



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON PESTICIDE RESIDUES

56th Session

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COORDINATION OF WORK BETWEEN THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON PESTICIDE RESIDUES (CCPR) AND THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON RESIDUES OF VETERINARY DRUGS IN FOODS (CCRVDF) JOINT CCPR/CCRVDF WORKING GROUP ON COMPOUNDS FOR DUAL USE - STATUS OF WORK -

(Prepared by the United States of America
as Chair of the Joint CCPR/CCRVDF Electronic Working Group on Dual-Use Compounds
with the assistance of Brazil and New Zealand as Co-Chairs)

Background

1. The 25th session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF25, 2021) sought advice from the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC) on a mechanism for cooperation between CCPR and CCRVDF on the establishment of harmonized Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for compounds with dual uses.¹ The 52nd Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR52, 2021) also encouraged ways to facilitate and promote cooperation on cross-sectional issues between CCRVDF and CCPR².
2. CCEXEC81 (2021) recommended that CCRVDF and CCPR establish a joint Electronic Working Group (EWG) to advance their work on cross-sectional issues further and facilitate the establishment of single/harmonized MRLs for edible animal tissues for compounds with dual use.
3. Following the recommendation³ of CCEXEC81, the 44th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC44, 2021) agreed⁴ to establish a Joint CCPR/CCRVDF EWG chaired by the United States of America (USA), open to all Members and Observers working with the support of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) and the Codex Secretariat to address procedural and technical issues related to the establishment of harmonized MRLs for compounds with dual use as described in the Terms of Reference (ToRs) agreed by CAC44:
 - The Joint EWG will review work already done cooperatively between CCPR and CCRVDF and will identify and, if possible, prioritize areas of potential further collaboration between them and how this could be carried out (e.g., jointly, in parallel) to facilitate the consideration of compounds with dual uses by both committees and the possible harmonization of MRLs.
 - This may include reflections on improved work synchronization between CCPR and CCRVDF and collaboration between CCPR/CCRVDF and JMPR/JECFA.
 - The Joint EWG will update CCPR53 (2022) and CCRVDF26 (2023) on their preliminary findings.
4. Regarding the timeframe, the Joint EWG will continue its work if both CCRVDF and CCPR consider it useful.
5. The Joint EWG made initial recommendations to CCRVDF26 (2023) and CCPR54 (2023). Both committees agreed to continue the Joint EWG. They recommended the following new ToRs that CAC46 (2023) subsequently endorsed⁵, including the re-appointment of USA as Chair of the EWG and the appointment of Brazil and New Zealand as Co-Chairs:

¹ REP21/RVDF25, para. 146

² REP21/PR52, para. 12

³ REP21/EXEC81, paras. 33-34

⁴ REP21/CAC44, paras. 64-66

⁵ REP23/CAC46, para. 106

- **ToR #1:** Continue the Joint EWG, chaired by the USA and co-chaired by Brazil and New Zealand, to identify and prioritize issues affecting both committees, recommend ways to address them, and inform CAC accordingly.
 - **ToR #2:** Develop a list of compounds with dual use as a pesticide and veterinary drug for which no or only one Codex MRL has been established, with member countries providing the information to populate this list.
 - **ToR #3:** Identify dual-use compounds that have different Codex MRLs for a similar edible commodity of animal origin and recommend a single, harmonized MRL(s) for the compound(s) and affected commodity(ies) on a case-by-case basis. The EWG might recommend that CCRVDF/CCPR consider selecting the higher MRL value.
 - **ToR #4:** Consider the matter related to harmonized food descriptors to be used by JECFA and JMPR.
6. CAC47 endorsed the recommendation of CCEXEC87 to explore the scheduling of a virtual session of CCPR and CCRVDF to consider the recommendations of the virtual meeting of the Joint CCPR/CCRVDF Electronic Working Group (EWG), noting that this would be the first time such an arrangement was made and might be used in the future to address common issues involving different Codex committees.⁶

