

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
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WORLD  
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**Agenda Item 2**

**CX/NFSDU 00/2-Add.1  
May 2000**

## **JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

### **CODEX COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION AND FOODS FOR SPECIAL DIETARY USES Twenty-second Session Berlin, 19 - 23 June 2000**

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

#### **1. MATTERS REFERED BY OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES**

##### **1.1 CODEX COMMITTEE ON PESTICIDE RESIDUES (ALINORM 01/24)**

##### ***Feasibility of Establishing Specific MRLs for Cereal-Based Foods and Infant Formula<sup>1</sup>***

68. The Committee recalled that at its last session it agreed that in response to a request from the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) a paper be prepared on the feasibility of establishing specific MRLs for cereal-based foods and infant formula and on possible unique toxicological concerns to children.

69. The Delegation of Germany introduced the document prepared in co-operation with USA, CI and the Codex Secretariat, and informed the Committee that the paper covered a wide range of issues relating to whether or not the current procedures of recommending ADIs and MRLs were appropriate to protect the health of infants and children. The Delegation stated that infants and children might be more or less susceptible to some chemicals than adults, and that this needed to be considered in the risk assessment. The Delegation proposed several options if the Committee intended to proceed with the establishment of ADIs for infants and children and MRLs for processed foods. These were: the establishment of a generic common limit for products intended for infant and children and the application of additional safety factor on a case-by-case basis when setting ADIs for pesticides that may have the potential for enhanced toxic effect for infants and children.

<sup>1</sup> CX/PR 00/9; CRD 15 (comments of GCPF), Section 2.7 Sensitivity of Infants and Children to Pesticides, Report of the 1999 JMPR.

70. The Committee decided to focus the consideration on: (1) the request of the CCNFSDU; and (2) the appropriateness of current ADI and MRL setting practice in relation to the protection of infants and children.

71. Regarding the request of the CCNFSDU, some delegations indicated that the paper did not adequately address the feasibility of establishing separate MRLs for cereal-based products and infant formula and questioned the need for setting MRLs for such products. It was pointed out that the establishment of separate MRLs for a raw commodity, one for adults and the other for infants and children, was neither practical nor feasible.

72. The Observer from the European Community informed the Committee that in order to protect the health of infants and young children it adopted a common limit of 0.01 mg/kg for all pesticides for ready-to-eat foods for infants and children, as temporary precautionary measure, pending toxicological evaluations of the substances.

73. The Committee noted that it had not established MRLs for composite products. It recognized that in order to do this it would be necessary to develop new methodology to estimate MRLs for composite products and it was considered that the methodology would be complex in nature; and it might not form a sound scientific basis for establishing Codex MRLs. The Committee concluded that the establishment of MRLs for these products was not feasible at this time.

74. The Committee did not support the establishment of two MRLs for a raw commodity, one for adults and another for infants and children, and could not reach consensus at this time on the establishment of a generic common limit (e.g., at the limit of determination) for these products.

75. The Committee noted that the standard wording for the pesticide residue provision was not applicable to the Proposed Draft Standards for Cereal-Based Foods for Infants and Young Children and for Infant Formula because there were no MRLs established for those products. In view of the above, the Committee endorsed the proposed CCNFSDU wording for the pesticide residue provision for inclusion in those proposed draft standards to read:

#### **“5.1 Pesticide Residues**

The product shall be prepared with special care under good manufacturing practice, so that residues of those pesticides which may be required in the production, storage or processing of the raw materials or the finished food ingredient do not remain, or, if technically unavoidable, are reduced to the maximum extent possible”.

## **1.2 CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING**

### ***Proposed Draft Amendment to the Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling (ALINORM 01/22)<sup>2</sup>***

54. The Committee recalled that the Proposed Draft Amendment requiring labelling of sugars, fibre, saturated fats and sodium when a nutrition claim is made for one or more of these nutrients,

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<sup>2</sup> ALINORM 99/22 – Appendix VI, CX/FL 00/8 (comments of Brazil, Denmark, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Thailand, EC, CIAA), CRD 5 (India), CRD 11 (Canada), CRD 23 (Malaysia, Mexico), CRD 29 (Philippines), CRD 30 (Chile)

had been returned to Step 3 by the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission, since there was no consensus on its adoption at Step 5.

55. The Delegation of Malaysia proposed to defer consideration of this question until the Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses could provide advice on the public health need for nutrition labelling. The Committee recalled that the CCNFSDU had not come to a final conclusion on this question at its last session and had agreed to consider it further. The Committee agreed that this should not hold the progress of the revision of the Guidelines, which had been approved as new work under its responsibility.

