

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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ALINORM 05/28/40

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Twenty-eighth Session

Rome, Italy, 4 – 9 July 2005

REPORT OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE NEAR EAST REGION

Amman, Jordan, 7 – 10 March 2005

Note: This report includes Codex Circular Letter CL 2005/15-NEA

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CX 3/25.2

CL 2005/15-NEA
March 2005

To: Codex Contact Points
Interested International Organizations

From: Secretary,
Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00100 Rome, Italy

Subject: **Distribution of the Report of the Third Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East Region (ALINORM 05/28/40)**

The report of the Third Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East Region will be considered by the 28th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, Italy, 4 – 9 July 2005).

MATTERS FOR ADOPTION BY THE 28TH SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Proposed Draft Regional Guidelines at Step 5/8 of the Elaboration Procedure

1. Proposed draft Regional Guidelines for National Codex Committee and Codex Contact Point (para. 66, Appendix V)..

Proposed Draft Regional Standards at Step 5 of the Elaboration Procedure

2. Proposed draft Regional Standard for Canned Humus with Tehena (Processed Chick Peas with Tehena),(para. 34, Appendix III);
3. Proposed draft Regional Standard for Canned Foul Medames (Processed Fava Beans), (para. 43, Appendix III);
4. Proposed draft Regional Standard for Tehena, advanced to Step 5 of the Codex Procedure (para. 53, Appendix III).

Governments and interested international organizations in observer status with Codex wishing to propose amendments or comments on the above documents should do so in writing in conformity with the *Uniform Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts* and *Guide to the Consideration of Standards at Step 8 of the Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standard including Consideration of any Statements relating to Economic Impact* (see Procedural Manual of the Codex Alimentarius). Comments should be forwarded to the Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy (fax +39 06 57054593; e-mail codex@fao.org), ***preferably by e-mail, not later than 10 May 2005.***

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Third Session of the Coordinating Committee for the Near East Region reached the following conclusions:

Matters for Adoption by the 28th Session of the Commission

The Coordinating Committee agreed to forward :

- the proposed draft Regional Guidelines for Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committee for adoption at Step 5/8, with the omission of Steps 6 and 7 (see paras 54-66 and Appendix V);
- the re-named proposed draft Regional Standard for Canned Humus with Tehena (Processed Chickpeas with Tehena) for adoption at Step 5 (see paras 23-34 and Appendix II);
- the re-named proposed draft Regional Standard for Canned Foul Medames (Processed Fava Beans) for adoption at Step 5 (see paras 35-43 and Appendix III);
- the proposed draft Regional Standard for Tehena for adoption at Step 5 (see paras 48-53 and Appendix IV).

Matters of Interest to the 28th Session of the Commission

The Coordinating Committee:

- Agreed to finalize the standards for Canned Humus with Tehena (Processed Chick Peas with Tehena), Canned Foul Medames (Processed Fava Beans) and Tehena as regional standards and to consider preparing proposals for new work on their conversion to international standards at a later date (see paras 20-22);
- Reaffirmed the central role of the Regional Coordinating Committees in facilitating intra-regional coordination between countries on the work of the Commission as well as the matters related food safety and food control at the regional and national level (see paras 10-12);
- Unanimously agreed to recommend to the 28th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission that Jordan be reappointed for a second term as Regional Coordinator for the Near East (see para. 156).

Matters of Interest to other Committees

Codex Committee on General Principles

The Coordinating Committee:

- Agreed that there was a continuous need for a Code of Ethics within Codex. The Code was particularly important for developing countries in the Region that were net food importers and that did not have appropriate food import inspection facilities to prevent the imports of sub-standard or unsafe foods (see paras 13-14).

Other Matters

The Coordinating Committee:

- Agreed that the proposed draft Regional Code of Practice for Street-Vended foods needed further work and decided to return it to Step 2 for redrafting by an electronic Working Group for circulation, comments and further consideration at Step 4 at its next Session (see paras 44-47);
- Recommended to include in the agenda of its next Session an item on the exchange of experiences in the Region in the development and application of mutual recognition and equivalence agreements/protocols (see para. 166);
- Expressed its gratitude to FAO and WHO for carrying out activities related to the provision of scientific advice and for their extensive capacity building activities to assist the countries of the region in improving their national food control systems (see paras 15-19 and 149-155);
- Exchanged updated information on food control and food safety issues in the Near East region and on consumers participation in Codex work (see paras 71-148);

- Agreed that the countries in the Region should be encouraged to promote the use of generic HACCP models when addressing the safety of traditional popular foods and requested FAO and WHO to provide assistance in their effort (see paras 157-161);
- Agreed to discuss a paper on the promotion and use of electronic certification in the Region at its next session (see para. 162);
- Agreed to bring to the attention of the Commission the view expressed by some delegation on the development of a Codex Standard for Parmesan Cheese (see paras 163-165).

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

ADI/MRL	Acceptable Daily Intake/Maximum Residue Limits
CAC/GL	Codex Alimentarius Commission / Guidelines
CCNEA	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East
CCFAC	Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants
CCFICS	Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems
CCPFV	Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables
CCRVDF	Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods
CODEX STAN	Codex Standard
CRD	Conference Room Document
EDTA	ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GMOs	Genetically Modified Organisms
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
INS	International Numbering System
JECFA	Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives
JEMRA	Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meetings on Microbiological Risk Assessment
JMPR	Joint FAO/WHO Meetings on Pesticides Residues
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
SLDBs	Small and/or Less Developed Businesses
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (WTO Agreement on the Application of)
STDF	Standards and Trade Development Facility
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade (WTO Agreement on the Application of)
WHO	World Health Organization
WHO/EMRO	World Health Organization/Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean
WTO	World Trade Organization

INTRODUCTION

1. The FAO/WHO (Codex) Regional Coordinating Committee for the Near East held its Third Session in Amman from 7 to 10 March 2005 at the kind invitation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The Session, chaired by Dr Yaseen Khayyat, Director-General of the Jordan Institution of Standards and Metrology (JISM), was attended by delegates, advisors and observers representing 14 Member Countries of the Region, one Member Country from outside the Region, one special Observer (Palestine) and 5 international organizations. A complete list of participants, including the Secretariat and representatives of FAO and WHO, is provided in Appendix I to this report.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

2. Dr Yaseen Khayyat, Chairperson of the Coordinating Committee, welcomed the delegates and highlighted the efforts made by the countries of the region to upgrade their food control system infrastructures and procedures in order to cope with the changing global trading environment. He thanked FAO and WHO for their support and technical assistance and for strengthening the participation of developing countries in the work of Codex. He highlighted the importance of Coordinating Committee meetings, which provided invaluable opportunities for countries to develop regional Codex standards, exchange views and experience and harmonize their procedures and systems with the best international practices.

3. In his opening remarks, Mr Hartwig de Haen, Assistant Director-General of FAO, welcomed the participants to the meeting on behalf of FAO and WHO. He noted that the elaboration of food standards required active cooperation between all interested stakeholders, including research institutions, consumers and industry. He stressed the need for the countries of the Near East region to actively participate in Codex work in order to ensure that Codex standards, guidelines and recommendations take into account their conditions.

4. His Excellency, Honourable Ahmad El Hindawi, Jordan Minister of Industry and Trade, officially opened the meeting and welcomed the delegates and participants on behalf of the Government of Jordan. He commended the on-going efforts made by FAO and WHO, both internationally and within the countries of the region, to promote food safety and quality and thus better protect the population of the Region. He referred to the initiatives currently underway in the Region, including in Jordan, to improve food safety and food control systems in response to the emerging challenges in food trade, and to overcome the obstacles of limited financial resources and expertise through the increased participation in Codex work and the strengthening of intra-regional cooperation in the area of food safety.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 1)¹

5. The Coordinating Committee noted that Agenda Item 9 "Other Business and Future Work" should come after Agenda Item 10 "Nomination of the Coordinator" in accordance with the established practice and agreed to reverse the order. It agreed to discuss under "Other Business and Future Work" (renumbered Agenda Item 10) the following matters, subject to the availability of time:

- Generic HACCP models for traditional popular foods in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (presented by the Delegation of Jordan);
- Application of electronic certification on imports to the Near East region (presented by the Delegation of Jordan);
- Proposal for the Elaboration of a Codex Standard for Parmesan Cheese (presented by the Delegation of Egypt).

6. In addition, the Coordinating Committee agreed to consider Conference Room Documents 2 "Risk Management Approach on Food Compliance - Model Strategy" prepared by the Delegation of Jordan under Agenda Item 6 "Information and Reports on the Food Control and Food Safety Issues including Codex Standards".

¹ CX/NEA 05/3/1

7. With these modifications, the Coordinating Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda as the Agenda for the Session.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 2)²

8. The Coordinating Committee was informed of key decisions and other outcomes of the Sessions of the Codex Alimentarius Commission that were held subsequent to the last Session of the Coordinating Committee, as summarized in the working document.

9. In particular, the Coordinating Committee discussed the following matters:

Review of Regional Coordinating Committees

10. The Committee reaffirmed the central role of the Regional Coordinating Committees in facilitating intra-regional coordination between countries on the work of the Commission as well as the matters related food safety and food control at the regional and national level. Several delegations stated that the Regional Coordinator and the Member elected on a geographical basis should both continue to serve as Members of the Executive Committee.

11. The Delegation of Jordan, supported by other delegations, pointed out that the coordination at the regional level needed to be strengthened so that the coordinated views of countries of the Region could be presented to the Commission and the Executive Committee. These delegations highlighted the need for all countries of the Region to examine the issues of interest being discussed in Codex in a timely manner and provide their documented technical and policy input to the Coordinator and the Member elected on a geographic basis.

