

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEx COMMITTEE ON RESIDUES OF VETERINARY DRUGS IN FOODS

Twenty-eighth Session
23–27 March 2026

Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States of America

MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM FAO/WHO, INCLUDING JECFA

(Prepared by FAO and WHO)

Information from the Joint FAO/WHO Committee on Food Additives (JECFA)

1. Since the 27th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF27, 2024), two meetings of JECFA (i.e., JECFA 100th and 101st) have been convened. These meetings addressed food additives (i.e., JECFA 100th) and contaminants (i.e., JECFA 101st). The summary reports, technical reports, and detailed monographs from these meetings are available on the relevant FAO¹ and WHO² websites.
2. The JECFA meeting originally scheduled for July 2025 to evaluate residues of certain veterinary drugs in food was suspended following budget restrictions at WHO.
3. FAO and WHO are currently engaged in discussions regarding the planning of the next JECFA meeting on veterinary drugs and will inform CCRVDF once a decision has been reached.

JECFA Toolbox for Veterinary Drug Residues Risk Assessment

4. FAO has developed a *JECFA Toolbox for Veterinary Drug Residues Risk Assessment*. The aim of the toolbox is to strengthen the understanding of JECFA procedures for assessing risks resulting from veterinary drug residues in food among interested stakeholders (such as regulatory agencies responsible for veterinary drug approval or food safety standards, the pharmaceutical industry, producers in animal agriculture, and veterinary associations). The toolbox is also designed for use by potential new JECFA experts to broaden the pool of experts available for the JECFA roster and to ensure greater geographical representation, particularly from regions with previously low representation in FAO/WHO expert bodies.
5. The Toolbox has been launched during a webinar held as a side event at the 47th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC47) on 29 November 2024. The summary and recording of the launch event are available online.³ The Toolbox is publicly available in six languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish) on the FAO website,⁴ along with the interactive materials, divided into six technical sections and an introductory module published in English, Spanish, and French. Additional sources and guidance documents in the Toolbox provide detailed information about the specific topics and steps in the risk assessment process.

FAO's Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (RVDF) Tool

6. FAO has developed the RVDF Tool as a practical resource to help countries, in particular low- and middle-income countries, strengthen national food safety systems by improving how veterinary drug residue analysis and monitoring are planned and implemented. The tool supports the identification of capacity gaps in laboratories, surveillance systems, and governance, and promotes alignment of national monitoring practices with Codex standards and JECFA evaluations. By encouraging data-driven approaches, improved intersectoral coordination, and targeted capacity development, the RVDF Tool contributes to protecting consumer health, facilitating fair practices in trade, and supporting global efforts to mitigate antimicrobial resistance within a One Health framework. In 2025, Pakistan, Ghana, and Lao PDR completed pilot assessments using the RVDF Tool, and additional countries will be invited to undertake assessments in 2026. The full tool is expected to be published in 2027.

¹ <https://www.fao.org/food-safety/scientific-advice/jecfa/en>

² [https://www.who.int/groups/joint-fao-who-expert-committee-on-food-additives-\(jecfa\)/publications](https://www.who.int/groups/joint-fao-who-expert-committee-on-food-additives-(jecfa)/publications)

³ Recording: [Launch event: JECFA Toolbox for Veterinary Drug Residues Risk Assessment 27 February 2025](#); summary report: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd4909en>

⁴ JECFA Toolbox for Veterinary Drug Residues Risk Assessment: Q <https://www.fao.org/jecfa-toolbox-veterinary-drugs-assessment/en>

Ad hoc FAO/WHO Expert Meeting: Water quality in agrifood systems and food safety

7. The Ad hoc FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on water quality in agrifood systems and food safety implications – focus on chemical contaminants, was organized jointly by FAO and WHO and took place on 20–23 May 2025 at FAO headquarters in Rome. The main objective of the meeting was to facilitate the finalization of the document, prioritizing food safety issues related to chemical water quality in agrifood systems. The report of the meeting has been published on the FAO website.⁵ Furthermore, a webinar to explain the outcome of the report will be held on 10 February 2026.⁶ The webinar summary will be published in due course.

