

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
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Organization

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**Agenda item 9**

**CCASIA20/CRD 2**

## **JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

### **FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR ASIA**

**Twentieth Session,**

**New Delhi, India 26-30 September 2016**

### **PHYSICAL WORKING GROUP REPORT ON PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL CODE OF HYGIENIC PRACTICE FOR STREET-VENDED FOODS**

**Prepared by India**

1. CCASIA19 agreed to establish a Physical Working Group (PWG), subject to the agreement with new Coordinator who would be appointed by CAC38, which would meet immediately before CCASIA20 to consider the report of the EWG and comments submitted in order to facilitate the discussion in the Plenary.
2. The Physical Working Group (PWG) met on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2016 during 2:00PM to 5:00PM. It was attended by representatives from 12 member countries and 2 observer organisations.
3. The PWG discussed the report of the EWG and the comments received. The important proceedings are briefly presented below.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

4. The PWG made some amendments to the introduction to make it concise and to take into account the fact that the street-vended foods were popular in all types of countries.

#### **SECTION 2 SCOPE, USAGE AND DEFINITIONS**

##### *2.1 Scope*

5. The proposal to delete the term "consumer" and the related guidance from the document made by a member was discussed further. After adequate discussions, the PWG agreed to retain the term and the guidance while taking note that the general principles of food hygiene (CAC/RCP1) covered consumer in the scope and that the consumers were important stake holders in ensuring safety of street vended foods.

##### *2.2 Use*

6. The PWG agreed to make some minor changes to better reflect the intended use of the document.

##### *2.3 Definitions*

7. Following changes were agreed in the definitions:
  - Potable/ drinking water: The PWG agreed to the suggestion from Codex Secretariat to amend the definition to indicate that the latest version of WHO Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality applied.
  - Sealed container: It was agreed to cover plastic jars/ bottles with screw caps and accordingly the definition was amended. It was also agreed to move the text providing guidance on structural aspects in Point (e) to section 5.2 as the last bullet.
  - Water container: The term was deleted from the section as it has not been used anywhere in the document.

## **SECTION 4 STAKE HOLDERS IN STREET FOOD VENDING**

### *4.1 Street Food Vendors*

8. The PWG agreed to make some changes to the text in the second and third bullets of Paragraph 10 in the Section for better clarity.

### *4.3 Authorities*

9. It was agreed to delete the first bullet in Paragraph 17 as it was felt that it is redundant.

## **SECTION 5 LOCATION, DESIGN, STRUCTURE AND APPLIANCES**

### *5.1 Street Food Stalls/Carts/Kiosks*

10. The PWG agreed to incorporate a new Paragraph 20 to indicate that all the places where food is placed in the kiosks etc. should be at sufficient height above the ground to prevent contamination.
11. The PWG also discussed the proposal to indicate availability of “running” water but agreed to indicate “clean” water to avoid any misinterpretation in Paragraph 25 (renumbered).

## **SECTION 7 EQUIPMENT AND APPLIANCES**

12. The PWG made amendments to cover all types of containers and equipments in the guidance in the Paragraph 35.

## **SECTION 8 FOOD PREPERATION, HANDLING, DISPLAY AND STORAGE**

### *8.1 Raw Materials/Ingredients and Packaging*

13. The PWG discussed how to refer to the standards that should a street food vendor should comply with and agreed to leave the text in the square brackets for further discussions in the plenary. The PWG made amendments to address packaging and also to take into account the fact that the ice used by the vendor may or may not be intended to come in direct contact with food.
14. The PWG also agreed to move the text in Paragraph 40 to Section 8.3 where it was considered more relevant.

### *8.2 Preparation/ Cooking*

15. In Paragraph 46 it was agreed to include a provision for washing and cleaning of knives and cutting boards where separate sets of knives and cutting boards were not always available for raw and cooked food.
16. The text in the Paragraph 49 was aligned with the relevant text in Code of Hygienic Practice for Precooked and Cooked Foods in Mass Catering (CAC/RCP 39-1993) for the purpose of consistency and practicality.
17. Paragraph 51 was amended to make the guidance more appropriate.