12. Some countries suggested that the Coordinating Committees could meet every year to keep the pace with the annual sessions of the Commission. The Codex Secretariat pointed out that annual sessions of Coordinating Committees required careful consideration due to the busy schedule of Codex sessions as well as their financial implications on the Codex budget.

Code of Ethics for International Trade in Foods

13. Several delegations emphasized the fundamental role that the Code of Ethics could play in ensuring that all foods and feeds moving internationally comply with Codex standards. Several countries stated that it would be useful to include in the Code references to international instruments such as relevant WTO agreements.

14. The Coordinating Committee agreed that there was a continuous need for a Code of Ethics within Codex. The Code was particularly important for developing countries in the Region that were net food importers and that did not have appropriate food import inspection facilities to prevent the imports of sub-standard or unsafe foods. The Delegation of Jordan stated that all foods exported should meet the requirements of the exporting countries.

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO COMPLEMENTARY TO THE WORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (Agenda Item 3)³

15. The Representative of FAO, on behalf of FAO and WHO, introduced document CX/NEA 05/3/4 to the Committee and highlighted several issues of particular importance to the Region.

16. The Committee was informed of the ongoing activities of the parent organizations in the framework of the FAO/WHO Consultative Process on the Provision of Scientific Advice to Codex and Member Countries, including a workshop to explore new approaches to enhance the participation of experts and use of data from developing countries in the formulation of scientific advice at the international level.

² CX/NEA 05/3/2 and CX/NEA 05/3/3 (comments from Jordan submitted in response to CL 2004/46-NEA).

³ CX/NEA 05/3/4.

17. The Committee noted that a number of requests for scientific advice were still pending due to lack of sufficient financial resources and that the 55th Session of the Codex Executive Committee endorsed a set of criteria to be used by FAO and WHO for prioritizing these requests for scientific advice. It was noted that the final decision on the convening of expert bodies to provide scientific advice remains with the Directors-General of FAO and WHO.

18. The Representative of FAO drew the attention of the Committee to the outcome of recent meetings of the FAO/WHO expert bodies (Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives -JECFA, Joint FAO/WHO Meetings on Pesticides Residues - JMPR, Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meetings on Microbiological Risk Assessment JEMRA) and of a special expert consultation held on the subject of residues of veterinary drugs without ADI/MRL. It was noted that the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF) had developed a plan of work to address this issue in the Codex system. The Committee noted the request by the Delegation of Saudi Arabia to FAO and WHO and Codex to look into the microbiological specifications of food products, in particular total plate count. The Committee was also informed that the issue of acrylamide had been discussed at the 64th meeting of JECFA (February 2005) and the outcome of the JECFA evaluation would be presented at the 37th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants (CCFAC) in April 2005. The Representative of WHO informed that a message on the issue of acrylamide had recently been communicated to member countries through the INFOSAN network⁴.

19. The Committee expressed its gratitude to FAO and WHO for carrying out activities related to the provision of scientific advice, in direct support of Codex as well as its member countries. It was noted that FAO and WHO did not utilize funds from the private sector to convene expert consultations in order to maintain its scientific integrity and neutrality, but that discussions were underway to establish a trust fund where national governments could be invited to contribute to the extra-budgetary funding of these consultations. The importance of FAO and WHO scientifically evaluating issues and addressing concerns such as the food safety of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) before they become a problem was highlighted. The on-going work of FAO to provide information to the countries of the region, including in the area of good agricultural practices (GAP), was also highlighted.

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARDS AND RELATED TEXTS AT STEP 4 (Agenda Item 4)

20. The Coordinating Committee recalled the 49th Session of the Executive Committee had approved the proposal to elaborate the standards for Processed Chickpeas (*Humus*) and Processed Fava Beans (*Foul Medames*) on the understanding that the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV) would be consulted after the drafts had reached Step 5. It also noted that when the elaboration of a new Standard for Tehina was approved as new work for the Committee, the 26th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission did not give any specific indication with regard to the Committee responsible for the finalization of the text as a world-wide standard. The Committee further noted that due to the current backlog of the CCPFV, the finalization of the three standards as world-wide standards could take a number of years and such delay would impede the facilitation of the trade of these products within the Region.

21. In view of the importance of these three products for the Region, the Committee agreed to finalize these three standards as regional ones and to consider preparing proposals for new work on their conversion to international standards at a later date. The Committee agreed to inform the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Executive Committee of this decision.

22. In view of the few comments submitted on proposed draft standards for Processed Chickpeas (*Humus*), for Processed Fava Beans (*Foul Medames*) and for Tehena, circulated in November 2004, and of the need to progress the documents in the Step Elaboration Procedure, the Committee agreed to establish an in-session working group consisting of interested delegations, to revise the three documents in light of the written comments submitted by countries. The Committee proceeded with the consideration of the three proposed draft standards on the basis of the text revised by the Working Group, presented as CRD 7.

⁴ www.who.int/foodsafety/fs_management/infosan/en/.

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR PROCESSED CHICKPEAS (*HUMUS*) (Agenda Item 4a)⁵

23. The Coordinating Committee recalled that at its Second Session, the proposed draft Standard for Processed Chickpeas (*Humus*) was returned to Step 2 for further redrafting and circulation for comments at Step 3.

Specific Comments

24. The Committee considered the text section by section and in addition to some editorial changes and amendments to the Arabic translation, agreed to the following changes:

Title

25. The Title of the Standard was amended as "Regional Standard for Canned Humus with Tehena (Processed Chickpeas with Tehena) in order to better reflect the nature of the product covered by the standard.

Scope

26. The Committee amended the section to align the text with the standardized language used in other Codex standards for processed fruits and vegetables.

Description/Product Definition

27. To ensure consistency with the structure of other Codex standards for processed fruits and vegetables, the section was revised to include a sub-section "Product definition"; the provisions contained therein were subdivided in three points related to: the manufacturing process; the packing and the final heat processing.

Essential Composition and Quality Factors

28. Two sub-sections on Basic and Optional Ingredients (sub-sections 3.1 and 3.2, respectively) were added for consistency with the structure and language of other Codex Standards. The Committee agreed to list salt as an optional ingredient. Provisions related to the analysis of fatty acid were moved from 3.1.6 (re-numbered 3.3.6) to Section 10 "Methods of Analysis and Sampling".

Food Additives

29. The Committee noted that this Section should contain the names of the additives permitted and are considered to be technologically necessary and, where appropriate, the maximum amount permitted in the food. Therefore, it deleted under 4.1 "Acidifying Agent" the generic statement in relation to the use of this category of additives and added a specific provision for Citric Acid- (INS 330). The Committee put the entire sub-section 4.1 in square brackets for further consideration at its next session. Sub-section 4.2 "Natural flavouring" was deleted and the item "condiment and spices" was moved under the new sub-section 3.2 "Optional Ingredients".

Hygiene Requirements

30. The Committee agreed to add a reference to the Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods (CAC/GL 23-1979, Rev. 2-1993) in view of the low acidity of this type of products (normally not below a pH value of 4.6

31. The Committee noted the Codex Procedural Manual provided for the use of standardized text in this section of commodity standards and required that any additional provisions be endorsed by the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene. It further noted that all provisions should be based on sound science and that scientific studies and data would be necessary to justify the inclusion of specific microbiological criteria for foodborne pathogens or toxins in this commodity standard. Therefore, the Committee agreed to delete the provision requiring the absence of microorganisms and their toxins which cause illness. The Delegations of Egypt and Saudi Arabia expressed their reservation with regard to this decision.

⁵ CX/NEA 05/3/5; CX/NEA 05/3/5, Add. 1 (comments by Egypt), CRD 3 (comments by Lebanon) and CRD 5 (comments by Kuwait). CRD 7 (Report of the Working Group on proposed draft Standards for Canned Humus with Tehena, for Processed Fava Beans (*Foul Medames*) and for Tehena).

Labelling

32. The Committee agreed to align the section with the text used in other Codex standards for processed fruits and vegetables. It noted that the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev.1-1991) provided for the mandatory the labelling of the following information: name of the food; list of ingredients, net content and drained weight; name and address of manufacturer or importer; country of origin; date marking and storage instructions; and, instructions for use. The Committee noted that, while a specific provision for the name of the product should be indicated in the standard, all other provisions contained in the proposed draft were appropriately covered by the General Standard and agreed to their deletion.

Methods of Analysis and Sampling

33. The Committee noted that the section should include only those methods of analysis and sampling considered necessary and that methods for analysis should be included for the determination of all specific provisions (such as total acidity, etc) contained in the standard. It therefore agreed to put the entire section in square brackets for further consideration and revision at its next session.

STATUS OF THE PROPOSED DRAFT PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR PROCESSED CHICKPEAS (*HUMUS*)

34. The Committee agreed to forward the re-named "Proposed draft Regional Standard for Canned Humus with Tehena (Processed Chickpeas with Tehena) amended as above to the 28th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for preliminary adoption at Step 5 (see Appendix II).

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR PROCESSED FAVA BEANS (*FOUL MEDAMES*) (Agenda Item 4b)⁶

35. The Coordinating Committee recalled that at its Second Session, the proposed draft Standard for Processed Fava Beans (*Foul Medames*) was returned to Step 2 for further redrafting and circulation for comments at Step 3

General Comments

36. The Committee agreed to consider 'as consequential' all changes agreed upon during the discussion on the proposed draft Standard for Canned Humus with Tehena (Processed Chickpeas with Tehena) (see Agenda Item 4a) with regard to the standardized structure and language of sections on: Scope; Description; Essential Composition and Quality Factors; Hygiene Requirements; Labelling; and Methods of Analysis and Sampling.

