristics such as herbicide tolerance and insect resistance. Some recent assessments have been for GM crops with altered compositional characteristics such as soybeans that have a higher concentration of oleic acid and a correspondingly lower concentration of linoleic acid.

#### *Food additives*

Steviol glycosides have been approved as a non-calorie sweetener and/or flavour enhancer (food additive) in a wide range of products that contain sugar and/or are permitted to contain approved intense sweeteners.

#### *Contaminants*

- Cadmium in peanuts

A review of the dietary exposure to cadmium in Australia and New Zealand was recently conducted in consideration of increasing the ML for cadmium in peanuts in Australia and New Zealand. As a result of the assessment FSANZ recommended amending Standard 1.4.1 to increase the existing maximum level (ML) for cadmium in peanuts from 0.1 to 0.5 mg/kg.

- Cyanogenic glycosides in cassava chips

Due to findings of high levels of hydrocyanic acid (hydrogen cyanide) in ready-to-eat cassava chips, FSANZ developed a proposal to assess the public health risk. The assessment concluded that based on the data available, regulatory measures in the Code are required to reduce levels of hydrocyanic acid in ready-to-eat cassava chips to as low as reasonably achievable.

### *Policy driven initiatives*

Policy driven initiatives have included development work on issues such as; Nutrition Health and Related Claims, mandatory and voluntary fortification of Foods. The development of a standard for Nutrition, Health and Related Claims addresses nutrient content, nutrition function and risk reduction claims. A regulatory model is still under consideration.

Two mandatory fortification standards were implemented in 2009. In September 2009, mandatory folic acid fortification Standard was implemented meaning folic acid is now added to wheat flour for bread-making purposes. From October 2009, the mandatory fortification of iodine Standard was implemented, requiring the replacement of non-iodised salt with iodised salt in bread.

Under the voluntary fortification Standard, several amendments to the Code were made in 2009. These included the voluntary addition of calcium to chewing gum containing no more than 0.2% residual sugars; the voluntary fortification of fluoride to bottle (packaged) water was also approved; and the voluntary addition of Lutein as a nutritive substance to infant formula products.

### **Food Safety Programs**

FSANZ has completed work on proposals to mandate compulsory hazard analysis critical control points (HACCP) based food safety programs for high risk business sectors. Work on a new standard to mandate food safety programs for catering activities serving the general public has been deferred awaiting the outcome of the policy guideline review.

### **NEW ZEALAND**

#### **Amalgamation of NZFSA and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry**

The New Zealand Government has announced that the New Zealand Food Safety Authority will be amalgamated with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

A single department will be legally created on 1 July 2010, with full integration of the functions of the two departments expected to be completed by December.

Amalgamating NZFSA and MAF allows for a single organisation focused on the integrity and performance of New Zealand's biological economy. The new organisation will provide consistency in the regulatory approach for domestic and export-based businesses by having a single competent authority spanning imports and exports of animal and plant products and responding to public, animal and plant health biosecurity events.

### **Regulatory reform**

#### Introducing and enacting new domestic food legislation (Food Bill)

The Food Bill is a fundamental platform for NZFSA, both in terms of moving to a state of better and less regulation and providing a regulatory framework for improved food safety outcomes.

In 2003 NZFSA began a broad-ranging review of the domestic food regulatory regime and by 2006 began work on rewriting the Food Act to reflect a number of changes to improve the regime. In 2009, NZFSA reviewed the policy in light of the Government's regulatory reform programme to address, amongst other things, the regulatory burden faced by businesses.

Government agreed to changes to the approach that addressed regulatory burden whilst retaining regulation necessary to assure food safety and suitability.

The redrafting of the Food Bill has shifted the focus from Food Control Plans, as the principal control measure, to a range of risk based measures to be applied to food business based on the risk they pose to public health. The degree of control each measure imposes will be commensurate with the risks posed.