### *8.3 Handling and Storage*

18. The PWG agreed to move the text in Paragraph 55 to section 8.1 where it was more relevant.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The PWG recommends that CCASIA consider the proposed draft Regional Code of Hygienic Practice for Street-Vended Foods (Asia), as attached in Appendix, with a view to finalize the remaining issue in the square bracket, discuss further comments if any, and progress the Code through the Codex Step Procedure with the possibility of adoption at Step 5/8.

## APPENDIX

**PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL CODE OF HYGIENIC PRACTICE  
FOR STREET- VENDED FOODS IN ASIA**

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## INTRODUCTION

1. “Street-vended foods” or its equivalent “street foods” are defined as foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors in streets and other public places for immediate consumption or consumption at a later time<sup>1</sup>. Rapid urbanization and population growth, are expected to continue and street-vended foods, which are largely but not exclusively an urban phenomenon, will expand accordingly.
2. Street-vended foods are appreciated not only for their wide variety, unique taste, easy availability but also for food security for the low cost. It provides a livelihood for a large number of workers. They preserve the local culinary traditions of a region/place.

## SECTION 1 OBJECTIVES

2. This Code of Hygienic Practice addresses essential hygienic conditions that should be taken into consideration when setting street food control measures.

## SECTION 2 SCOPE, USAGE AND DEFINITIONS

### 2.1 Scope

3. This Code defines the general hygienic practices required to be followed to make the street foods safe. It will be useful for all the three major stakeholders (Vendors/ cooks/ other food handlers, consumers and the relevant authorities) who need to be involved to make street foods hygienic.

### 2.2 Use

4. This Code has been intended for use by the Asian Countries to ensure the overall safety and hygiene of street vended foods.

### 2.3 Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Hygienic Practice, the terms used herein have the following definitions:

- Appliances/ Equipment<sup>2</sup>

The whole or part of any apparatus, vessels, containers, utensils, machines, instruments or appliances for use in preparing, storing, handling, cleaning, selling or supply/delivery of food.

- Clean

Free from dirt, dust, grease, waste, food residues as well as all other foreign materials and objectionable odour.

- Clean Water<sup>2</sup>

Water that does not compromise food safety in the circumstance of its use.

- Contaminant<sup>3</sup>

Any substance not intentionally added to food or feed for food producing animals, which is present in such food or feed as a result of the production (including operations carried out in crop husbandry, animal husbandry and veterinary medicine), manufacture, processing, preparation, treatment, packing, packaging, transport or holding of such food or feed, or as a result of environmental contamination. The term does not include insect fragments, rodent hairs and other extraneous matter.

- Cook

Individual who cooks food for human consumption.

- Crockery/ Cutlery<sup>2</sup>

All tools used for food preparation, serving and consumption (whether non-disposable or disposable), and they include glasses, plates, dishes, cups, saucers, spoons, forks, ladles, chopsticks etc.

- Cross-contamination

Transfer of micro-organisms or other harmful substances from one food (usually raw) to another food either by direct contact or by food handlers or through contact surfaces or through air. Cross contamination can also occur when raw food touches or drips on to cooked or ready-to-eat foods.

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<sup>1</sup> *Essential safety requirements for street vended foods, WHO-1996.*

<sup>2</sup> *Regional Code of Practice for Street Vended Foods (Near East) (CAC/RCP 71-R-2013)*

<sup>3</sup> *Codex Alimentarius Commission, Procedural Manual twenty-fourth Edition, Section I: Basic Texts and Definitions*

- Customer/ Consumer

A person or group of people who buy the food to eat.

- Disposable articles<sup>2</sup>

Any appliances, containers, implements, utensils, napkins, gloves or wrappers that are intended for one time use in the preparation, storage, display, serving or sale of food.

- Food contact surfaces

Any surface that may come in contact with food during its preparation, cooking, holding and serving.

- Food handler<sup>4</sup>

Every person handling or coming into contact with food, or with any equipment or utensil used in food handling

- Food hygiene<sup>3</sup>

Conditions and measures necessary for the production, processing, storage and distribution of food designed to ensure a safe, sound, wholesome product fit for human consumption.

- Food Safety<sup>5</sup>

Assurance that food will not cause harm to the consumer when it is prepared and/or eaten according to its intended use.

- Impermeable<sup>2</sup>

Preventing the passage/ absorption of water and or/fluid.