37. The Committee considered the text section by section and, in addition to consequential changes, some editorial revisions and amendments to the Arabic translation, agreed to the following:

Specific Comments

Title

38. The Committee agreed with the proposal of the Working Group to revise the title of the Standard as "Canned Foul Medames (Processed Fava Beans)" and to change the name of the product accordingly throughout the text.

Description

39. The Committee amended sub-section "Squashable- " to refer to the state of dry pulses of *Vicia faba* cooked by heat to become ripe with the skin of some pulses crack open and part of the pulps melt in the liquid, for clarity.

⁶ CX/NEA 05/3/6 and comments submitted by Egypt (CX/NEA 05/3/6, Add. 1) and CX/NEA 05/3/6, Add. 1 (comments by Egypt), CRD 3 (comments by Lebanon) and CRD 5 (comments by Kuwait). CRD 7 (Report of the Working Group on proposed draft Standards for Canned Humus with Tehena, for Processed Fava beans (*Foul Medames*) and for Tehena).

40. In considering that a section on "Defects and Allowances" was no longer included in the proposed draft standard and that the definition of the concepts used in the section was not necessary, the Committee deleted sub-sections 2.13 "Husked skin", 2.14 "Broken pulses", 2.1.5 "Squashed pulses", 2.1.6 "Plant substances not of product origin" and 2.1.7 "Extraneous Matter".

Essential Composition and Quality Factors

41. The Committee agreed that provisions related to optional ingredients contained in "Quality Factors – Specific" related to vegetable oils, salt, tomato sauce, garlic and spice, teheha, be moved under the new sub-section 3.2 "Optional Ingredients". The Committee agreed that there was no need to indicate limits/GMP for the use of vegetable oil and Tehena in canned Foul Medames in view of their optional use. In sub-section 3.2.2 (renumbered 3.4.2) the percentage of drained weight was changed to 67% to take account of the 2% maximum limit for salt (as optional ingredient).

Food Additives

42. The Committee noted that since EDTAs had an assigned Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI), their maximum levels of use should be specified numerically. Therefore, it agreed to put in square brackets the maximum levels for further consideration at its next Session and requested delegations to consult with manufacturers and other relevant parties with a view to proposing specific values to be assigned to these additives.

STATUS OF THE PROPOSED DRAFT PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR PROCESSED FAVA BEANS (FOUL MEDAMES)

43. The Committee agreed to forward the re-named "Proposed draft Regional Standard for Canned Foul Medames (Processed Fava Beans) amended as above to the 28th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for preliminary adoption at Step 5 (see Appendix III).

PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STREET-VENDED FOODS (Agenda Item 4c)⁷

44. The Coordinating Committee recalled that at its Second Session, the Committee returned the proposed draft Regional Code of Practice for Street-Vended Foods to Step 2 for further drafting and circulation for comments at Step 3, with the understanding that Egypt in collaboration with Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and WHO would redraft the Code on the base of the discussion and comments made.

45. The Delegation of Egypt, in introducing the document, briefly described the structure of the proposed draft Code and underlined the social, economic and health repercussions of the Code; the social dimension of the sector that provides food to the moderate-income population of the region at an affordable price; and the urgent need to ensure the safety of street-vented food by implementing appropriate control measures.

46. The Coordinating Committee commended the Delegation of Egypt for the work done on this complex document. Comments expressed by the delegations that intervened underlined the specificity of street-food in the countries of the Region; the need to consider the traditions and customs; the importance of consumer awareness and education; and the need to focus on training of street-food vendors. The Committee also noted that due to the late submission of the document, countries had not sufficient time to examine the text in detail.

STATUS OF THE PROPOSED DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STREET VENDED FOOD

47. The Committee agreed that the proposed draft Code needed further work and decided to return it to Step 2. The Committee agreed that an electronic Working Group led by Egypt with the assistance of Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Sudan would redraft the Code on the basis of the above discussion and comments, with a view to the circulation of the revised draft for comments at Step 3 by early 2006 and further consideration at Step 4 at the next Session of the Committee.

⁷ CX/NEA 05/3/7 and CRD 6 (comments of United Arab Emirates).

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR TEHENA (Agenda Item 4d)⁸

48. The Coordinating Committee recalled that the 26th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission had approved the elaboration of a standard for Tehena as new work for the Committee.

General Comments

49. The Committee agreed to consider 'as consequential' all changes agreed upon during the discussion on the proposed draft Standard for Canned Humus with Tehena (Processed Chickpeas with Tehena) (see Agenda Item 4a) with regard to the standardized structure and language of sections on: Scope; Description; Essential Composition and Quality Factors; Hygiene Requirements; Labelling; and Methods of Analysis and Sampling.

50. The Committee considered the text section by section and, in addition to consequential changes mentioned above and some further editorial changes, agreed to the following:

Specific Comments**Essential Composition and Quality Factors**

51. Similarly to the decision taken for the proposed draft Standard for Processed Chickpeas (*Humus*) (Agenda Item 4a), the Committee agreed to move the provision related to the analysis of fatty acid from Section 3.2.3 to Section 9 "Methods of Analysis and Sampling".

Packaging and Storage

52. The Committee agreed to change the term "technological" to "organoleptic" as the latter was more appropriate.

STATUS OF THE PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR TEHENA

53. The Committee agreed to forward the proposed draft Regional Standard for Tehena as amended above to the 28th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for preliminary adoption at Step 5 (see Appendix IV).

PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL GUIDELINES FOR CODEX CONTACT POINTS AND NATIONAL CODEX COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 4e)⁹

54. The Committee recalled that the Second Session of the Committee had agreed to initiate new work on regional guidelines for Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees and that this proposal for new work had been approved by the 26th Session of the Commission. The Committee noted that the working document was circulated in February 2005.

55. The Delegation of Egypt introduced document CX/NEA 05/3/9 to the Committee and stated that the proposed draft guidelines had been prepared on the basis of a similar text already developed for the African region, by incorporating modifications to address the particular needs in the Near East region. The Committee agreed to examine the proposed draft guidelines section by section and made the following amendments, in addition to some editorial changes.

56. The Committee agreed to change the term 'functions' to 'tasks' in paragraph 2 and elsewhere throughout the document.

57. The Committee agreed to recognise that all communication from the member country to the Commission and vice-versa, as well as within national authorities, goes through the Codex Contact Point (paragraph 4).

⁸ CX/NEA 05/3/8 and CX/NEA 05/3/8, Add. 1 (comments by Egypt), CRD 3 (comments by Lebanon) and CRD 5 (comments by Kuwait). CRD 7 (Report of the Working Group on proposed draft Standards for Canned Humus with Tehena, for Processed Fava Beans (*Foul Medames*) and for Tehena).

⁹ CX/NEA 05/3/9.

58. In regard to the tasks of Codex Contact Points, the Committee agreed to delete the reference to the studying of the documents and changed the text accordingly since the task was not necessarily performed by the Codex Contact Point in all countries (paragraph 5(b)). The Committee further agreed to align the wording of the paragraph 5(e) to the corresponding phrase of the Core Functions of the Codex Contact Points set out in the Procedural Manual.

59. As regards the Requirements of Codex Contact Points (paragraph 10), the Committee agreed to amend the leading sentence to emphasize the indicative nature of the listed requirements and add a new second bullet point referring to 'code of conduct'.

60. The Committee agreed to refer to professional associations rather than to business associations (paragraph 12) and to combine the third and fourth items referring to food industry and traders into a single entry (paragraph 14) to make the text consistent.

61. In relation to the tasks of National Codex Committees, the Committee agreed to the proposal to modify the provision regarding the nomination of delegates to the effect that the National Codex Committee proposes relevant parties for nomination as delegates rather than nominating them directly. It was also agreed to place the third bullet point in the first position (paragraph 13).

62. While noting that the listing of the composition of a National Codex Committee is not exhaustive, the Committee agreed to replace the reference to consumer protection associations with the Ministry of Environment. A reference to laboratories was added to the bullet point referring to government analysis service. It was also agreed add to new bullet points on local and any other authorities related to food safety and food control (paragraph 14).

63. The Committee agreed that assuring the communication between all members of the National Codex Committee be added to the responsibilities of the person serving as the secretary of the National Codex Committee (paragraph 16).

64. The Committee agreed to add a reference to the objective of ensuring impartiality of the Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees and avoiding any conflict of interest in these bodies when requiring that no conditions be attached to external contributions (paragraph 23). With this change, the Committee felt that the second paragraph under the heading 'Funding' (paragraph 24) had become redundant and agreed to its deletion.

65. The Delegation of Lebanon expressed the view that the text as currently drafted did not specifically depict the working relations to be maintained between the Codex Contact Point and the National Codex Committee. The Committee noted that in view of the significant differences in government structure among countries the guidelines should not be overly prescriptive and that certain flexibility was necessary to allow countries to build a structure considered to be most effective by them, on a case-by-case basis.

STATUS OF THE PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL GUIDELINES FOR CODEX CONTACT POINTS AND NATIONAL CODEX COMMITTEES

66. The Committee noted that due to the late submission of the document, several countries did not have sufficient time to examine the text in detail. However, given the importance of the guidelines in the Region as well as the urgent need to develop national capacities to participate in Codex more effectively, the Committee agreed to forward the proposed draft guidelines to the 28th Session of the Commission for final adoption at Step 5 and 8 with the omission of Steps 6 and 7. The proposed draft guidelines as amended and agreed by the Committee are attached to the Report as Appendix V.

