

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 8

**CX/NASWP 04/8/8
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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NORTH AMERICA AND THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC

Eight Session

Apia, Samoa, 19 – 22 October 2004

ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE TO THE REGION

(prepared by the Regional Coordinator)

This paper identifies a number of issues of particular interest to the region with a view to facilitating exchange of information and/or formulating a region position.

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELLING

This issue was discussed most recently at the 27th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The Commission has asked the Codex Committee on Food Labelling to provide comments on the following

- a. Whether the current provisions in section 4.5 and 4.5.2 for country of origin labeling contained in the Codex General Standard for the labeling of Pre Packaged Foods were adequate to address members needs with respect to country of origin labeling;
- b. Whether countries have encountered difficulties with the interpretation of those provisions

Opinion on this issue is divided among members of the Commission with some members arguing that the existing provisions relating to country of origin are adequate and there is no need for any further elaboration while others are seeking more detailed country of origin labeling provisions on the grounds that consumers are demanding more information on where their foods are coming from.

Given the significance of this issue for members of the region, it would be useful for the region to exchange views on the need for revision of the current Codex provisions relating to country of origin labeling ahead of the next meetings of the 33rd session of CCFL and 28th session of the CAC.

ROLE OF THE REGIONAL COORDINATORS/MEMBERS

The proposed review of regional coordinating committees provides members the opportunity to clarify a number of issues in relation to regional coordinating committees, including matters of structure, membership, terms of reference and the respective roles of regional coordinators and members elected on a geographical basis. At the 27th session of the Commission it was decided that a circular letter would be sent out seeking the views of members on a number of specific questions to enable regional coordinating committees to discuss the subject and formulate their views and recommendations for the 28th session of the CAC.

TRUST FUND

The FAO/WHO Trust Fund was formally launched in early 2003 and became operation in late 2003. The fund has enabled a number of members of the region to attend various Codex meetings. The Trust Fund is particularly important to the NASWP region given its relative isolation and the difficulties faced by many of its developing members in attending Codex meetings. The regional coordinating committee meeting provides the region an opportunity to increase awareness of the Trust Fund and to discuss any relevant issues.