- Microorganisms<sup>2</sup>

Any microscopic living organism that can cause food-borne disease or food spoilage.

- Perishable food

Food which is subject to rapid decay, spoilage and or growth of microorganisms with or without the production of toxins or metabolites when not kept under the required storage conditions (e.g. milk and milk products, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, etc.).

- Pests<sup>4</sup>

Insects, birds, rodents and any other animal capable of directly or indirectly contaminating food.

- Potable/Drinking Water<sup>2</sup>

Treated water, which shall comply with the latest version of WHO Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality.

- Raw Food

Food that is not cooked.

- Ready-to-eat<sup>2</sup>

Any food (including beverages) which is ready for immediate consumption (could be raw or cooked, hot or chilled) without further processing at the point of sale.

- Relevant Authority/ Competent Authority

Any concerned ministry/department/local authorities including municipalities, police and other relevant authorities.

- Sealed Container<sup>2</sup>

Food grade containers such as:

- (a) Hermetically sealed containers;
- (b) Sealed jars, with anchor and crown type closures;
- (c) Milk bottles sealed with aluminium caps;

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<sup>4</sup> *Code of Hygienic Practice for precooked and cooked foods in Mass Catering (CAC/RCP 39-1993)*

<sup>5</sup> *Regional Guidelines for the Design of Control measures for Street Vended Foods (Africa) (CAC/GL 22R-1997)*

(d) Glass or plastic jars and bottles with screw caps; and

(e) Sealed Cans.

- Street Foods

Foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors in streets and other public places for immediate consumption or consumption at a later time.

- Street Food Centre<sup>2</sup>

Any public place or establishment designated by the relevant authority for the preparation, display and sale of street foods by multiple vendors.

- Street Food Stall<sup>2</sup>

A place where street food is prepared, displayed, served or sold to the public. It includes carts, tables, benches, baskets, chairs, vehicles etc. with or without wheels and any other structure on it or in it.

- Street food vendor

Individual selling street foods in street food stalls, kiosks, carts or centers.

- Waste Water<sup>2</sup>

Sullage water arising as a result of the activity of street food vendors.

- Water Containers<sup>2</sup>

~~Any food grade container with a lid used solely for the purpose of storing and further usage of water that has not been used for any other purpose.~~

## **SECTION 3 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

### *3.1 Rules and Regulations*

5. Appropriate rules and regulations should be drafted in order to be implemented easily with the possibility of controlling the street foods sector as an integral part of the food preparation process. Such rules and regulations can either be elaborated separately or incorporated into existing food regulations.

### *3.2 Registration / Licensing of Street Food Vendors*

6. Where required by the national legislation, street food vendor should have registration/ licensing from relevant authority before starting their business. The registration/identification proof issued by the relevant authority should be displayed on the cart/ kiosk etc.

7. Relevant authority should issue or renew the registration of any street food vendor who complies with all the requirements of the Code of Hygienic Practice established by the relevant authority.

## **SECTION 4 STAKE HOLDERS IN STREET FOOD VENDING**

8. This section deals with the essential roles and responsibilities of the three important stakeholders.

### **4.1 Street Food Vendors**

9. Every street food vendor, during conduct of business should observe the following:

- Personal hygiene: The street food vendor should wear clean clothes, clean disposable gloves, hair net etc. The street food vendor should keep finger nails short and clean at all times, and avoid wearing jewellery, ornaments etc. during food preparation. Non-infected cuts and wound should be completely protected by a waterproof dressing that is firmly secured and routinely changed.
- Hygienic behaviour: Eating, chewing, smoking and nose blowing should be avoided while handling food. Refrain from any unhygienic practices such as spitting, cleaning nose, ears or any other body orifice, touching any body part, touching mobile phone, currency etc. while handling food. Should not sneeze or cough over or onto the food. Should wash hands thoroughly with soap and clean water before and after handling food, after using the toilets, after activity like sneezing, touching any surface.
- Health of the street food vendors: Any street food vendor, assistant or food handler, showing any of the following symptoms: jaundice, diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, sore throat, discharge from ear, eye and nose, frequent and rapid coughing, visibly infected lesions (boils, cuts, etc. etc. should not be involved in any food handling activity.