DISCUSSION PAPER ON MUTUAL RECOGNITION AGREEMENTS BETWEEN NEAR EAST COUNTRIES ON IMPORT /EXPORT ACCREDITATION (Agenda Item 5)¹⁰

67. The Delegation of Jordan, in introducing the discussion paper, explained that the paper described an overall conceptual framework of a harmonized and cooperative regional approach towards the application of mutual recognition agreement(s) on a bilateral and/or multilateral basis between countries of the Region. The Delegation informed the Committee that the purpose of the paper was to: increase consumer confidence in their food products being in compliance with both importing and exporting country requirements; facilitate food trade by providing enhanced means of assuring that exported products conform to importing country requirements; minimize duplication of activities (e.g. inspection and examination); enable proper and effective exchange of information and expertise.

68. Many delegations commended the Delegation of Jordan for the excellent document and provided information on bilateral agreements/protocols, including equivalence agreements, which had been established among countries of the Region. They highlighted the importance of accreditation of import/exports as well as the need for establishing mechanisms for food import and export control based on equivalence systems.

69. The Committee thanked the Delegation of Jordan for the discussion paper and noted that the document was presented for facilitating the discussion on this important subject for the Region. It further noted that countries should be encouraged to examine and implement Codex texts developed by the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) that were dealing with food imports and exports, mutual recognition agreements and assessment of equivalence. The importance to continue to participate in the ongoing CCFICS work was also stressed.

70. In concluding the discussion, the Committee recommended that, due to the importance of the matter and the need to promote intra-regional trade, an item on the exchange of experiences in the Region in the development and application of mutual recognition and equivalence agreements/protocols be included in the agenda of its next Session.

INFORMATION AND REPORT ON THE FOOD CONTROL AND FOOD SAFETY ISSUES INCLUDING CODEX STANDARDS (Agenda Item 6)¹¹

71. The Coordinating Committee was informed of the recent developments and current status of food control and food safety issues in countries in the region. The following is a summary of individual statements made.

Algeria***i. System for the control of food quality and safety***

72. The control of food quality and safety in Algeria is carried out under the authorities of several ministerial departments, such as the Ministry of Agriculture (control of products of animal origin, plant health, etc), Ministry of Industry and its Algerian Institute of Standardization, establishing quality and safety standards for foods, and the Ministry of Commerce.

73. Within this governmental structure, the Ministry of Commerce occupies a central position because the mission given to it in the fields of consumer protection, surveillance of fair commerce and practices and promotion of food quality. To carry out its work, the Ministry of Commerce has adopted the following structure. At the Central level the Directorate for the control of quality carries out investigations and quality control activities (products offered to consumers and products for import or export) and the Directorate for the quality and consumers implements and coordinates legislation and regulations related to the safety and quality of food products. At the regional local level, there are Regional and Departmental Directorates of Control. At the intermediate level the Algerian Centre for the Control of Quality and Packaging is responsible for ensuring appropriate operations of the laboratory networks for the quality control and prevention of fraudulent practices (19 laboratories covering all the territory, of which 4 have regional roles).

¹⁰ CX/NEA 05/3/10.

¹¹ Comments submitted in response to CL 2004/45-NEA from Jordan (CX/NEA 05/3/11).

ii. Legislation

74. The laws regarding the control of foods include: Law on the general rules of consumer protection (this Law is under revision to ensure consistency with the WTO rules); Law on veterinary public health; and Law on standardization.

iii. National Codex Alimentarius Committee

75. A draft decree on the creation of a National Codex Committee was adopted by the Government and is being published in the official gazette. The new Codex Contact Point will be operational before March 2005. In addition, work is ongoing to bring Algerian laws and regulations into conformity with the provisions of WTO SPS and TBT Agreements in view of the accession.

Bahrain

76. The Food Control Section within the Ministry of Health is responsible for all issues related to food safety and food quality. The main aim is to guarantee that foods imported and prepared in the Kingdom are safe, wholesome and of high quality. This is achieved through :

- Inspection of all imported and exported foods, mainly through physical inspection and laboratory analysis.
- The use of national technical regulations and Codex standards, for shipments of food. Unfit foods are rejected and are either destroyed or returned to the country of origin.
- Inspection of domestic foods through random visits to food places to ensure that hygiene requirements are met and to ensure that these practices are healthy.
- Active surveillance of foods with samples of different foods withdrawn to assess their quality and safety. Control measures are directed towards high risk foods. Such surveys helped to direct inspection efforts as various high risk foods have been identified and proper control measures applied.
- Inspection of all new food places to make sure they meet health requirements; accordingly, these places are licensed to sell foods.
- The recent approval by the Bahrain National Committee for Standards that the Codex Standards for contaminants, additives and labelling- are accepted in Bahrain as equivalent to the National Regulations and Standards.

Egypt

77. In Egypt, food safety and control activities are multi-sectoral; however, the main coordination role in that area is carried out by the Ministry of Health, Environment and Population (MOHEP).

78. The bodies involved in food control in Egypt are:

- i. The Ministry of Health and Population through: Food Safety and Control Directorate; Public Health Laboratories; and National Institute of Nutrition.
- ii. The Ministry of Agriculture through: Reference Laboratory for safety analysis of food of animal origin; Central Laboratory for pesticide residues and heavy metals in food and feed; and Egypt Biosafety System.
- iii. The Ministry of External Trade and Industry through: Egyptian Organization for Standardization; General Organization for Import and Export Control; and the Ministry of Supply.

79. As means of coordination, food control activities are coordinated through the Food Safety Supreme Committee (MOHEP) which also includes the Codex Committee and Food Specification Committee (EOS) and the Committee of Rejected Consignments (GOIEC).

Iraq

80. In Iraq food safety is primary concern of various agencies, including:
- i) Ministry of Planning (Central Organization for Standardization and Quality Control) where imported and domestic foods are analyzed in the laboratories according to Iraq standards. All imported food consignments are sampled by a health control representative which is drawn from customs warehouses; samples forms are distributed to three laboratories, including central standard laboratory, nutrition laboratory and radioactivity laboratory. The Central Standard Laboratory conducts analyses (sensory, chemical and microbial). In case of non-compliance, the authorities are notified. If the product is in compliance, the Health Control Authorities are notified, otherwise the importer may appeal for re-testing. If the product is in conformity with applicable standards, the health control authorities are notified as necessary and the importer is authorized to request another examination in the case of non-conformity. The draft standards are prepared by qualified and experience technical experts and are circulated for comments before being adopted formally. The Standard board has prepared: 331 standards; 122 draft standards; and 228 guidelines.
 - ii. Ministry of Health, responsible for control of imported and domestic food;
 - iii. Ministry of Environment, responsible for radioactivity residue analyses;
 - iv. Ministry of Agriculture, responsible for control of livestock and poultry importation and pesticide residue analyses;
 - v. Ministry of Trade, responsible for food items imported by the Government.

81. It is important also to note the role of the Food Consultative Committee, which oversees problems with pending food safety issues and takes the final decision, binding to all agencies which are represented on the board.

Jordan

82. Based on the understanding that successful food safety strategy requires the integration and co-ordination of food controls, the Jordan Food and Drug Administration (JFDA) was established under the JFDA Act, 2003, which came into effect on 16 April 2003. The basic legislation that regulates food control in Jordan is the Food Law no.79/2001. According to the Food Law, JFDA is the responsible official agency entrusted to regulate and supervise food control activities in Jordan.

Food Inspection System

83. Control of imported food in Jordan is carried out at the border inspection posts (BIPs) under direct control from the JFDA, while inland food inspection is carried out according to the JFDA standards and procedures by Health Administrations. Large municipalities (especially Greater Amman Municipality) also exercise food inspection activities within their jurisdiction. The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) is responsible for the safety of fresh produce. The Jordanian Institution for Standards and Metrology (JISM) is the designated standards setting body in Jordan and establishes standards of quality and safety for food products. The JFDA carry out directly imported food control activities in Aqaba port, in close cooperation and coordination with MOA, JISM and the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA). The ASEZA has full mandate on domestic market post audit and inspection in Aqaba based on a risk management model launched mid 2004.

Imported food control

84. Monitoring of imported food for compliance with food regulations is based on a risk-based system. The system places emphasis on those products determined to be high-risk food products in terms of human health. Based on this classification, levels of inspection and sampling operations for laboratory analysis have been identified.

Laboratory Support Services

85. The JFDA has three official food laboratories. The Municipality of Amman has also a well-equipped food laboratory for the support of food control activities within the Greater Amman area. The Food Laboratory of the Faculty of Agriculture in the University of Jordan is frequently used by JFDA as a reference laboratory for microbiological analysis. For sophisticated chemical/physical analysis of food, the laboratories of the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) are considered the most competent reference laboratories.

Kuwait

86. In Kuwait there are three governmental authorities which are concerned with food safety and control. Their responsibilities include the controlling and inspection of food products manufactured by local industries, controlling and inspecting imported raw and finished products to determine suitability and acceptability for human consumption and enforcing food standards which define quality and minimal acceptability for foods produced locally and imported.

87. These authorities are:

- i. Standards and Metrology Department (SMD): All the food standards are based on Codex. There are 556 standards, more than 25% of them are mandatory standards.
- ii. The Kuwait Municipality is responsible for insuring that the food produced or imported into the country and sold within the country is safe. It is also responsible for taking samples, inspecting factories, stores and market places for foodstuffs to ensure the satisfaction requirements.
- iii. The Ministry of Health runs tests on the samples which are taken by the Municipality in the bacteriology and chemical laboratories.