FAO work on food safety risk assessment of environmental inhibitors used in agrifood systems

8. Environmental inhibitors are used to reduce methane emissions from farming sectors like livestock and rice cultivation, and to minimize nitrogen loss from soil. While several inhibitors are already in use globally and others are under development, potential food safety risks from residues in food products need to be fully addressed. Their unintended presence in food commodities could raise health concerns and disrupt trade if appropriate food safety measures have not been applied. Following up on the report *Food safety implications from the use of environmental inhibitors in agrifood systems*,⁷ FAO has worked to develop the report *Environmental inhibitors in agrifood systems – Considerations for food safety risk assessment*⁸ outlining key food safety considerations and steps in the risk assessment process for environmental inhibitors. This new report focuses on potential residue uptake and transfer into crops/plants and animal-derived foods intended for human consumption. Additionally, a technical brief has been prepared to convey the report's main messages to a wider audience.⁹
9. To launch the report, FAO organized a webinar on this subject on 20 January 2026. The summary and the recording of the webinar will be available online on the news page.¹⁰
10. These publications have been developed within the activities of the FAO Food Safety Foresight Programme. More information on FAO's work on foresight in food safety is available online.¹¹

FAO work on feed safety

11. In 2025, FAO conducted an International Workshop on Feed Risk Assessment – Chemical Safety,¹² in collaboration with the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) and supported by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Fishery, Food Security and Nature (LNVN). It aimed to revisit and explore the state of the art in methods and tools for the risk assessment of chemical contaminants in feed for farmed animals. The focus was on possible health risks for consumers of animal-source foods and animal health risks. Participants agreed on the need for: greater harmonization of risk assessment approaches at the national level; more structured research and information exchange; better international collaboration to share high-quality data; and a centralized, user-friendly quality data-sharing platform that could facilitate more seamless integration of hazard and occurrence data from various sources. The workshop was also an opportunity to consult on the upcoming FAO publication on feed risk assessment based on Codex-relevant texts. A summary of the workshop and the recommendations is available online.¹³
12. As recommended by over 400 participants in the Global Forum for Animal Feed and Feed Regulators¹⁴ organized by FAO in October 2025, FAO is launching a process for the designation of FAO Animal Feed Reference Centres that will provide the Organization and its Members with reliable and high-quality technical advice, data, and information. A call for interest will be disseminated in the course of 2026.
13. Feed safety regulatory and technical matters relevant for Codex will continue to be addressed in the annual International Feed Regulators Meetings, the next one being planned to take place in Brazil in July 2026.

⁵ <https://www.fao.org/food-safety/news/detail/fao-who-release-report-on-chemical-food-safety-risks-from-water-use-in-agrifood-systems/en>

⁶ <https://www.fao.org/food-safety/news/detail/webinar-to-launch-the-joint-fao-who-report--prioritizing-food-safety-issues-related-to-chemical-water-quality-in-agrifood-systems---10-february-2026/en>

⁷ <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc8647en>

⁸ <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/39606e38-ef44-4d93-8870-8c0a4493bf13>

⁹ <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/57ae13dc-610e-4429-b819-fdf9c040370b>

¹⁰ <https://www.fao.org/food-safety/scientific-advice/foresight/en>

¹¹ <https://www.fao.org/food-safety/scientific-advice/foresight/en/>

¹² <https://www.fao.org/feed-safety/news-events/detail/en/c/1734982/>

¹³ <https://www.rivm.nl/en/documenten/report-international-workshop-on-feed-risk-assessment-chemical-safety>

¹⁴ <https://www.fao.org/events/detail/fao-global-forum-for-animal-feed-and-feed-regulators/en>

FAO work on the state of research on the interactions between food additives, the gut microbiome, and the host

14. FAO has conducted a scientific literature review¹⁵ to assess how certain food additives may affect gut microbiome and, in turn, human health. The review aimed to gather and assess the quantity, quality, and reliability of current evidence, mapping research limitations and knowledge gaps, and exploring how microbiome data might be used to enhance chemical food safety risk assessments. The review concludes with a set of recommendations to guide and improve the integration of microbiome science into risk assessment frameworks. This work completes the reviews of the impacts of veterinary drug residues, pesticide residues, and microplastics on the gut microbiome and human health, and presents the conclusions of the FAO Technical Meeting on the Gut Microbiome in Food Safety Chemical Risk Assessment. All these reports are available online.¹⁶