10. The above can be ensured through awareness generation, motivation and trainings.

#### 4.2 Consumers

11. Consumers should avoid eating or chewing, smoking, spitting and touching near the displayed food.
12. Consumers should not litter the area, should not sneeze or cough near the food.
13. Consumers should always throw left overs in the waste bin.
14. Consumers should report to the concerned authorities about unhygienic behavior of any vendor, if noted.

#### 4.3 Authorities<sup>6</sup>

15. To ensure proper management of street foods, a multi-sectoral approach involving all concerned authorities viz food safety personnel, local body or municipality, urban development department, police etc. is required.
16. The authorities should:
  - Monitor the hygienic status of street foods being sold.
  - Monitor the environmental condition, water safety, garbage disposal, etc.
  - Generate awareness, motivate and train food vendors and also customers regularly.
  - Involve suitable and experienced experts and voluntary agencies in managing awareness generation, motivation and training of vendors and customers.

### SECTION 5 LOCATION, DESIGN, STRUCTURE AND APPLIANCES

#### 5.1 Street Food Stalls/Carts/Kiosks

17. The structure of the stalls/ carts/kiosks should preferably be approved by the competent authority. Street food stalls should be located in clean, ventilated and non-polluted areas. There should be free accessibility and enough space between kiosks.
18. Stalls/carts/kiosks should be covered to prevent contamination of food.
19. All cooking ranges, washing equipment, working tables, shelves and cupboards on which food is placed should be at the sufficient height above the ground to prevent contamination.
20. Stalls/ carts/ kiosks should be made of safe material which can be easily cleaned and disinfected.
21. Waste bins should be covered and made of material which could be easily cleaned and disinfected.
22. Stall/ cart should have separate storage spaces for raw and cooked food.
23. Sanitation facilities with water should be provided for vendors and customers at safe distance away from the food handling area at the stalls.
24. There should be appropriate hand washing facilities with clean water, soap and other cleaning agents and the facilities provided should be kept clean and hygienic.

#### 5.2 Street Food Centres

25. The design of the street food centre should:
  - Be reviewed by relevant authority.
  - Provide sufficient and adequate space for orderly placement of vendor stalls for food handling, preparation, storing and serving.
  - Allow for orderly flow of materials and goods in and out of the centres as this will help to avoid possible sources of food contamination.
  - Allow for the proper placement of client facilities such as toilets, hand washing and eating facilities and be located or arranged in a manner that prevents sources of food contamination.
  - Provide suitable, sufficient areas for solid waste storage and crockery and appliance cleaning, washing and sanitizing. These should be appropriately placed so as not to contaminate food.
  - Have smooth cement, glazed tile, equipped with properly placed floor drains for the purpose of removing surface water and to facilitate cleaning and sanitizing.

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<sup>6</sup> *Street foods of Calcutta, Food, Nutrition and Agriculture, FAO/ANA, 17/18, I.Chakravorty et al, pg 30-37 (1996).*

- Have sufficient lighting, properly placed to facilitate food preparations, handling, storage and serving.
- Have smoke hoods above cooking ranges to enable the removal of fuel and cooking gases, smoke and fumes from the centre into the open air.
- Have available ample supply of clean water with adequate facilities for its storage.
- Have appropriate drainage system for waste disposal.
- Include suitable racks or cases for multi-use containers or bottles with seals.

## **SECTION 6 MAINTENANCE AND SANITATION**

### *6.1 Maintenance*

26. The stalls and work surfaces should be kept in an adequate state of repair so as not to contaminate the food as a result of chipping surfaces, loose nails or breakages.

### *6.2 Water supply and quality*

27. Vendors should have access to clean water.
28. Quality of water should be monitored at three points regularly: at source, after collection in containers and at usage points<sup>5</sup>.
29. Vendors should be made aware of hygienic use and storage of water and ice.

### *6.3 Pest control*

30. Every vendor should at all times take appropriate measures to keep his/her stall free from pest to prevent contamination of the food.
31. Any contaminated food should be appropriately disposed of. Contamination of food with pest control materials such as pesticides and with fuel, detergents etc should be prevented.

### *6.4 Solid and liquid waste handling*

32. All solid waste should be properly disposed of in suitable containers that are secured with tight fitting lids or placed in waste bins. Collection of garbage by municipalities on a regular basis should be done.
33. Liquid waste like waste water should be drained immediately into drains or sewers and not allowed to accumulate.