Lebanon

88. Access to safe and healthy food is a priority for countries and in Lebanon is increasingly becoming the top priority of relevant public institutions. Despite the efforts already made, controlling food quality and safety remains a crucial issue in the country. The problem of unsafe food is still growing at the national and international levels, especially in relation to international trade of food and agricultural products. The enforcement of the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) requires countries to strengthen their quality control and quarantine systems and also urges producers to take the required actions.

89. Lebanon is trying to modernize its food safety legislation and is strengthening public administrations concerned with quality control in the food chain continuum (from farm to table). Examples of these recent developments include: Laws on Animal Quarantine; Plant Quarantine; Food Safety; International Trade; Standards and Metrology; Consumer Protection; modernization of the institution responsible for standards and regulations; and the institution of the National Food Safety Day.

Libyan Arab Jamahirya

90. The food control system in Libya is based on the Health Law No. 106 and Standards Law No. 5 (adopted in 1990), which prohibit the distribution and selling of fraudulent and unsafe foods and of food not compliant with the standards issued by the National Centre for Standards and Codes.

91. The National Centre for Food and Drug Control was established as the specialized health authority, responsible for accepting or rejecting any important food consignments. The Centre the authority to monitor and inspect all food production, distribution and display outlets. In 2003, the Centre has inspected 9,305 imported food items. A total of 220 shipments were rejected and about 19,131 samples were analyzed. Additionally, the Centre has conducted a total of 2,310 field visits to the domestic market, including manufacturers, schools, wholesale and retail outlets, restaurants and slaughterhouses.

92. Recently, the General Public Committee of Libya established a National Codex Committee and nominated the National Centre for Standards as the focal contact point for Codex matters.

Qatar

93. Food control activities in Qatar are performed by the Ministry of Health and by the Municipalities. Because of the small area of the country, the Municipalities inspect foods sold in the retail market and in restaurants and send samples to the central laboratories for analysis.

94. The Central Laboratory conducts organoleptic, chemical, microbiological and radiological analyses on all imported foods (arriving by air, land or sea) as well as on samples taken from domestically produced foods by the Municipalities and reports back to the Ministry of Health. Foods are either accepted or rejected after evaluation of analytical results against published national, international, regional and GCC (Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Gulf) standards for sampling and testing. New national food standards are currently under preparation. Qatar cooperates with the GCC for sampling and testing of food products and cross-boundary transit of goods is based on a GCC approved / recognized shelf life / safety certificate.

95. Qatar is a member of the Gulf Standards and Metrology Organization and carefully follows any issue related to food and drugs. For example, in the case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), the Ministry of Health took the necessary actions to protect the health of consumers. Currently, the Ministry of Health is following up on issues related to Avian Influenza and is taking the necessary actions.

Saudi Arabia

96. There are several competent authorities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia responsible for food control and safety, namely: i) the Saudi Arabian Standards Organization (SASO) responsible for setting and issuing food standards; ii) the Ministry of Commerce and Industry responsible for examining and analyzing imported food products, excluding living animals and fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as some animal products which are examined and analyzed by the Ministry of Agriculture; iii) the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs responsible for controlling products in markets, restaurants, hotels, and local plants, in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; iv) ten control and analysis laboratories with eleven branches related to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry are responsible for examining and analyzing imported food products introduced into the Kingdom by land, air, and sea. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture has animal and agricultural quarantine facilities located in these customs access points and undertaking the same functions for imported food products; v) a Standing Committee has been established to monitor food safety in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including the Ministries of Commerce and Industry, Health, Municipal and Rural Affairs, Finance (Customs Department), and SASO; vi) A royal decree was issued recently stipulating the creation of a Drug and Food Administration to supervise all food and drug entities and work is underway for its establishment.

Sudan

97. Food safety in Sudan is the concern of all the governmental, private sector and consumer associations. The laws determine the responsibilities of each agency, their role and relations with the others.

98. The Sudanese Standards and Metrology Organization (SSMO) plays the leading role in standard setting, inspection and quality control of exported and imported goods in national ports and entry points. Beside its basic role in standards settings and their implementation, other relevant ministries have other responsibilities. The Ministry of Agriculture, in addition to the extension and pesticide responsibilities, is solely responsible for plant quarantine.

99. The Ministry of Health has responsibilities for manufactured and ready to eat foods as well as on health quarantine. The Ministry of Animal Wealth deals with animal health, products, veterinary quarantine and slaughterhouses. Other Ministries such as Foreign Trade, Industry and Customs have their roles. The main means of collaboration is through the national councils. The National Codex Committee is composed of the different relevant ministries and agencies in addition to the private sector, consumer associations and scientists. The Ministry of Health has the food consultative committee, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has the National Insecticide Council and the National Council, and the Ministry of Environment has the High Environment Council. In the SSMO, a national committee for food safety was established recently to deal with industrial establishment safety issues. In all these national committees and councils, all the related governmental and private sector agencies are represented.

Syrian Arab Republic

100. Food control in Syria is shared by various Ministries:

- i. The Ministry of Economy and Trade applies the anti fraud law of food control via various internal trade directorates and the laboratories present at governorates in Syria. The Ministry controls food on the domestic market and some imported and exported products.
- ii. The Ministry of Health is responsible for analysing food samples obtained from restaurants, schools and baby foods.
- iii. The Ministry of Agriculture applies the animal and agricultural quarantine by law.
- iv. The Ministry of Local Administration and Environment applies the control on popular restaurants and street foods.
- v. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for imported food through borders of entry by the responsible local customs directorates.
- vi. The Ministry of Industry is specialized in issuing food standards through the Standardization and Metrology Organization. The Ministry is also responsible for controlling food manufactured in industrial plants during processing through local industry departments and industrial research laboratories. The Standards Institute relies on published Codex codes and standards in preparing national standards. It is important to note that Standards and Metrology Institute oversees foods in terms of issuing conformity certificates upon request. Additionally, the Institute hosts the National Codex Committee which contributes in studying documents obtained from Codex.
- vii. The Atomic Energy Institution conducts food irradiation monitoring.
- viii. Syrian Universities analyse samples submitted by Customs Centres.
- ix. The Consumers Protection Association participates in studying food standard drafts. The participation is still considered weak.

Tunisia

101. The Law no. 117 of 1994 concerning consumer protection represents the framework for food control in Tunisia; the Law covers not only foods but all products. Accordingly, the National Board of Consumer Protection was established.

102. Agencies responsible on food control in Tunisia include: Ministry of Interior and Local Development (through Municipalities); Ministry of Trade and Traditional Industry (quality enhancement and violations); Ministry of Agriculture and Hydraulic Resources (veterinarian and plant origin field); Ministry of Health, Ministry of Industry and Energy and Small and Medium Size Enterprises and Direction of Hygiene and Environmental Protection.

103. The latter Ministry intervenes through several agencies, which include the National Standards and Industrial Property which sets national standards with the participation of various concerned parties including consumers represented by the Consumer Protection/Defence Organizations, and the Technical Centre for Food Industries, which contributes to supporting the national programme for capacity building of food industries, focusing on the application of HACCP in food production unites.

104. It is important to note that various ministries work through central and branch departments according to country's administrative organization. Additionally, the National Agency for Health and Environment Control carries out vertical coordination of control agencies responsible for product safety. This agency analyses and evaluates risks and reports to concerned specialized parties.

105. All departments involved in food control work with a coordinated logic through committees in which all concerned agencies are represented. As for official food standards, 80% of national standards comply with international standards and work is undergoing to revise the remaining standards to bring in harmony with international standards, where these exist.

106. Active laboratories include: Central Laboratory for Analysis & Research and its provincial branches; National Nutritional Institute; Pasteur Institute; various specialized laboratories attached to the Ministry of Agriculture (i.e. veterinary medicine institute, pesticide laboratories, laboratories of the High Institutes for agricultural science and research); higher education universities laboratories (i.e. national research and physiochemical analysis Institute, national scientific and technological research Institute); laboratories of various Boards such as the National Oil Board; the Laboratories of the International Centre for Environmental Technology; and in the near future, the laboratories of the Technical Centre for food Industries.

107. The agency responsible for laboratory accreditation is the National Accreditation Board, working under the supervision of the Ministry of Industry, Energy and SMEs, which has accredited various laboratories.

United Arab Emirates (UAE)

108. Provision of safe and healthy food for all communities of the UAE is a priority of the Government which publishes the statutes concerned and establishes standards institutions. The food control system and the laboratories are responsible for setting codes, standards and procedures and executing inspection on food throughout the food chain.

109. In the domain of standards, the Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology is the responsible agency through national technical committees with members of all agencies related to both the public and private sector. The Authority coordinates with the standards institution of the GCC for standards harmonization through the GCC.

110. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries is responsible for legislation and control of animal production. It supervises the import, handling and use of pesticides and has specialized pesticides laboratories and has recently established a new laboratory for pesticide residues in food.

111. Municipalities, through their health department and control food and laboratory departments and administrations, are responsible for executing the work and procedures for enforcing standards and food control systems on processed domestic and imported food products according to the statutes in place.

112. There are six food laboratories related to municipalities in the UAE. Three of these laboratories have been accredited according to ISO 17025 and equipped with high tech analytical equipment and biological techniques.

113. The National Food Safety Committee which is formulated within the General Secretariat of the UAE Municipalities has representatives from all concerned governmental agencies, including the Customs Authority. This Committee is responsible for supervising the enforcement of food safety systems and coordination between member agencies. Additionally, it puts forward draft policies and legislations concerning updating systems and food safety procedures.