The Food Bill was introduced in May 2010 and is expected to be reported back from Select Committee in September, and enacted by December 2010. It is intended that there will be a five year transition period for full implementation of the new Food Act.

### Other Regulatory Reform

The New Zealand Government agreed to a range of measures to enhance regulatory quality. A crucial element is the Government Statement on Regulation. The statement sets out a work programme comprising a number of measures to address key gaps and weaknesses in the current regulatory quality arrangements. The statement commitments are to:

- Introduce new regulation only when government is satisfied that it is required, reasonable, and robust; and
- Review existing regulation in order to identify and remove requirements that are unnecessary, ineffective or excessively costly.

The Government agreed to a range of measures to help deliver on the Government Statement. They include:

- Departments to provide an annual regulatory plan of all known and anticipated proposals to introduce, amend, repeal or review legislation;
- Enhancing the incentives on departments to undertake high quality analysis, including strengthening regulatory impact statement requirements; and
- Directing departments to put in place systems and processes for the ongoing scanning of legislation they are responsible for, with the intention of identifying legislation that is, or may be, unnecessary, ineffective, or excessively costly.

### **New Zealand's Food Safety Risk Management Framework**

NZFSA has revised and updated its risk management framework. The term 'risk' relates to the consumer and is the likelihood that a hazard in the food will cause an adverse health effect.

The Food Safety Risk Management Framework consists of four steps, each supported as appropriate by effective two-way risk communication:

1. Preliminary risk management activities;
2. Identification and selection of risk management options;
3. Implementation of control measures;
4. Monitoring and review.

The Food Safety Risk Management Framework describes these four steps and the rationale for them, and gives examples of how they are put into practice by NZFSA. The framework recognises that any process of managing risks will always reflect the current state of scientific knowledge, and that there is a need to continually invest in all aspects of risk management in order to achieve ongoing improvements in food safety.

### **Pathogen reduction strategies for foodborne *Campylobacter*, *Salmonella* and *Listeria***

Two-and-a-half years into NZFSA's *Campylobacter* risk management strategy a 50 per cent reduction in cases of *Campylobacter* infection caused by food has been realised. While the general trend is downwards, we expect the number of cases annually to continue to fluctuate and it is important that momentum in reducing what is still an unacceptably high level of foodborne illness is maintained.

A *Salmonella* strategy is identifying the main food sources of this common foodborne pathogen and will target interventions where there is the greatest potential for reducing illness. Detailed knowledge of the status of *Salmonella* in New Zealand foods is also an important aspect of maintaining market access.

As part of the strategy to control incidents of *Listeria monocytogenes*, guidance documents are being produced by NZFSA that will act as a guide to all food operators who process ready-to-eat foods. .

### **SOLOMON ISLANDS**

The Codex Contact Point is within the Ministry of Health & Medical Services. In terms of developments to improve the national food control system within the country an Integrated Food Policy (National Food Security, Food Safety & Nutrition Policy 2010-2015) was developed. Three ministries were involved and they are Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources and Ministry of

Health & Medical Services. Agriculture, Fisheries and Nutrition have their respective Action Plans in place which will compliment the policy document. However, Food Safety has developed an Action Plan which forms part of the National Environmental Health Action Plan (NEHAP) and it is anticipated that it will be endorsed by the cabinet in October 2010.

All stakeholders which include the food industry were engaged through a range of meetings and a workshop to ensure the policy had a wider support. While developing the policy, regulations were also developed to ensure that both policy and regulations were based on the same principles. The Policy Document was officially launched by the three partner government ministries on the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

A Food control regulation, Pure Food (Food Control) Regulations 2010 was developed which had been endorsed by cabinet in April 2010 and awaiting gazettal which is anticipated to be the end of June 2010. It takes into account the farm to table approach and addresses both the safety and healthy nature of food. Industry, traders and community groups were all engaged from the very first drafting step. It was also developed to be in line with Codex Standards.

The standards include commodity standards which will facilitate trading of safe and healthy food. Other existing legislation that facilitates trade is the Pure Food Fish & Fishery Products Regs which is export focused and meets the buyer's requirements which might be even stricter than Codex.