Proceedings of the Electronic Working Group

7. Since CCRVDF26 (2023) and CCPR54 (2023), the Joint EWG has conducted the following activities:
- Members were asked to identify emerging issues affecting both committees that might be addressed by the Joint EWG (ToR #1).
 - Members were asked to populate a list of dual-use compounds registered/approved in their country (ToR #2).
 - 34 Codex standards (Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) values or MRL) were identified that differ for dual-use compounds depending on whether the compound was evaluated as a veterinary drug or pesticide. The Joint EWG is working towards identifying a harmonized MRL value where differences exist to recommend CCPR and CCRVDF and working towards developing a harmonized definition for dual-use compounds (ToR #3).
 - 11 edible commodities of animal origin were identified as being cross-sectional between the two committees. Two of these 11 food commodities already have harmonized descriptors; four have different descriptors and five lack descriptors. The Joint EWG is working towards proposing harmonized descriptors for the four that have different descriptors and five that lack descriptors (ToR #4).
8. Although the Joint EWG has made substantial progress since its inception, the Chair and co-Chairs believe two key challenges have emerged.
- **Challenge #1:** Registered participants have been inclusive and included the global regions that comprise Codex membership, but actual participation within the online forum has been limited. For example, 34 Codex members and one observer organization were registered to participate in the EWG. However, excluding responses from the Chair's and Co-Chairs' countries, the EWG only received four sets of comments on MRL (ToR #3) and food descriptor (ToR #4) harmonization. The low number of comments meant that it was not possible to make firm recommendations on these matters.
 - **Challenge #2:** The Joint EWG operates entirely within the EWG online forum, followed by recommendations being presented to each committee separately. It is the opinion of the Chair and co-Chairs that this strategy is not the most effective for all issues. As mentioned previously, participation in the online forum has been limited. This leads to the individual sessions of CCPR and CCRVDF being the first time that a majority of members have become familiar with and discussed the work of the Joint EWG. Because recommendations are presented to each committee separately, one committee may make changes to recommendations or develop new recommendations without the benefit of hearing from their colleagues in the other committee. On substantial, complex issues, this is likely to cause recommendations to be "volleyed" between the two committees, with little progress being made.
9. Together, these two challenges have made it difficult for the Chair and co-Chairs to determine whether consensus has been achieved and whether recommendations are ready for presentation at CCPR and CCRVDF.
10. Due to the aforementioned challenges, the Chair and co-Chairs have considered scheduling a virtual meeting of the Joint EWG to address the current ToRs. The advantage of a virtual meeting of the Joint EWG is two-fold. First, it will increase active participation from members. Second, it will provide space for CCPR and CCRVDF delegations to discuss the issues affecting both committees and any suggestions to the draft recommendations, making the working group and output a true joint effort between CCPR and CCRVDF. Ultimately, the Chair and co-Chairs see this approach as a mechanism to generate more robust and inclusive recommendations before presenting the recommendations to either committee. This will facilitate the discussions at the plenary and lead to more efficient advancement of the Joint EWG work.

⁶ REP24/EXEC87, para 49; REP24/CAC47, paras 22(i), 131

Discussions at the 55th Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR55)

11. The update from the Joint EWG was provided to CCPR55 (2024). The JMPR Secretariat indicated JMPR's support for the harmonization agenda of the Joint EWG on compounds for dual use. However, further consideration is required when it comes to harmonizing health-based guidance values (ADI and Acute Reference Dose (ARfD)). Therefore, the JMPR Secretariat stated that the possible harmonization of relevant health-based guidance values (HBGVs) should be done as part of a risk assessment process by JMPR and JECFA in support of CCPR and CCRVDF, and it would not be possible just to choose the higher HBGV. The Joint EWG Chair and co-chair clarified that the primary focus of the Joint EWG was to harmonize MRLs, and the intent is to defer to JECFA and JMPR to make recommendations on harmonizing HBGVs if needed.
12. CCPR55 (2024):
 - (i) indicated their continued support for the work of the Joint EWG;
 - (ii) endorsed the scheduling of a joint virtual meeting of the EWG;
 - (iii) encouraged CCPR delegations to participate in the joint virtual meeting of the EWG; and
 - (iv) encouraged CCPR delegations to liaise with their CCRVDF counterparts to coordinate positions and actively participate in the work of the Joint EWG, including the upcoming virtual meeting of the Joint EWG.⁷