114. Codex Alimentarius standards, codes and guidelines are the key reference to ensure that they are either adopted or considered when formulating national food safety standards and legislation. Currently, the Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology is the national focal point for Codex and is formulating the national Codex committee.

115. A new draft food law is currently being prepared. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries is the SPS focal point, whereas the Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology is the TBT focal point. In 2004, a new national system was put in place whereby the Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology is charged with conducting laboratories accreditation and providing conformity certification.

Palestine

116. Food safety in Palestine is currently a shared responsibility between the ministries: Health (MOH), Agriculture (MOA), National Economy (MONE) and Ministry of Local Authorities. MOH is responsible for issuing import and export approvals, investigates outbreaks and has a High Committee for Food Safety, from members of the different ministries involved.

117. Inspectors' qualifications are veterinary doctor, agriculture engineer, and public health sanitarian. Their main activities are inspection at food establishments, control of food handlers and collection of samples from different areas to submit to public health laboratories for analysis according to the standard and different regulations. Inspectors belonging to MONE conduct inspections on the market (prevention of adulteration and fraud) and take samples from imported food on the border. Inspectors belonging to MOA oversee primary production (animal health, fruit and vegetables). MOH laboratories, agriculture laboratories and branch of food laboratories conduct chemical and microbiological analysis.

118. There is no food law in Palestine; Egyptian and Jordanian Public Health Laws and other orders have been used in addition to the Palestinian Food Standards. Where food standards are absent, Egyptian, Jordanian and Codex Alimentarius texts are used.

RISK MANAGEMENT APPROACH OF FOOD COMPLIANCE - MODEL STRATEGY"¹²

119. The Delegation of Jordan presented Conference Room Document 2 which provided a brief account on developments of a new risk-based management system for conducting post audit and inspection activities on the food sector outlets in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone (ASEZ) since mid 2004.

120. The risk-based management system, recently developed and implemented by the ASEZ Authority, classified food activities according to their associated food hazards and was interrelated with their actual inspection scoring grades in order to determine the scheduled frequency of inspection visits. The system would be fully automated and linked to GIS electronic maps and traceable databank, utilizing mobile devices and radio-connection by October 2005.

121. The programme also included a food safety awareness campaign under coaching and guidance enforcement which targeted namely food managers and food handlers. Further awareness material was under preparation in more specialized fields of food safety, food borne diseases and nutrition and would focus on various audience segments (i.e. food handlers, housewives, school kids and adult consumers) in different forms such as quiz booklets, colour books, guide handouts, brochures and posters both in Arabic and English language. Actual data had shown that over 80% of the establishments had demonstrated evidence of improvements over a period of a year.

CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN FOOD STANDARDS SETTING AT THE CODEX AND NATIONAL LEVEL (Agenda Item 7)¹³

122. The following is a summary of the reports made by the delegations.

Algeria

123. Algeria will shortly establish its National Codex Alimentarius Committee (the decree to this effect is under publication in the official gazette). It is foreseen that representatives of consumer associations will become members of this Committee. Consumer associations are also invited to participate in the regulatory and standardizing work on food products (these associations participate in the work on national committees on standardization).

124. Furthermore, in the framework of the reform of legislation on consumer protection, it is foreseen that a National Council on Consumption, which essentially regroups consumer and professional associations.

125. This new organ will formulate views on: national policy in the area of quality and consumer protection; draft technical regulations; and draft standards.

¹² CRD 2

¹³ CX/NEA 05/3/12 (Comments submitted in response to CL 2004/45-NEA from Jordan).

Bahrain

126. The Kingdom of Bahrain stresses the crucial importance of involving consumers and representatives of consumer associations in all food safety matters. As such, Bahrain involved the Consumer Protection Association which represents consumers, as well as traders and industrialists, in food safety matters. Furthermore, the Food Control Division holds regular seminars, workshops, and conferences on food safety with the participation of various social categories, in order to enable them to participate in taking sound health decisions.

127. More recently, a draft proposed standard for Bahraini sweets was elaborated in consultation with the following parties: the Consumer Protection Association, sweets manufacturers, the Consumer Protection Administration, the Standards Administration within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the Public Health Laboratory. Also, a Consumer Protection Law was drafted and it is currently under study in the Parliament.

Egypt

128. Codex has emphasized consumer protection as one of its main objectives. Since the 1990s Codex has recommended continuing and strengthening consumer participation in food related decision making at national and international levels. The National Codex Committee, with its subsidiary Committees, has given top priority to the protection and interests of consumers in the formulation of food standards. Consumer groups were granted an observer status in 1999 and the Commission continued to involve consumer interests in its work.

129. There are in Egypt almost 66 consumer protection associations. They are represented in the National Codex Committee and in the various technical committees established by the Egyptian Organization for Standardization (ESO). A Consumer Protection Unit was created within ESO to undertake consumer-related activities, in addition to issuing a newsletter on a regular basis. There are also consumer protection associations related to the Ministry of Supply and Internal Commerce.

Iraq

130. There is no actual participation of consumers in preparation of the standards in Iraq; however, there are NGOs present through associations (eg. Iraqi Association for Nutrition and Food Safety, the Market Research and Consumer Protection Centre, the Ministry of Higher Education, the University of Baghdad and the Consumer Protection Association) which are still in their early stages of existence.

Jordan

131. The Jordan National Society for Consumer Protection (NSCP) was established in 1989. Since 1995, NSCP represents consumers in the National Codex Committee (NCC), in the administrative council of the Jordan Institute for Standards and metrology (JISM) and in all technical committees concerned with food standards since 1995.

132. The NSCP hosts the Arab Consumers Federation (AFC), which was established in 1998. Eleven consumer societies from 11 Arab countries are full members in AFC and other 4 Arab countries are affiliate members. The NSCP has full membership in Consumers International (CI). The NSCP is very active in consumer education in general and specifically in food safety issues through different means of mass media (TV, radio, daily and weekly newspapers). The NSCP publishes a monthly newsletter and a quarterly magazine and has a website to inform and educate the consumer.

Kuwait

133. Consumer protection has been established recently. Otherwise, consumers participation in food standards setting at national level in the following way: determine the needs to set standards by annual survey; draft of standards specification shall be prepared by technical panels constituted of representatives representing the producers, merchants, consumers, relevant authorities and those of having experience; draft being prepared for distribution to competent authorities and individuals for remarks thereon.

Lebanon

134. Consumer participation in food standards is very weak, but it is expected that consumers will take an important role in the National Codex Committee, which is being constituted.

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

135. Consumers' protection associations have only been recently established in Libya, the first being established in February 2005. For this reason, consumers have not been previously involved in the preparation of national standards. However, major sectors of the community actively participate in the preparation of national standards, e.g.: scientific research institutions, academia, industry, marketing, legislation, depending on the nature of standards. The newly established consumer association will participate in this activity.

136. Consumer protection associations are members of the National Codex Committee and of all its technical committees. Recently, a new decision has been published to establish a high Council for Consumer Protection. Despite its governmental identity, it has a wide multi-sectoral representation and focuses on the protection of consumers.

Qatar

137. Given that Qatar, as all other Gulf States, uses Gulf standards, the Gulf Standards Organization involves in any approval process all stakeholders in the Gulf States among traders, industrialists, and consumers and seeks their views in this regard. Also, the State of Qatar is in the process of providing the Gulf Standards Organization with the citizens' views based on the received complaints concerning foodstuff in order for the Organization to take them into account.

138. There are specialized units within the Chambers of Commerce in the Ministry of Health responsible for dealing with the citizens' complaints and submitting them as necessary to the competent committees within the Ministry of Health and the Gulf Standards Organization for consideration. In addition, complaints in the press regarding any foodstuff or pharmaceuticals are duly taken into account when considering and setting standards.

Saudi Arabia

139. Consumer participation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is facilitated by the following means: i) Industrial chambers of commerce in Saudi Arabia, through consumer protection committees present in most of them. The industrial chambers of commerce participate along with the technical and general committees and the Saudi Arabian Standards Organization (SASO) board of directors in the food standards setting process, therefore enabling consumer participation; ii) Most government entities have directorates responsible for consumer protection which participate in the food standards setting process through SASO; iii) A project is underway to establish a national consumer protection commission.

Sudan

140. Consumers participation is vital in ensuring food safety throughout the food chain, especially in Sudan where most food ingredients are consumed or exported in raw form. Consumers are organized in a consumer protection association that was established and officially registered in Khartoum in 1997. The Association now has more than six branches in the capital and other major Sudanese cities. This association is one of the nine Arab consumer associations that established the Arab Federation for Consumers in 1998.

141. This association actively participates in many standards committees, along with other government and private sector representatives. They also participate in public awareness activities through seminars, lectures or any other media forum. It has a regular page in one of the leading newspapers. The association is represented in the following standards committees: Milk and milk products; Sugar and sugar products; Meat and meat products; Packing and packing materials; Environment; National Codex Committee; National safe food; Mycotoxins; Chemicals industries; Medicinal and aromatic herbs industries; Cereals and cereals products; Industrial and investment activities; Gum; Food additives and contaminants. They are also closely linked with a jurisdiction unit established for consumers protection cases.

Syrian Arab Republic

142. The Consumer Protection Association was created recently in the Syrian Arab Republic, in Damascus more precisely at the beginning of 2002, while its Statutes were issued in 2003. It deals mainly at present with publishing comments and information in local newspapers on issues of interest to consumers, in addition to raising awareness through the various media. The Association is a member of the National Codex Committee. Also, a representative of the Association has been designated to the Standing Standards Committee. Therefore, its activities remain limited and needs to be strengthened and promoted. In the meantime, some governmental departments play the consumer protection role by controlling goods and products in the Syrian markets.