In terms of Food Imports as Solomon Islands (and ) or other Pacific Islands Countries do not want to be a dumping ground for poor quality, expired, high fat food products, we are introducing better import control and thus a Food Imports Guidelines ( Working Tool) are being drafted and discussed with importers. There is close cooperation with Customs and Quarantine. With this guideline, the aim is to make the program risk-based and to give recognition to equivalent food control systems in other countries

### **Question 2: Strengthening Codex at the National level**

#### **AUSTRALIA**

##### **Codex Australia Stakeholder Forums**

Codex Australia continues to host Stakeholder Forums either annually or biannually. These Forums focus on the role and importance for Australia's agriculture-food industry of participation in the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) and its subsidiary bodies.

The objective of these Forums is to enhance the ability of food producing industries, academia, and consumer and public interest groups, to contribute to Australia's input to the work of Codex and to identify measures that will assist government in representing the interests of stakeholders across the work of Codex committees.

These Forums provide an opportunity to raise the awareness of all stakeholders of the importance of the work of Codex for Australia's agriculture-food producing industries, ensuring that they are fully engaged in the Codex consultation process for the committees/issues that are relevant to their interests; and to put forward their views on Codex issues in addition to the Advisory Panel Process.

The outcomes and recommendations of the Codex Australia Stakeholder Forums are:

- Reported to the Codex Interdepartmental Committee, and to relevant government agencies;
- Incorporated into Codex Australia's work program;
- Referred, where relevant, to agriculture-food industry councils, and representative bodies; and
- Posted on the Codex Australia website.

##### **Seminar for First Time Delegates to the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS)**

To ensure the effective participation of all Members at CCFICS, the Australian Secretariat invites all first time participants to attend an information seminar prior to the commencement of the plenary session.

This seminar outlines the processes and procedures that are essential for the smooth operation of the Committee during its deliberations, including:

- Registration of participants;

- Seating arrangements;
- Operation of microphones & headsets;
- How to make an intervention; and
- Papers for the meeting.

The Chair of the Committee addresses the seminar to discuss the issues on the agenda and advises on the outcomes he is hoping that the current session will achieve.

Delegates also have the opportunity to ask questions of the Australian Secretariat on any other issues concerning the operation of the Committee.

#### **NEW ZEALAND**

New Zealand Food Safety Authority released, in February 2010, a revised Strategic Plan setting out our strategic objectives in Codex. The Strategic Plan, which covers the 2010-2013 period, sets out New Zealand's Strategic priorities in Codex and the actions we will be taking to achieve these objectives. The document was developed in close consultation with other national agencies and stakeholder groups. It is worth noting that the revised plan, as with the previous plans, places high priority on promoting close linkages and collaboration with the members of the North America and the South West Pacific region in advancing our interests in Codex. A specific priority activity is the provision of mentoring support and guidance to the Pacific Island member countries and support the implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan.

The NZ Strategic Objectives in Codex publication can be accessed from the NZFSA website using the following link

<http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/policy-law/codex/nz-objectives-and-strategy/new-zealand-codex-2010-2013.pdf>

#### **SOLOMON ISLANDS**

At the National level Solomon Islands had benefited from a training conducted for the National Codex Committee. A regional training for the former CCP and two other National NCC members was conducted. In terms of Infrastructure, the Codex office is located within the Ministry of Health with basics such as computer, telephone/fax and internet connections. In terms of receiving information and networking with other CCPs, there is no difficulty.

Another point that needs to be highlighted as well is if assistance could be given to help in printing materials such as Posters and other Codex related pamphlets for awareness.

With reference to Objective 3.4 on the proposed on-the –job training through attachments to QUAD CCPs, if this could be implemented to give exposure and added skills for the CCPs which will be implemented at their country levels.

Refer to Objective 3.5: if this initiative could be implemented as well.