Consultation with the Codex Secretariat

13. Following CCPR55 (2024), the Chair and co-Chairs sought advice from the Codex Secretariat on how to best progress the work of the Joint EWG. Based on this consultation and building upon the recommendations endorsed by CCPR55, the Chair and co-Chairs consider that it would be beneficial to explore the feasibility of scheduling a virtual session of the Joint EWG that precedes a possible virtual Joint Session of CCPR and CCRVDF to address the current ToRs. In addition to the aforementioned benefits of a virtual session of the Joint EWG, this approach would allow final decisions to be made jointly by both committees rather than the Joint EWG presenting recommendations to each Committee separately. This would, therefore, assist in building consensus-based decision-making simultaneously for both Committees.

Discussions at the 27th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF27)

14. The update and challenges encountered by the EWG were presented to CCRVDF27 (2024). Views were expressed that the limited participation in the Joint EWG might be due to challenges with accessing and using the online forum in which the EWG operates. The Codex Secretariat acknowledged that the online forum might not be perfect. However, because the online forum handled a range of tasks in Codex, it might not be easy to find a solution that provided all the required features. The Codex Secretariat encouraged Members and Observers to provide feedback on specific examples of challenges they faced and suggest solutions for improving work in the online forum, noting that these challenges would need to be addressed within the constraints of available resources.
15. CCRVDF27 (2024):
 - (i) indicated their continued support for the Joint CCPR/CCRVDF EWG;
 - (ii) endorsed exploring the feasibility of scheduling a virtual session of the Joint EWG that precedes a possible virtual Joint Session of CCPR and CCRVDF;
 - (iii) encouraged CCRVDF delegations to participate in the possible virtual session of the Joint EWG and possible virtual Joint Session of CCPR and CCRVDF; and
 - (iv) encouraged CCRVDF delegations to liaise with their CCPR counterparts to coordinate positions and actively participate in the work of the Joint EWG.⁸

Discussion in the Joint CCPR/CCRVDF working group

16. The Joint EWG has been working since the establishment of its revised ToR on a definition for dual-use compounds, an approach or procedure to harmonize MRLs for dual-use compounds, including harmonized MRLs derived through this proposed procedure, as well as harmonization of food descriptors used by JECFA and JMPR. The details and findings of this will be distributed for comments by Codex members and observers through two circular letters, CL 2025/47-PR/RVDF (harmonization of food descriptors) and CL 2025/48-PR/RVDF (harmonization of MRLs for dual-use compounds), which can be found on the CCPR⁹ and CCRVDF¹⁰ webpages¹¹, respectively.

⁷ REP24/PR55, paras. 274-280

⁸ REP24/RVDF27, paras. 115-124

⁹ <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/committee/related-circular-letters/en/?committee=CCPR>

¹⁰ <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/committee/related-circular-letters/en/?committee=CCRVDF>

¹¹ <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circular-letters/en/>

Recommendations

17. CCPR56 is invited to:
- (i) indicate their continued support for the Joint CCPR/CCRVDF EWG;
 - (ii) endorse scheduling a virtual session of the Joint EWG that precedes a virtual Joint Session of CCPR and CCRVDF;
 - (iii) encourage Codex members and observers to participate in the possible virtual session of the Joint EWG and possible virtual Joint Session of CCPR and CCRVDF; and
 - (iv) encourage Codex members and observers to liaise with their veterinary (animal health) service counterparts to coordinate positions and actively participate in the work of the Joint EWG, including providing replies to the circular letters on harmonization of food descriptors (CL 2025/47-PR/RVDF) and harmonization of MRLs for dual-use compounds (CL 2025/48-PR/RVDF).

APPENDIX I
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS¹

CHAIR
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¹ Please contact the focal point of the Member Country or Observer Organization for the details of the delegates. The list of Codex contact points for members are available from the Codex website at:
<http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/about-codex/members/en/>
<http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/about-codex/observers/observers/obs-list/en/>

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