Tunisia

143. Consumers in Tunisia are represented through the Consumers Protection Defence Organization, which is an independent organization with various branches in the country and intervenes directly in food control by obtaining samples and analyzing them, then submitting files which prove technical and economic violations to concerned official agencies. The Organization has, among its members, specialized volunteers in various sectors such as physicians, pharmacists, engineers, veterinarians, etc. The Organization with its branches plays an important role in consumer awareness and guidance through audio visual and written mass media. The Organization is active officially with technical committees in preparing standards and is a member of the Tunisian Codex Committee by a Republican decision and in all its technical Codex National Committees.

Palestine

144. Consumer Protection Associations are widely spread across the West Bank provinces, while only one is active in the Gaza Strip. This in addition to the Consumer Protection Directorate in the Ministry of National Economy and the Food Industry Board. These associations work in close collaboration with the Food Control Directorate in the Ministry of Health and the Consumer Protection Directorate in the Ministry of National Economy, as well as the Standards Organization, in order to inform the official authorities about any smuggling in the Palestinian markets or inedible products.

145. These associations are currently trying to unite all Palestinian associations. The official public authorities encourage these associations to focus on the grassroots level only, with no interference or participation from the public authorities in their management so as to complement or compete with their work. Furthermore, these associations undertake cultural activities for housewives and restaurant workers, in addition to unofficial market control. Finally, they publish bulletins and cultural newsletters related to food safety.

Consumers International

146. Consumer participation in Codex has long been accepted as a critical part of the decision-making process, as consumer protection lies at the heart of the Codex mission. Consumer International (CI), as the largest global coalition of consumer organisations, has tracked progress in improving opportunities for consumers in national codex consultative process since 1993 through a survey of CI members.

147. The results of the 2004 survey have shown the following: CI participates in many Codex meetings and has contributed to many important debates on behalf of consumers. CI's participation is welcomed and valued by many government delegations. Results of the 2004 survey note that consumer participation in Codex remains strong. A total of 32 organisations, more than half of those responding to the survey, continue to attend Codex meetings as members of NGO delegations and/or governments. Compared to 1999, the 2004 survey suggests more respondents are aware of the work of national Codex contact points, and invitations to participate in national consultations are more common. Moreover, a greater proportion of those who participate (54%) report success in influencing government positions than in previous years.

148. However, nearly half of those participating do not report success and the findings overall show that the consultation process still needs improvements. The survey suggests that simply inviting, and even increasing, consumer input to Codex does not necessarily translate into real opportunities to influence government and Codex decisions. Many consumer organisations report that governments fail to present their position in advance or provide feedback on the decisions taken, such that meaningful dialogue can take place. In addition, many consumer groups report a troubling trend, that Codex consultations are increasingly influenced more by industry than consumer representatives.

INFORMATION ON CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION (Agenda Item 8)¹⁴

149. The Representative of FAO presented the document and informed the Committee about the recent and ongoing global and regional activities undertaken by FAO and WHO of interest to the countries of the Region. These, among others, included the Second Global Forum of Food Safety Regulators (GF-2) held in October 2004 in Bangkok, Thailand; the upcoming electronic forum to consider the possible convening of a Third Global Forum; and the project for the *Enhancement of Coffee Quality through Prevention of Mould Formation* which aims to reduce mycotoxin contamination in coffee.

150. The Representative indicated that FAO, WHO, OIE, WTO, and the World Bank had established a Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) in 2003 to coordinate the capacity building efforts of these organizations in the areas of food safety, plant, and animal health and to provide a funding mechanism for countries and stakeholders in meeting the obligations of the WTO SPS Agreement. Countries were encouraged to obtain information on how to apply for the Fund from www.standardsfacility.org

151. The Committee was also informed about a number of tools available in Arabic which contain guidance and technical materials to be used by countries in capacity building. They included the FAO/WHO publication “*Assuring Food Safety and Quality - Guidelines for Strengthening National Food Control Systems*” to enable national authorities to improve their food control systems and “*Food Quality and Safety Systems - An FAO Training Manual on Food Hygiene and the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System*”. It was noted that a Training Manual on Improving Participation in the Work of Codex and another manual on Food Safety Risk Analysis would be finalized very soon. The Committee also noted FAO's ongoing regional and national projects and activities in relation to capacity building.

152. The Representative of WHO highlighted the international and regional initiatives currently underway by WHO, as well as the tools and activities under development. The Representative noted that WHO/EMRO has food safety programmes in all the Member States of the Eastern Mediterranean region and that the national Ministries of Health of the Region review these programmes with WHO every two years, and prioritize the food safety activities in which they would like to receive WHO support. The Committee noted that the WHO regional plan of action for food safety was under implementation and that many countries had already commenced the development of food safety country profiles and that some countries of the Region had established national food safety committees. The Representative listed several inter-country meetings organized to strengthen the capacity of the countries of the Region, including on the subjects of a regional food safety network and food borne disease surveillance. The Representative also noted that guidelines for developing food legislation in the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region were currently being finalized by WHO.

153. The Committee called for increased synergy and coordination among the activities and projects undertaken by various organizations and donors in the countries of the Region.

154. In response to a query regarding FAO's activities in improving the quality and safety of fresh fruits and vegetables in some countries of Latin America, the FAO Representative informed the Committee that the training materials prepared through this project were available in English from FAO's website and that FAO was in the process of seeking funding to implement a similar programme in the countries of the Near East region.

155. The Committee expressed its appreciation to FAO and WHO for their extensive capacity building activities to assist the countries of the region in improving their national food control systems.

¹⁴ CX/NEA 05/3/13.

NOMINATION OF THE COORDINATOR (Agenda Item 9)¹⁵

156. On the proposal of the Delegation of Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Coordinating Committee unanimously agreed to recommend to the 28th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission that Jordan be reappointed for a second term as Regional Coordinator for the Near East. The Delegation of Jordan thanked all the countries for their support and accepted the nomination.

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE WORK (Agenda Item 10)***Generic HACCP Models for Traditional Popular Foods in the Eastern Mediterranean Region¹⁶***

157. The Delegation of Jordan, referring to the Conference Room Document 8 prepared in collaboration with WHO/EMRO, emphasized the importance of promoting the use of HACCP based approach recommended by Codex in the manufacturing, distribution and use of some popular foods in many Arab countries. The Delegation stated that generic HACCP models could be applied to ensure the safety of these foods, some of which were produced in small businesses or even in households.

158. The Representative of FAO informed the Committee that an FAO/WHO Technical Meeting had been convened in Rome in December 2004 to review a draft document "Guidance to governments on the application of HACCP in small and/or less developed businesses (SLDBs)". The guidance document, on completion of the review process, would be made widely available in the Region.

159. The Committee agreed that the present Conference Document provided a good starting point to raise awareness on this matter in the Region and encouraged Jordan and other countries to distribute and use the document to promote the application of HACCP models in SLDBs.

160. The WHO Representative informed the Committee that WHO EMRO (Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean) will print "Generic HACCP Models for Traditional Popular Foods in the Eastern Mediterranean Region" and distribute it to member states of the Region.

161. The Committee expressed the appreciation to the ongoing work of FAO and WHO in this area. The Committee agreed that the countries in the Region should be encouraged to promote the use of generic HACCP models when addressing the safety of traditional popular foods and requested FAO and WHO to provide assistance in their effort.

Electronic certification

162. The Delegation of Jordan proposed that the use of electronic certification should be promoted in the Region, recognising the work being made by the Codex Committee on Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) in this area. The Delegation offered to prepare a discussion paper in this regard to explore concrete means to facilitate the implementation of electronic certification at the regional level. The Committee accepted this offer and agreed to discuss this matter at its next session.

Codex Standard for Parmesan cheese¹⁷

163. The Delegation of Egypt introduced the Conference Room Document 4 and expressed the view that the Commission should initiate new work on a Codex standard on Parmesan cheese, without further delay. The Delegation pointed out the name of Parmesan cheese was considered as generic in many countries of the world and that there was no impediment, legal or else, for Codex to develop an international standard for this product.

164. Several delegations which spoke supported the view of the Delegation of Egypt. The need for Codex standards for cheese(s) produced in the region was also mentioned. The Committee agreed to bring to the attention of the Commission the views expressed during the present session by these delegations.

¹⁵ CX/NEA 05/3/14 and Corrigendum to the English and French version.

¹⁶ CRD 8 (submission from Jordan).

¹⁷ CRD 4 (submission from Egypt)

165. The Committee noted that the matter had been discussed at the 27th Session of the Commission in 2004. Since there had been no consensus on whether the Commission should initiate new work in this area, the matter would be discussed again at the 28th Session of the Commission in July 2005.

Future Work

166. In regard to its future work, the Coordinating Committee noted that it would discuss at its next Session the following matters, in addition to any specific items to be referred to Regional Coordinating Committees by the Commission or the Executive Committee:

- Draft Regional Standards for Canned Humus with Tehena (Processed Chickpeas with Tehena), for Canned Processed Foul Medames (Processed Fava Beans) and for Tehena;
- Proposed Draft Regional Code of Practice for Street-Vended Food;
- Discussion paper on the promotion of electronic certification application on food imports in the Region;
- Information exchange on the food control and food safety issues, including the use of Codex standards and of mutual recognition/equivalence agreements, and on consumer participation in food standards setting in the Region;
- Information on capacity building activities by FAO and WHO in the Region.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION (Agenda Item 11)

167. The Coordinating Committee was informed that the 4th Session of the Committee was tentatively scheduled to be held from 25 February – 1 March 2007. The final dates and venue would be determined by the Codex Secretariat in consultation with the Host Country, subject to approval by the 28th Session of the Commission and confirmation at a later stage.

