



# CCFH54

## Letter from the Chairperson

Dear CCFH Delegates,

I am delighted to welcome you to the 54th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH54), which will meet 11-15 March 2024 at the Emara Ole-Sereni Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya. This is the first Codex meeting to be co-hosted since the return to physical meetings, and the second time in its history that the CCFH will meet in Africa. I will serve as the Chairperson of the Committee for the first time. Professor George Ooko Abong, Associate Professor from the University of Nairobi will serve as my co-Chairperson from Kenya. It has been a pleasure working with Kenya over the last 18 months in the organization of CCFH54 and we are excited to see our efforts come to fruition very soon in Nairobi.

Before my selection as CCFH Chairperson, I was privileged to attend the 53rd Session of CCFH in San Diego, California, USA. However, this was not my first contact with Codex. In my nearly 20 years of experience as a Food Scientist at the United States Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), I have worked with a number of delegates on Codex related issues. This has provided me with an in-depth knowledge of food hygiene, Codex Alimentarius, and related processes. My expertise in international food safety systems and leadership as Co-Chair of FSIS's Science and Policy Committee have also prepared me in assuming my new role. As CCFH Chairperson, my goal is to ensure that all Members are heard as we work towards consensus to develop and advance science-based standards.

I would like to acknowledge and appreciate the leadership of my predecessor, Dr Emilio Esteban, who successfully led the CCFH for 15 years. His great accomplishments include, but are not limited to, the recent revision of the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (GPFH) (CXC 1-1969), which is a cornerstone document in Codex, as well as the most recent adoption of the *Guidelines for the Control of Shiga Toxin-Producing Escherichia coli (STEC) in Raw Beef, Fresh Leafy Vegetables, Raw Milk and Raw Milk Cheeses, and Sprouts* (General Section, Annex I on raw beef and Annex III on raw milk and raw milk cheeses) and the *Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production and Processing* (General Section and Annex I on Fresh Produce). Our goal at this session should be to complete the outstanding Annexes in both documents so that they are finalized in full. This will enable us to potentially begin work on a number of important topics that are waiting in the wings—alignment of all CCFH texts with the GPFH, and revisions on existing texts, notably on *Salmonella/Campylobacter*, *Listeria*, and viruses.

CCFH54 will meet in person, however, in an effort to make it more accessible to those who will not be able to join us in Nairobi, CCFH54 will be webcasted in [listening mode only](#) on YouTube in English, French and Spanish. The webcast will not offer the possibility to make interventions, therefore, in order to intervene, Codex Members and Observers should aim to have at least one delegate present in Nairobi to attend the Physical Working Groups (PWGs) and plenary.

### REGISTRATION

As this is a physical meeting, only delegates participating [in person](#) are requested to register for CCFH54 on the Online Registration System via your Codex Contacts Points. For those of you who have not yet registered and are planning to attend in person, we encourage you to register as soon as possible so that you may begin the formal process of entry to Kenya, specifically the electronic travel authorization (ETA).

Early registration is also important for the CCFH Secretariat to know how many delegates will join us in Nairobi so that we may make appropriate seating plans in the plenary room and other logistical arrangements.

## VIRTUAL WORKING GROUP

In preparation for CCFH54, a virtual Working Group (VWG) meeting to consider comments on the Proposed draft revision on the *Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Pathogenic Vibrio Species in Seafood* will meet on 26 February, 2024, from 9.00 am-12.00 pm EST (15.00-18.00 CET). The event will be conducted in English, French and Spanish. Please register in advance at the following link to participate in the VWG: <https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJltcu-vrD0rHslQlv2cktZlhT6uEMmBKcY>.

## PHYSICAL WORKING GROUPS AND SIDE EVENTS

In order to make CCFH54 as productive as possible, we encourage all delegates to arrive by Saturday, 9 March to attend any pre-planning meetings and any of the following events, which will take place on Sunday, 10 March :

PWG on Annex II on Fresh Leafy Vegetables and Annex IV on Sprouts for inclusion in the Guidelines for the Control of Shiga Toxin-Producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) in Raw Beef, Raw Milk and Raw Milk Cheeses, Fresh Leafy Vegetables, and Sprouts.

PWG on Annex II on Fishery Products and Annex III on Dairy Products for inclusion in the Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production.

On the afternoon of Monday, 11 March, there will be a PWG on CCFH Work Priorities (New work proposals/forward workplan).

There will also be a number of side events during CCFH54, including:

- A WHO Side Event entitled: "Moving towards a global strategy to control *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* in poultry" on 11 March
- A FAO Side Event entitled: "Food Allergens: Expert meetings results" on 12 March
- A Youth in Codex Side Event on 13 March
- An International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods (ICMSF) Side Event, on the afternoon of 14 March

## CCFH54 AGENDA AND DOCUMENTS

All working documents will be distributed for comment in advance of the session and Members are encouraged to submit their comments in writing. Most documents and accompanying Circular Letters have already been distributed, with a couple more on the way in the coming days. The reports from the VWG and PWGs will also be available as Conference Room Documents (CRDs) as soon as they are finalized before or during the week of CCFH54.

Please visit the CCFH54 webpage often to access all of the relevant committee documents and other information related to the upcoming meeting, including the "Information for Delegates" at the following link: <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/meetings/detail/en/?meeting=CCFH&session=54>.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the CCFH Secretariat at [ccfh@usda.gov](mailto:ccfh@usda.gov).

Looking forward to seeing you in person in Nairobi.

Evelyne Mbandi PhD  
CCFH Chairperson