### **Question 3: Training and Capacity Building**

#### **AUSTRALIA**

##### **DAFF Capacity Building Activities**

Australia participated as a presenter in the **FAO's Regional Workshop: Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification- Bangkok Thailand 3-6 March 2009**. The objective of the workshop was to enhance understanding of food import and export inspection and certification systems necessary to strengthen food safety and quality in ASEAN countries.

**National Seminar on Import and Export Certification Control Systems, 29 October 2009**. At the invitation of the Indonesian National Codex Committee, Codex Australia presented a one day seminar in Jakarta, Indonesia on international standards relating to import and export inspection and certification. The objective of the seminar was to enhance the knowledge and understanding of Indonesian industry and government officials in regards to the work of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS). The seminar was well attended by various government officials and has enhanced their participation in CCFICS.

Australia participated as a presenter in the **Sub-regional training on import/export inspection and certification, 30 November – 3 December 2009**. The objective of this training was to strengthen regional trade facilitation and strengthen food import control including food safety emergencies.

**APEC Export Certification Workshop, 25-26 February 2010**. This workshop was sponsored by the United States of America with the assistance of Australia to discuss issues relating to export certification in the APEC region.

As a result of the APEC Workshop, a number of possible next steps were identified. Key among these were: the possibility of APEC providing technical assistance on avoiding unnecessary certificate requirements; a project on how the Generic Model Official Certificate Annex to the Codex Guidelines for Design, Production, Issuance and Use of Generic Official Certificates (CAC/GL 38-2001) can be more broadly utilized among APEC Member Economies; a project on enhancing the use of electronic certification in the APEC region; having APEC individual economies review their certification requirements for food and consideration in proposing that CCFICS consider additional work on incorporating appropriate attestations in the generic model certificate. The United States has undertaken to progress some of these initiatives through Codex.

### **FSANZ Capacity Building Activities**

FSANZ staff have participated in, and led various capacity building training activities and workshops throughout 2008 and 2009. These training activities have included participation from NASWAP countries.

Throughout 2008 and 2009, FSANZ worked closely with its **APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF)** partners to advance the work of the 2008 APEC Sub-Committee for Standards and Conformance (SCSCII). The purpose of the FSCF is to coordinate efforts in food safety capacity building and improve information sharing.

FSANZ co-chaired the 2008 FSCF Forum, and provided a report outlining the progress made in the area of food safety cooperation and capacity building and outlines an expanded scope of work and an Implementation Plan for 2008-2011. Ahead of the APEC FSCF, FSANZ co-chaired and co-sponsored an APEC funded Seminar entitled Food Safety Control System and Risk Analysis, which was held as one of the activities under the umbrella of the APEC FSCF. In 2009, FSANZ again co-chaired the FSCF in Singapore, along with the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China (AQSIQ).

FSANZ has also participated in the development of the APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum **Partnership Training Institute Network (FSCF PTIN)**. In addition, the FSCF Co-Chairs developed and led a Steering Group which will drive much of the work of the PTIN. The Steering Group consists of additional membership from volunteer food safety experts representing APEC member economies, food industry, academia and APEC Specialist Regional Bodies.

In 2009, FSANZ led a workshop entitled **Developing Food Laws, Standards and Enforcement Systems**, which was developed under the FSCF umbrella. The training was conducted over two phases in 2009, with a practical project between the workshops. Both workshops were held in Vietnam, with participants from China, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines and Vietnam. The first phase of the training program involved an intensive five-day training workshop. The workshop covered a range of material in relation to the development, implementation and enforcement of food standards. The second phase of the training program had participants undertaking a four-six month practical, in-country case study that encouraged direct application of material covered in the workshop. FSANZ provided both technical support and mentoring during this phase of the program. The third and final phase was a follow-up workshop where participants presented the outcomes of their work.