Work on One Health and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

Quadripartite (FAO/UNEP/WHO/WOAH) work on Antimicrobial Resistance

15. The Quadripartite is working and supporting Member States in the implementation of the 44 commitments included in the UNGA Political Declaration 2024. Those commitments were adopted in September 2024 at the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on AMR, which establishes targets and actions for countries to combat the AMR threat through a One Health approach. The commitments included governance, financing, access to antimicrobials and diagnostics, a coordinated multisectoral response, sector-specific commitments in Human Health, Agriculture and Animal Health, and Environment, research and development, training, innovation and manufacturing, and surveillance and monitoring.¹⁷
16. The Quadripartite is guiding, coordinating, and conducting two of the UNGA Political Declaration political commitments, the revision/update of the Global Action Plan (GAP) on Antimicrobial Resistance, and the establishment of the Independent Panel on Evidence for Action against AMR (IPEA).¹⁸
17. The Quadripartite Joint Secretariat (QJS) on AMR continues to implement its Strategic Framework for Collaboration on AMR, signed in April 2022. This Framework reflects the joint work of the four organizations to advance a One Health response to AMR at the global, regional, and country level.

2nd Global Joint Summit of Human and Veterinary Medicines Regulatory Authorities and Forum

18. One of the priorities of the QJS on the AMR workplan includes developing and updating standards and technical advice on global practices. This work includes providing support to human and animal medicines regulatory authorities by convening a joint global regulatory summit and producing a workplan to support countries in using regulations, enforcement, and smart solutions to preserve the efficacy of antimicrobials. The first Global Joint Summit of Human and Veterinary Medicines Regulatory Authorities to Preserve Antimicrobials was held on 4-5 May 2023 in Geneva, Switzerland. The theme of the summit was “Phasing out over-the-counter sales of antibiotics”.¹⁹ The second Global Joint Summit was held virtually on 14-15 January 2026, with the theme “Strengthening Regulatory practices on labelling for Antimicrobials - A One Health perspective (for human, veterinary and environmental regulators)”.²⁰

FAO

*Reduce the Need for Antimicrobials on Farms for Sustainable Agrifood Systems Transformation (RENOFARM)*²¹

19. This action-oriented, country-focused, and country-led initiative engages the entire production continuum from farm to fork, strengthens public-private partnerships, and supports countries in the implementation of their National Action Plans on AMR. To date, RENOFORM has over 400 members, including more than 70 FAO and WHO Members, and has established a Community of Practice comprising more than 700 participants. Through policy dialogue, capacity development, and knowledge exchange, RENOFORM directly supports the practical application of Codex standards, guidelines, and codes of practice on AMR, particularly those on risk management measures to reduce the emergence and spread of foodborne antimicrobial resistance. The 2nd International Symposium on Pathways to Reduce the Need for Antimicrobials to Support Sustainable Agrifood Systems Transformation will take place in Chongqing, China, on 21–23 April 2026.

¹⁵ <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/c279160c-595f-4384-a2c0-f4f2c7727240>

¹⁶ <https://www.fao.org/food-safety/scientific-advice/foresight/health-and-food-safety/en>

¹⁷ <https://www.un.org/pga/wp-content/uploads/sites/108/2024/09/FINAL-Text-AMR-to-PGA.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://www.qjsamr.org/independent-panel-for-evidence-for-action-against-amr>

¹⁹ <https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2023/05/04/default-calendar/human-and-veterinary-medicines-regulatory-authorities-summit>

²⁰ <https://www.qjsamr.org/news-and-events/news/qjs-news-item/19-12-2025-second-global-regulatory-authorities-summit>

²¹ <https://www.fao.org/antimicrobial-resistance/background/fao-role/renofarm/en/>

