

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
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Agenda Item 3

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION AND FOODS FOR SPECIAL DIETARY USES 29th Session

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GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF NUTRITION CLAIMS: DRAFT TABLE OF CONDITIONS FOR NUTRIENT CONTENTS (PART B CONTAINING PROVISION ON DIETARY FIBRE)

- *Comments at Step 6 of the Procedure* -

Comments from:

BRAZIL

1. A source element identifying that dietary fiber is an intrinsic component of these food groups.

The premise that the dietary fibre source is an intrinsic component of fruits, vegetables and integral grains restricts the offer of other beneficial components and which are present in fruits, green vegetables and wholegrain cereals foods, as well as of other dietary fibre sources. The dietary fibre is a component that plays an important physiologic and functional role in the prevention of non-transmissible chronic diseases, for having effect on the intestinal mobility, satiation, lipids plasmatic profile, glicemic response, cellular oxidation, among others. And not always those effects proceed, only, from the composites present in the cellular wall of fruits, vegetables and wholegrain cereals foods; but, from others components, as the fructans, resistant starch, bioactive composites among others.

This way, the composites present or not in the cellular wall of fruits, vegetables, wholegrain cereals foods and other food must be considered and analyzed as dietary fibre, due to the fact that they present physiologic effect of fiber. Those considerations signal the importance of considering the physiologic effects of the dietary fibre on its definition.

2. A chemical element identifying the component to be measured

The need of identification of the chemical element of the component to be quantified cannot be applied for dietary fibre as it is done for other nutrients, because the fiber is constituted by several components and not by single or isolated components, some of the which are clearly identified and others not.

The dietary fibre is a different component from others, because it's not used on the small intestine, and serves as substratum for the intestinal microbionota, which provides countless positive effects for the human organism.

In the case of the dietary fibre, the non-available carbohydrates and other associated composites, even so they represent a group of components of complex quantification, they can be considered on its definition.

Comparison with currently proposed Codex Definition

- Non-digestibility cannot be measured in the laboratory. Therefore, there is no method that can support such the definition.

The method of determination of the indigestible fraction refers to the vegetable components that are not digested nor absorbed in the small intestine and that achieve the colon, where they are used as fermentation substratum by the micro flora. That method quantifies several components resistant to the digestive action of enzymes as carbohydrates (dietary fibre, resistant starch, sugars, alcohol and oligosaccharides; nitrogen compounds, resistant proteins, enzymes and urea) and others associated composed of nutritional importance such as polyphenols.

Other methods must be proposed.

Methods of analysis

Today, it is not used a method totally appropriate and relatively cheap for the analysis of dietary fibre. A proposal would be the standardization of new methods or the introduction of modifications in the AOAC methods, once it is very used at several countries.

Protocols of new methods or adaptation of existent methods for the dietary fibre analysis shall be elaborated, and collaborate studies shall be done in medium period.

General comments

- Brazil hopes to advance on the discussion of the theme in order to make possible a definition of fibres which allows the adoption by the country.

- It is undeniable the association of fiber consumption with the beneficial effects to the health; so, the importance that the definition to be assumed by CODEX takes into consideration the need of the correct information on the fibres content in foods, mainly those originating from fruits, vegetables and wholegrain cereals foods.

- Regarding the current studies about fibres characterization, the proposal presented by WHO of recognizing as fibre the intrinsic plant cell wall polyssaccharides and, considering other carbohydrates with proven physiologic effect in a different group of fibres, needs to be evaluated taking into consideration the group of aspects involved on the definition and its impact in the adoption of public policies of the healthy feeding promotion.

Reference:

LAJOLO, F. M.; MENEZES, E.W. ed. Carbohidratos en foods regionales iberoamericanos. Proyecto CYTED/CNPq XI.18 "Composición, Estructura, Biological Propiedades of Carbohidratos y su Utilización en Foods". EDUSP, São Paulo, 2006. 648 p. (ISBN 85-314-0935-7).