### **NEW ZEALAND**

New Zealand has actively supported various capacity building initiatives in the region including providing leadership and coordination of a Trust Fund sponsored training workshop on Codex for members of the Asia Pacific region that was held in conjunction with the 16th session of the Coordinating Committee for Asia that was held in Bali in November 2008. We have also actively supported the efforts of FAO/WHO efforts in promoting Codex and food regulation through participation in the Pacific Food Safety and Quality Legislation Expert Group.



Consistent with the objective 3 of the Regional Strategic Plan New Zealand, along with the Quad countries, has taken a number of steps to promote regional networking among Codex contact points aimed at improving communication on Codex and related issues. We have maintained regular dialogue with the Regional coordinator and also share briefing papers and other relevant documents with members of the NASWP region.

#### **SOLOMON ISLANDS**

A regional training organized for Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands in 2005 was attended by the former CCP and two other National NCC members. At the National level Solomon Islands had benefited from a training conducted for the National Codex Committee in 2007.

Documents are usually sent out for comments electronically and often not so many members make comments however, when conducting meetings you will note the difference. It was gathered that if there is going to be training at the national level then the trainers have to have wider and experience in Codex and it proposed that Allan Mc Carville from Codex Canada run the same training for the PICs so that there is uniformity in the level of training.

#### **Question 4: Regional Strategic Plan-priority areas for implementation**

##### **AUSTRALIA**

Australia has not identified any areas of training and development required.

##### **NEW ZEALAND**

New Zealand does not have any specific comments to this question.

##### **SOLOMON ISLANDS**

The following are seen to be the most important:

- 3.4 On-the-job training for PIC CCPs through attachment to QUAD CCPS to observe the management of Codex work.
- 3.5 Develop a mentoring programme between the developed and developing countries of the region to enhance the PIC knowledge and understanding of Codex issues, structure and processes and promote more effective participation in international standards development.
- 4.4 Conduct workshops/training courses as appropriate to facilitate the development of technical capacity of the members of the region to address the identified issues.
- 6.4 On-the-job training at appropriate institutions/ministries/departments in the developed member Countries of CCNSWP.

#### **Question 5: Codex Standards-national priorities, interests and training needs**

##### **AUSTRALIA**

Australia is interested in the responses from the Pacific Island Countries in relation to this question.

##### **NEW ZEALAND**

One of New Zealand's strategic objectives in Codex is to 'influence Codex standards and processes' and take a leadership role in promoting science as the basis for food safety decision making. A priority area of work for New Zealand at present is the development of international guidelines for the control of campylobacter and salmonella in poultry meat. New Zealand is co leading this work in the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene.

New Zealand is also taking a lead role in the advancement of work in the Codex Committee on Food Labelling and the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses in relation to the implementation of the Global Strategy on Diet Physical Activity and Health.

##### **SOLOMON ISLANDS**

Solomon Islands is participating in the electronic Working Group CCFFP on Food additives. In addition to this the following standards are of interest : Noni, Kava and Cassava and would like to see that thorough

research work is done so that they become standards that would assist in facilitating small island economies to trade these products.

**Question 6: Any Other Matters**

**AUSTRALIA**

There are no other matters that Australia would like to raise in response to CL 2009/28-NASWP.

**NEW ZEALAND**

New Zealand does not have any issues to raise under this question.

**SOLOMON ISLANDS**

With the view that Solomon Islands has got a rather weak economic base and taking in to account that cost cutting measures that are going to be implemented by the CTF and imposed on PICs, it cannot fully participate. With reference to the Strategic Plan Solomon Islands would propose and see if the following are implemented:

2.1 PIC member countries to continue to avail of funding assistance under the FAO/WHO Project and Fund for Enhancing the Participation of Developing Countries in the Work of Codex.

2.2 Promote coordinated approach for assistance from the Trust Fund to maximise coverage of subject areas of interest to the region. PIC members to coordinate application to the Trust Fund to ensure, to the extent possible, that members benefit from participation from a wider range of committees.

With the above, selection and prioritizing of committees and relevant meetings to participate in is very important and that should be done at each country level.