## **SECTION 7 EQUIPMENT AND APPLIANCES**

34. All equipment, including containers, should be made of materials that do not transmit toxic substances, odour or taste, are not absorbent and will not result in food contamination, are resistant to corrosion and capable of withstanding repeated cleaning and disinfection.
35. All equipment, appliances and food cutting surfaces should be kept clean and should be cleaned before and after daily operations and immediately after being used to handle raw food. Only food safe cleaning agents, detergents etc. should be used.
36. The utensils, cutlery, crockery, equipment etc. should be made of food grade material, should be cleaned regularly and should be kept in good condition. Where feasible, disposable material should be used.

## **SECTION 8 FOOD PREPERATION, HANDLING, DISPLAY AND STORAGE**

### *8.1 Raw Materials/Ingredients and Packaging*

37. All raw materials and ingredients and packaging should conform to [applicable standards].
38. Ice should be made of potable water. Where appropriate, ice that does not come in direct contact with food may be made from clean water.
39. Packaged food ingredients should be used within expiry dates/ best before date.
40. Only permitted food additives should be used and in amount not exceeding the levels specified in the relevant regulations.
41. Food should be wrapped in clean and suitable packaging that can prevent contamination.

### 8.2 Preparation/ Cooking

42. Only safe raw food should be used in the preparation of street food.
43. Raw food should be thoroughly washed in clean water before cooking.
44. Frozen food should be thawed only once before cooking.
45. To avoid cross-contamination, raw and cooked food should be handled separately. For this, separate sets of knives and cutting boards should be used. If this is not possible, knives and cutting boards should be washed after every use.
46. Food should be sufficiently cooked or processed in a manner that renders it safe for consumption (time/temperature).
47. Cooked food should be re-heated only once before serving.
48. Cooking oil should regularly be checked for odour, taste and smoking colour, and if necessary, changed.
49. Where a food is to be served hot, it should be maintained at a temperature above 60°C<sup>7</sup>, keep hot food hot and cold food cold.
50. Cooked food should be kept in a hygienic place and if not consumed within 2 hours<sup>7</sup>, should be thoroughly heated before serving. However, unsold food beyond 4 hours<sup>7</sup> should be disposed of.

### 8.3 Handling and Storage

51. All food should be covered and protected against dust and dirt.
52. Clean and hygienic crockery, cutlery, utensils etc. should be used.
53. Disposable plates, covers, glasses, straws, paper towels, cups, spoons, gloves etc. should be used only once.
54. Ready to eat raw food should be handled most carefully, kept covered and displayed within a cabinet/ case.
55. Leftovers and unsold perishable food should be disposed of hygienically and not used.
56. Raw and cooked food should be handled and stored separately.
57. Seasoning and sauce should be stored at appropriate temperature.
58. Individual containers or packages should be used for serving of food.
59. Refrigerate promptly all cooked and perishable food, preferably below 5°C<sup>8</sup>.
60. Fuel, detergents, soap etc. should be stored in dedicated containers away from the food handling zone.
61. Transportation, storage of food should be carried out in a hygienic manner and should be consumed within specified shelf life.
62. After handling such items, hands should be thoroughly washed before handling food.

## SECTION 9 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

63. Every street food vendor, helper, cook or food handler should undergo basic food hygiene training. Viewed from a general perspective, most foodborne hazards may be prevented by thorough cooking, hot handling, rapid cooling, cold storage, avoidance of cross-contamination or combination of these. Training is to be conducted by the relevant authority or other institutions recognized or approved by the relevant authorities. Street Food Vendors should also be made aware of their responsibility to consumers.

60. The training material can be pictorial with less of texts. The key messages should be reinforced in short and crisp messages and also delivered in local language. The training material may be water proof so that they can refer to it/ keep it/hang it on their food vending cart/stall too. Information Education and Communication (IEC) material can be developed based on scientific knowledge, preferably developed by experts having past hands on experience, with help of competent authority, agency, Government or experienced Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

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<sup>7</sup> *Five keys to Safer Food Safety Manual -World Health Organization, 2006.*

<sup>8</sup> *INFOSAN Information Note No. 3/2010 - Safety of street-vended food, 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2012.*