20. FAO also continues to strengthen AMR surveillance and data-for-action through the International FAO AMR Monitoring (InFARM) system²², which supports countries in generating, analysing, and using AMR data from the food and agriculture sectors within a One Health framework. InFARM also supports harmonized surveillance of antimicrobial resistance in animals and food, aligned with Codex principles and risk analysis approaches. Through standardized methodologies, capacity development, and regional technical support, InFARM contributes to improved data quality, comparability, and use for risk assessment and risk management, thereby supporting the implementation of Codex AMR texts at national and regional levels. During 2025, FAO has progressively expanded InFARM to support the collection and use of antimicrobial use (AMU) data in plant/crop production, responding to emerging evidence and Member priorities related to AMU in plant production and protection.
21. In 2025, FAO further advanced work on AMR in collaboration with its ten Reference Centres²³ and through its knowledge dissemination and capacity development activities, including the organization of 13 AMR Knowledge Dissemination Dialogue webinars²⁴ and several other technical activities. These activities supported Members in strengthening surveillance systems, applying risk analysis principles, and reinforcing regulatory and institutional capacities needed for the effective application of Codex standards related to antimicrobial use and antimicrobial resistance.
22. During 2025, FAO worked on a large number of projects²⁵ aiming to contain and control AMR, among several others, two large projects funded by the Republic of Korea related to improving the microbiological safety of food in low- and middle-income countries.
23. Across regions, FAO continued to strengthen One Health–based collaboration, knowledge exchange, and innovation in support of food safety and AMR containment. In the Near East region, a key milestone was the launch of the Regional Food Safety Research and Innovation Network (RFSRIN) in February 2025, established through South–South and triangular cooperation. The network serves as a platform for knowledge exchange and innovation across the region. In parallel, preparations were undertaken for the Hack4safeFood hackathon, an initiative designed to generate science-based solutions to food safety challenges, supported by a comprehensive regional food safety landscape report.
24. In Latin America, the Secretariat of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC) and FAO continued implementing the Webinar Series initiated in 2022 on priority topics for the region. Since September 2024, the modules on Food Fraud (September) and Codex Texts on AMR (December) have been added. FAO also built capacity for AMR surveillance (data generation, collection, and analysis). In August 2025, a webinar was held with 18 countries to promote and support the region's adherence to the InFARM platform.

Workshop on antimicrobial co-selection at the food: environment interface

25. The workshop was organized jointly by FAO and the China Academy of Sciences (CAS) and took place on 10–13 November 2025 in Hangzhou, China. The main objective of the meeting was to catalogue contaminants that may play an important role in the co-selection of antimicrobial resistance in food and the food production environment; summarize the risks associated with deliberate or unintended exposure of feed crops, food crops, and animals to important co-selective agents for antimicrobial resistance and to identify critical gaps in knowledge and research priorities related to food safety in the context of these potential hazards. The meeting report will be published on the FAO website.

WHO

26. To support countries in strengthening AMR and AMU surveillance capacities, WHO is closely collaborating with other partners, such as the work of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF),²⁶ Quadripartite Technical Group on Antimicrobial Resistance and Use Integrated Surveillance (QTG-AIS)²⁷ and the activities related to the One Health Legislative Assessment Tool for AMR (OHLAT).²⁸ Other initiatives include:

WHO Medically Important Antimicrobial List

27. WHO published in February 2024 the WHO Medically Important Antimicrobial List (WHO MIA)²⁹ to promote the responsible and prudent use of antimicrobials in all sectors. New approaches and categories have been established in the revision of the Medically Important Antimicrobials for Human Medicine.

²² <https://www.fao.org/antimicrobial-resistance/resources/infarm-system/en/>

²³ <https://www.fao.org/antimicrobial-resistance/resources/reference-centres/en/>

²⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzp5NgJ2-dK4saHXAo4uWOeGJS9Degtk>

²⁵ <https://www.fao.org/antimicrobial-resistance/projects/ongoing/project-13/en/>

²⁶ <https://www.who.int/news/item/19-06-2019-new-multi-partner-trust-fund-launched-to-combat-antimicrobial-resistance-globally>

²⁷ <https://www.who.int/news/item/26-01-2023-the-quadripartite-organizations-established-the-technical-group-on-integrated-surveillance-on-antimicrobial-use-and-resistance>

²⁸ <https://www.qjsamr.org/technical-work/one-health-legislative-assessment-tool-on-amr>

²⁹ https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/gcp/who-mia-list-2024-lv.pdf?sfvrsn=3320dd3d_2

WHO AWaRe classification

28. WHO developed and published “WHO Access. Watch. Reserve. (AWaRe) antibiotic book”³⁰, which provides guidance on the choice of antibiotic, dose, route of administration, and duration of treatment for common infectious syndromes in alignment with the recommendations for antibiotics included in the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines and the WHO AWaRe classification of antibiotics.

