

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 2(a)

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

23rd Session
Arlington, VA (Washington DC metro area), U.S.A.,
16 – 21 October 2006

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

DECISIONS OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION CONCERNING THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

28th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, July 2005)

Adoption of proposed draft and draft Codex standards and related texts at Step 5 of the Procedure

1. The Commission adopted the proposed draft Codex standards for processed tomato concentrates, preserved tomatoes and certain canned citrus fruits at Step 5 and advanced them to Step 6 for comments and consideration by the next session of the Committee¹.

Discontinuation of Work

Proposed draft Standard for Soy Sauce

2. The Commission noted views in favour of and against the standardization of this product and recognized that, at present, there was no consensus to continue to work on a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce. The Commission noted that the scope and definition of the product varied widely across national legislations, that there were presently no major health risks associated with this product and that safety issues could be or were already being addressed in the relevant horizontal committees.

3. The Commission endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee² to discontinue work on soy sauce within Codex, with the understanding that such decision would not prevent the Commission from revisiting this matter in the future and reconsider the amenability of the product for standardization, noting that consumers' protection from fraudulent practices should be one of the factors to be taken into account when reassessing the need for standardizing this product³.

GENERAL DECISIONS OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, July 2006)

4. The Commission endorsed⁴ the proposal of the 57th Session of the Executive Committee (December 2005) to recommend to Codex Committees and Task Forces:

¹ ALINORM 05/28/41, Appendix VI.

² ALINORM 05/28/3A, para. 16.

³ ALINORM 05/28/41, paras. 103-104 and Appendix IX.

⁴ ALINORM 06/29/41, para. 8 and ALINORM 06/29/3, paras. 64-65.

- To prioritize work when the agenda of the Committee includes many items of work;
- To invite all Chairpersons, or host countries for adjourned committees, to provide their comments on the items of work that have been under consideration for more than five years; and
- To inform the Executive Committee and the Commission of the proposed timeframe for completion of all items that have been approved as new work prior to 2004.

5. The Committee is therefore invited to propose a timeframe for all items under consideration in the Step Procedure.

OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

CODEX COMMITTEE ON PESTICIDE RESIDUES - Concentration factor used by the CCPR in establishing Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for processed commodities

6. The last session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables agreed to seek advice from the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues on the concentration factor to be used for residues of pesticides in those Codex standards for processed fruits and vegetables where the product was concentrated and re-diluted⁵.

7. In reply to request from the CCPFV, the Committee informed the CCPFV and other commodity committees that its present policy in the establishment of MRLs for pesticides was based on the recommendations of the report of the JMPR⁶ 2003, i.e. CCPR will only establish MRLs for processed commodities in which the residue is concentrated during the processing procedure ($PF > 1$) and for which there is an existing Codex commodity code. When the processing factor is < 1 , the MRL for the raw commodity also applies to the processed commodity. CCPR, however has the subject of establishing of MRLs for processed commodities on its future Agenda and may develop further guidance⁷.

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES AND CONTAMINANTS - Concentration Effects

8. The Committee considered the request⁸ of the 22nd Session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV) regarding the concentration factor for contaminants in Codex standards for processed fruits and vegetables. The Committee noted that processed products could result from the combination of several products and that the application of good manufacturing practices should be also considered in order to reduce contamination. It noted that a concentration factor had been considered in the Maximum Level for Lead in Milk (CODEX STAN 230-2001, Rev. 1-2003) to which a footnote was added to state that "a concentration factor applies for partially or wholly dehydrated milk". It was also noted that the CCFAC did not have sufficient resources to determine the concentration factors for all contaminants-processed products combinations and that it was preferable to have a general provision that applies to processed products, while not preventing CCFAC to establish a specific value for a processed product when necessary. It was also indicated that Annex I of the GSCTF provided general guidance regarding maximum levels of contaminants and toxins in processed products.

9. Therefore, the Committee agreed to confirm to the CCPFV that the maximum levels apply to raw products and that, in the absence of a specific level for processed products, a processing (concentration/dilution) factor should be applied to processed products taking into account the specific properties of the contaminant⁹.

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE - Microbiological Criteria Provision of the Commodity Standards for Commercially Sterile Food Products

10. The Committee noted that the 22nd Session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables asked¹⁰ advice of the CCFH as to whether or not sterilized products, such as preserved tomatoes, needed to comply with the requirement related to compliance of the product with the microbiological criteria in Section 6.2 of the draft Codex Standard for Preserved Tomatoes and other similar sterile products.

⁵ ALINORM 05/28/27, paras. 39 and 68.

⁶ Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues.

⁷ ALINORM 05/28/24, paras. 8 - 9.

⁸ ALINORM 05/28/27, paras. 39 and 68.

⁹ ALINORM 05/28/12, paras. 120 - 121.

¹⁰ ALINORM 05/28/27, para. 70.

