

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



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**Agenda Item 14**

**CX/NFSDU 00/14-Add. 1**  
**April 2000**

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

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

#### **OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE WORK:** **CONSIDERATION OF THE NECESSITY FOR REVIEW OF THE GENERAL** **PRINCIPLES FOR THE ADDITION OF ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS TO FOODS** **(CAC/GL 09-1987)** **- Comments -**

#### **Comments from:**

#### **C.I.A.A. - CONFEDERATION OF THE FOOD AND DRINK INDUSTRIES OF THE E.U.**

The Confederation of the Food and Drink Industries of the EU (CIAA) welcomes the decision of the Codex Committee on nutrition and Foods For Specific Dietary Uses to consider reviewing the "General Principles for the Addition of Nutrients to Foods" (CAC/GL09-1987), as mentioned under agenda item 14, "Other Business and Future Work".

Living standards have improved considerably and more consumers in the whole world have access each day to a greater variety and availability of food than ever before.

Yet despite this favourable context, there still exists today in our society a risk of deficiency for almost all vitamins and minerals. This apparent paradox can be explained by the modification of dietary habits - due to changes in lifestyles and in food intake patterns, including reduction of energy intakes - which increase the risk of micronutrient deficiencies and sub-optimal intakes. The whole population is potentially concerned but this risk is higher for some groups such as children, teenagers, women of childbearing age, elderly people...

The main public health objective formally mentioned in the current General Principles for the Addition of Nutrients to Foods (CAC/GL09-1987), is to prevent or correct a "proven deficiency", as indicated in the definition of the "enrichment" of foods.

Food enrichment can indeed be a useful tool to correct proven deficiencies. However CIAA is of the opinion that the addition of nutrients to foods can also play an important role in helping to prevent the risk of deficiencies, ensure adequate intakes and the maintenance of health and well-being.

Furthermore, beyond the contribution to diet and nutritional status, fortified foods also provide consumers with essential vitamins and minerals known to reduce the risk of certain diseases, thereby helping to alleviate human suffering and reducing health care cost.

Therefore, CIAA considers that the present General Principles for the Addition of Nutrients to Foods, and in particular the definition of enrichment, is too restrictive as it is only limited to addressing demonstrated public health issues.

A responsible procedure for adding nutrients to foods should be provided for so that the greatest possible number of consumers have access to a selection of nutritionally-enhanced foods which could increase the likelihood of an adequate intake of micro-nutrients, thus contributing to the maintenance of good health.

CIAA believes that it is necessary to review the actual definition of food enrichment to include the concept of "nutritional enhancement" to allow the addition of one or more essential nutrients to a food, whether or not it is normally contained in the food, at levels higher than either that of the natural content or after restoration, for the purpose of ensuring that the population or population groups have access to that nutrient(s), to prevent the risk of nutrient deficiencies, ensure adequate intakes, and the maintenance of health and well-being.

Therefore, CIAA is in favour of reviewing the General Principles for the Addition of Essential Nutrients to Foods and volunteers to participate in the working group that will draft the discussion paper.