WHO's strategic and operational priorities to address drug-resistant bacterial infections

29. The WHO's strategic and operational priorities (2025-2035) for addressing drug-resistant bacterial infections in the human health sector, as recognized in the WHA77.6 Resolution, focus on four key areas: prevention of infections, universal access to diagnosis and treatment, strategic information, science, and innovation, and effective governance and financing. These priorities aim to accelerate national and global responses to AMR by providing countries with a framework for implementing a comprehensive, people-centered approach to health systems.³¹

Integration of data from New Approaches Methodologies into food chemical safety assessments

30. Advances in science are rapidly expanding the application of New Approach Methodologies (NAMs), including *in vitro*, *in silico*, and other non-animal testing methods. However, a clear definition of NAMs is still needed, and their use in food chemical safety evaluation remains limited. WHO and Nanyang Technological University Singapore (NTU), convened a workshop in June 2025 to advance global dialogue on the adoption and practical implementation of NAMs, bridging scientific innovation and regulatory frameworks. Key topics included the current state of NAMs, regulatory and technical challenges, capacity building for low- and middle-income countries, implementation strategies, and future directions.
31. Following the workshop, an update to Environmental Health Criteria (EHC) 240: Principles and Methods for the Risk Assessment of Chemicals in Food was proposed to incorporate NAMs, either through a new chapter or revisions to existing chapters, reflecting best available science. The FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) and JECFA subsequently discussed the feasibility of expanding NAMs' use in safety evaluation and recognized the need for clearer, harmonized guidance, despite some NAMs already being in use.
32. In conclusion, JMPR and JECFA agreed to update EHC 240 to provide guidance on general principles for the use of NAMs in the safety assessment of chemicals in food, while remaining adaptable to future scientific and technological developments. A dedicated joint working group is expected to undertake this revision.

Requests for scientific advice

33. WHO continues to prioritize the requests for scientific advice, taking into consideration the criteria proposed by Codex, as well as the requests for advice from Member Countries and the availability of resources.
34. In scheduling JECFA meetings and developing the agenda for CCRVDF, but also for other Codex committees such as the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA), Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF), the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO), the WHO must consider the overall amount and urgency of the priorities requested by these committees. Due to increasing requests for scientific advice to JECFA, not all can be addressed at the subsequent meeting. In prioritizing the work, the JECFA Secretariat considers existing criteria, ongoing Codex work, and available resources.
35. The activities of JECFA, which are supported by WHO, heavily rely on extra-budgetary resources from governmental institutions of WHO member states. As has been reiterated over the past few years, there has been a notable decline in donor funding for scientific advisory activities, including those associated with JECFA. Due to existing budget constraints, WHO is unable to obtain the required resources, necessitating a reduction in JECFA operations. As mentioned earlier, the JECFA meeting planned for 2025 on veterinary drug residues was postponed. Furthermore, the JECFA 101 meeting in October 2025 on food contaminants was shortened, with only arsenic evaluated. The ongoing challenge of inadequate extra-budgetary resources for the WHO's scientific advisory program will persistently affect future JECFA endeavors. WHO is actively evaluating the practicality of holding fewer, shorter JECFA meetings, merging committees, and assessing a limited number of chemical substances overall. Nevertheless, to alter the current trend of reduced JECFA evaluations in the coming years, WHO strongly urges Member Countries and stakeholders, including observers, to engage with WHO to explore ways they can directly or indirectly support WHO's scientific advisory activities.

Recommendation

36. CCRVDF28 is invited to note the information contained in this document.

³⁰ <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-MHP-HPS-EML-2022.02>

³¹ https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA77/A77_5-en.pdf