56. The Delegation of Brazil, supported by other delegations, expressed the view that the necessity for nutrition labelling should be determined by national authorities, taking into account the specific needs and situation of the country, and that the present Guidelines should be retained. The Observer from CIAA supported the current Guidelines as they provide flexibility and stressed the need to consider other means of information besides food labelling.

57. The Observer from the EC, supported by several delegations, indicated that nutrient declaration for sugars, fibre, saturated fat and sodium, should not only be required when a claim is made but also when a manufacturer voluntarily provides information on one of the four nutrients, since it would provide important information to the consumer.

58. The Committee noted a proposal to include a reference to the source of protein. The Committee however recalled that the purpose of the Guidelines was to provide information on the nutrient contents while the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods provided the relevant information on the source of nutrients through the declaration of ingredients, which was always included in the labelling.

59. The Committee noted several proposals to provide further detail on the nutrients which should be included: the declaration of cholesterol; monounsaturated and trans-fatty acids, in addition to saturated fat and polyunsaturated fatty acids; and a reference to total dietary fibre to clarify the term 'fibre'.

60. The Committee agreed to introduce some changes to the current text, as proposed by the delegations of Brazil, New Zealand, United States, and EC with the understanding that they would require further comments and consideration. The text of section 3.2.1.2 of the current Guidelines was retained; additional nutrient declaration (sugars, fibre, saturated fatty acids and sodium) was included in a new section 3.2.2 (in square brackets) referring also to voluntary declaration. The text of section 3.2.2 of the current Guidelines (now numbered 3.2.3) was reintroduced. In section 3.2.3 (renumbered 3.2.4) on fatty acids, the declaration of cholesterol was included in square brackets, as well as a reference to 'other fatty acid constituents'.

61. The Delegation of Malaysia expressed the view that if a claim was made in relation to saturated fatty acids, the text should include a reference to trans-fatty acids in view of the link between trans-fatty acids and coronary heart disease, as recognized by the FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Fats and Oils in Human Nutrition. The Secretariat recalled that the Guidelines for Use of Nutrition Claims include a footnote specifying that for claims concerning cholesterol and saturated fat, trans-fatty acids should be taken into account where applicable.

62. The Observers from IACFO and CI stated that they support mandatory comprehensive nutrition information on all foods regardless of whether manufacturers choose to make marketing claims or to report the amounts of specified nutrients. The Observer from IACFO encouraged the

Committee to consider the benefits of setting a mandatory nutrition labelling Codex standard that leaves the selection of nutrient lists to national authorities and noted that several countries were currently considering national mandatory labelling laws.

63. The Committee recognized that there was no consensus at this stage to advance the revised text to Step 5, and that the amendments proposed at the session required further discussion. Member countries were invited to provide detailed comments prior to the session in order to clarify the debate and facilitate further progress.

64. The Committee agreed to return the Proposed Draft, as amended at the current session, to Step 3 for further comments and consideration at the next session (see Appendix VII of the ALINORM 01/22).

**The Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses at its last Session (ALINORM 99/26, paras 11-15) was unable to reach a conclusion and reply to the Committee on Food Labelling regarding their request "to determine if public health needs required the mandatory labelling of sugars, fibre, saturated fats and sodium when nutrition labelling was applicable", therefore the CCNFSDU is invited to advise the CCFL on this issue.**

***Proposed Draft Recommendations on the Use of Health Claims (ALINORM 01/22 paras 65 - 73)***<sup>3</sup>

The Codex Committee on Food Labelling also considered the Proposed Draft Recommendations at Step 4 and made some amendments to several parts of the document.

The Committee noted the importance of the discussion on the issue of health claims and its progress, recognising the importance of the subject for public health, the confusion prevailing among consumers and the need for immediate action to ensure consumer protection.

The Committee agreed to return the Proposed Draft Recommendations to Step 3 for further comments and consideration (see Appendix VIII of ALINORM 01/22). It also agreed that the Proposed Draft Recommendations should be incorporated into the Guidelines for Use of Nutrition Claims, and subsequently the title should be changed to "Guidelines for Use of Health and Nutrition Claims".

**This issue will be considered by the CCNFSDU on Agenda Item 10.**

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<sup>3</sup> ALINORM 99/22 – Appendix VII, CX/FL 00/9 (comments of Australia, Brazil, Cuba, Denmark, Finland, New Zealand, Norway, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, CIAA, IACFO, IADSA), CX/FL 00/9-Add.1 (revised document), CX/FL 00/9-Add.2 (Thailand, EC) CRD 2 (ILSI), CRD 12 (Canada), CRD 15 (Thailand, CI, EFLA), CRD 24 (Malaysia, Mexico), CRD 28 (IDF), CRD 29 (Philippines), CRD 30 (Chile), CRD 33 (Japan), CRD 34 (Revised Text prepared by the Working Group and the report of the discussion)