11. The last session of the Codex Committee agreed to recommend¹¹ that in Codex commodity standards for products processed according to the Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Canned Foods, such as the *draft Codex Standard for Preserved Tomatoes*, the food hygiene section of these standards should continue to contain the provision relating to microbiological criteria, but with a footnote that indicates that such criteria are not recommended for this type of product.

12. Thus the provision should appear as follows:

The product should comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997).¹

1. For products that are rendered commercially sterile in accordance with the *Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods (CAC/RCP 23-1979, Rev. 2-1993)*, microbiological criteria are not recommended as they do not offer benefit in providing the consumer with a food that is safe and suitable for consumption.

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING - Sweeteners & Sugars

Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables

13. The 22nd Session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables noted that within the Codex system the terms “sugars” (including certain syrups), “honey”, and “sweetener” were defined in the Codex Standards for Sugars¹² and Honey¹³, and in the Codex Class Names and International Numbering System for Food Additives¹⁴ respectively. In addition, the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods¹⁵ did not differentiate between the different kinds of food additive sweeteners and grouped them under the general term “sweetener” while all types of sucrose were designated as “sugar” and considered as ingredients. In addition, in a Codex Standard, the reference to “sweetener” was usually considered as a food additive regardless of its caloric/nutritive value and listed under the Section on Food Additives under the general name “Sweetener”; whereas any reference to compounds which were not considered as food additives, but performing a sweetening function, were regarded as a food/food ingredient and listed under the Section on Essential Composition and Quality Factors. The Committee also noted that when discussing the Codex Standard for Applesauce, it had decided that the term “sugars” or “nutritive sweeteners” appearing in the Standard should be replaced by “*sugars as defined in the Codex Alimentarius and/or other carbohydrate sweeteners such as honey*”.

14. The Committee agreed that this matter was a cross cutting issue that should be resolved in a horizontal manner through the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants and the Codex Committee on Food Labelling so that substances used as food ingredients for sweetening purposes and substances used as food additives for sweetening purposes can be designated in a consistent manner within the Codex system. As a result, the Committee agreed to put forward the following questions to the aforesaid Committees¹⁶:

- a. Codex Committee on Food Labelling: In terms of foodstuff sweeteners (natural) (i.e., non-food additive), what terms (e.g., carbohydrate, nutritive) should be used in Codex commodity standards to indicate sweeteners other than those conforming to the Codex Standards for Sugars and Honey)?
- b. Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants & Codex Committee on Food Labelling: In terms of food additive sweeteners (artificial), what terms are appropriate to describe sweeteners (e.g. non-carbohydrate, non-nutritive, high/low intensity)?

¹¹ ALINORM 05/28/13, paras. 175 - 176.

¹² CODEX STAN 212-1999, Amd. 1-2001.

¹³ CODEX STAN 12-1987, Rev. 2-1001.

¹⁴ CAC/GL 36-1989, Rev. 7-2003.

¹⁵ CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991.

¹⁶ ALINORM 05/28/27, paras. 11 - 13.

Codex Committee on Food Labelling

15. The Codex Committee on Food Labelling noted the request from the CPPFV to consider the appropriate terms for “sweeteners as foodstuffs” and “sweeteners as food additives” to establish a clear distinction between these two terms used in the Codex standards.

16. For the term to be used for “sweeteners” as “foodstuffs”, the Committee noted that several delegations and one observer supported “foodstuffs with sweetening properties” as an appropriate term. Some other delegations pointed out the difficulty of making a clear decision at the current session due to the complicated nature of the issue and proposed to make a comprehensive list of the terms aimed at expressing sweeteners in all Codex standards for consideration at the next session. Furthermore, the Committee recognized that the request from the CCPFV was not clear as to whether the requested term would be used for labelling purposes or for description of the ingredients in the standards.

17. The Committee, however, noting the necessity to provide appropriate guidance to the CCPFV, agreed that “*foodstuffs with sweetening properties*” was the most appropriate term, with the understanding that this term would be used only for description of ingredients in the standards and not for labelling purposes.

18. For the appropriate term to be used for “sweeteners” as “food additives”, the Committee, recognizing that the Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants had agreed to start new work on the revision of “Codex Class Names and International Numbering System for Food Additives”, decided to ask the CCFAC to consider whether the term “artificial and/or synthetic sweetener” could be used¹⁷.

Codex Committee on Food Additives

19. With regard to the definition of the functional class “Sweetener”, the Committee agreed that it was not appropriate for the time being to make any changes in the definition, since the Committee was considering new work covering revision of several sections in the INS list¹⁸.

20. The last session of the Committee agreed to forward the revised Section 2 (Table of functional classes, definitions and technological uses) of the Codex *Class Names and International Numbering System* to the 29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for adoption at Step 5. It was also agreed to forward the revised Table to both the Codex Committee on Food Labelling for comment and to the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses for information¹⁹.

¹⁷ ALINORM 05/28/22, paras. 6 - 9.

¹⁸ ALINORM 05/28/12, para. 87.

¹⁹ ALINORM 06/29/12, paras. 98 - 99 and Appendix XV.