SUMMARY STATUS OF WORK

Subject matter	Step	Action by	Document Reference in ALINORM 05/28/40
Proposed Draft Regional Guidelines for Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees	Step 5/8	28 th CAC	para. 66 and Appendix V
Proposed Draft Regional Standard for Canned Humus with Tehena (Processed Chickpeas with Tehena)	Step 5	Governments 28 th CAC Governments 4 th CCNEA	para. 34 and Appendix II
Proposed Draft Regional Standard for Canned Foul Medames (Processed Fava Beans)	Step 5	Governments 28 th CAC Governments 4 th CCNEA	para. 43 and Appendix III
Proposed Draft Regional Standard for Tehena	Step 5	Governments 28 th CAC Governments 4 th CCNEA	para. 53 and Appendix IV
Proposed Draft Regional Code of Practice for Street-Vended Foods	Step 2	Working Group led by Egypt 4 th CCNEA	para. 47
Nomination of Regional Coordinator	-	28 th CAC	para. 156
Discussion Paper on the Promotion of Electronic Certification Application on Food Imports in the Region	-	Jordan 4 th CCNEA	para. 162
Information and reports on Food Control and Food Safety Issues, including the Use of Codex Standards and of Mutual Recognition / Equivalence Agreements	-	Governments 4 th CCNEA	para. 166
Information on Consumer Participation in Food Standards Setting in the Region	-	Governments 4 th CCNEA	para. 166
Information on Capacity Building Activities by FAO and WHO in the Region	-	FAO/WHO 4 th CCNEA	para. 166

APPENDIX I

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APPENDIX II**PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL STANDARD FOR CANNED HUMUS WITH TEHENA
(PROCESSED CHICKPEAS WITH TEHENA)****at Step 5 of the Elaboration Procedure****1. SCOPE**

This Standard applies to Canned Humus with tehena (processed chickpeas with tehena) as defined in Section 2 below and offered for direct consumption.

2. DESCRIPTION**2.1 PRODUCT DEFINITION**

Canned Humus with tehena (chickpeas with tehena) is the product:

- (a) prepared from pure, dry, washed, boiled and mashed chickpeas with tehena added with or without salt;
- (b) packed in a well-sealed container;
- (c) processed by heat in an appropriate manner, before or after being hermetically sealed in a container, so as to prevent spoilage.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS**3.1 BASIC INGREDIENTS**

Chickpeas as defined in Section 2 and tehena.

3.2 OPTIONAL INGREDIENTS

- (a) Salt
- (b) Condiments and spices

3.3 QUALITY FACTORS – GENERAL

The end product shall meet the following general requirements:

- 3.3.1 All the ingredients, including food additives, shall comply with their own standards, and be safe for human consumption.
- 3.3.2 The product shall be free from abnormal, foreign matters and insects and parts of them.
- 3.3.3 The product shall be free from added filling material, i.e. flour, starch, etc.
- 3.3.4 The mixture shall be pasty, homogeneous and free from agglomeration.
- 3.3.5 The product shall be natural in flavor, colour and odour.
- 3.3.6 The product shall not contain any fat content except that of tehena origin

3.4 QUALITY FACTORS – SPECIFIC

The following requirements apply to the product when prepared ready- for consumption in accordance with the instructions for use:

- 3.4.1 The minimum content of tehena is 8 % (m/m).
- 3.4.2 The maximum content of salt is 2 % (m/m).
- 3.4.3 The minimum content of total solids is 27 % (m/m).
- 3.4.4 The maximum content of total acidity is 1 % (m/m), as citric acid.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

Only those food additives listed below may be used and only within the limits specified.

[4.1 ACIDIFYING AGENT

INS No	FOOD ADDITIVE	MAXIMUM LEVEL
330	Citric acid	Max. acidity 1% as citric acid

]

4.2

INS No	Food Additive	Maximum Level
500i	Sodium carbonate	GMP
501i	Potassium carbonate	GMP

5. CONTAMINANTS

The product covered by this Standard shall comply with the maximum limits for contaminants and the maximum residues limits for pesticides established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

6. Hygiene REQUIREMENTS

6.1 It is recommended that the products covered by the provisions of this standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate Sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev.4-2003), Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods (CAC/RCP 23-1979, Rev. 2-1993) and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

6.2 The products 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).

7. PACKAGING AND STORAGE

7.1 The product shall be packed in containers, which will safeguard the hygienic, nutritional and organoleptic quality of the end product.

7.2 The product shall be stored in a well-ventilated store, protected against direct heat, moisture and contamination.

7.3 The used metal container shall be coated with food grade lacquer, suitable for the product, with no mechanical defect and rust free.

7.4 The end product container shall have no swelling, the inner pressure shall be less than atmospheric pressure at 20°C .

8. WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

8.1 FILL OF THE CONTAINER

8.1.1 Minimum Fill

The container shall be well filled with Humus with tehená and the product shall occupy not less than 90% of the water capacity of the container. The water capacity of the container is the volume of distilled water at 20°C which the sealed container will hold when completely filled.

9. LABELLING

The product shall be labelled in accordance with the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev.1-1991; *Codex Alimentarius*, Volume 1A).

9.1 NAME OF FOOD

The name of the food shall be “Canned humus with Tehena (processed chickpeas with tehená)”.

[10. METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING**10.1 METHODS OF SAMPLING**

Sampling shall be in accordance with Codex General Guideline on Sampling (adopted by the 27th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission).

10.2 METHOD OF ANALYSIS**10.2.1 Method of Sample Preparation**

According to the AOAC Method 945.68.

10.2.2 Salt Content

According to the AOAC Method 939.10.

10.2.3 Total acidity

According to the AOAC Method 925.53.

10.2.4 Fat Content

According to the AOAC Method 945.16.

The Gas Chromatography method to verify the tehen origin of fat content.

10.2.5 Moisture Content

According to the AOAC Method 926.12.]

APPENDIX III**DRAFT REGIONAL STANDARD FOR CANNED FOUL MEDAMES
(PROCESSED FAVA BEANS)****At Step 5 of the Elaboration Procedure****1. SCOPE**

This Standard applies to Canned Foul Medames (Processed Fava Beans) as defined in Section 2 below and offered for direct consumption.

2. DESCRIPTION**2.1 PRODUCT DEFINITION**

Canned Foul Medames is the product:

- (a) prepared through several steps (soaking, heat treatment, canning ...etc) which make the dry pulses of *Vicia faba* soft and easily crushed (squashable), with or without the addition of one or more of the optional ingredients mentioned in Section 3.2;
- (b) packed in a well-sealed container;
- (c) processed by heat in an appropriate manner, before or after being hermetically sealed in a container so as to prevent spoilage.

2.1.1 Squashable

The state of dry pulses of *Vicia faba* cooked by heat to become ripe with the skin of some pulses ,crack open and part of the pulps melt in the liquid.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS**3.1 BASIC INGREDIENTS**

Pulses of *Vicia faba* as defined in Section 2.

3.2 OPTIONAL INGREDIENTS

The following optional ingredients may be used:

- 3.2.1 Vegetable oil.
- 3.2.2 Salt in a maximum limit of 2%.
- 3.2.3 Tomato sauce, garlic and spices in a maximum limit of 2% single and of 4% when mixed.
- 3.2.4 Tehena

3.3 QUALITY FACTORS – GENERAL

The end product shall meet the following general requirements:

- 3.3.1 All the ingredients, including food additives, shall comply with their own standards, and be safe for human consumption.
- 3.3.2 The product shall be free from abnormal flavour, odour, colour and have the characteristics typical of the final product.
- 3.3.3 Product shall be free from insects and any foreign matter.

3.4 QUALITY FACTORS – SPECIFIC

The following requirements apply to the product when prepared ready- for consumption in accordance with the instructions for use.

- 3.4.1 Drained weight shall be not less than 65% of the net weight, without the added optional ingredients.
- 3.4.2 Drained weight shall be not less than 67% of the net weight, with the added optional ingredients.

3.4.3 The product shall not contain any preservative or colouring substance.

3.2.4 Foul pulses shall match in colour, size and appearance. The texture of the product shall be distinguishable and tender.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

Only those food additives listed below may be used and only within the limits specified.

4.1 ACIDITY REGULATORS

INS NO	FOOD ADDITIVE	MAXIMUM LEVEL
330	Citric acid	Max. acidity 1% as citric acid

4.2 ANTIOXIDANTS, PRESERVATIVES

INS NO	FOOD ADDITIVE	MAXIMUM LEVEL
385	Calcium Disodium Ethylene Diamine Tetra Acetate	[GMP]
386	Disodium Ethylene Diamine Tetra Acetate	[GMP]

5. CONTAMINANTS

The product covered by this Standard shall comply with the maximum limits for contaminants and the maximum residues limits for pesticides established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

6. HYGIENE REQUIREMENTS

6.1 It is recommended that the products covered by the provisions of this standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate Sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003), Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods (CAC/RCP 23-1979, Rev.2-1993) and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

6.2 The products 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).

7. PACKAGING AND STORAGE

7.1 The product shall be packed in containers, which will safeguard the hygienic, nutritional and technological quality of the end product.

7.2 The product shall be stored in a well-ventilated store, protected against direct heat, moisture and contamination.

7.3 The used metal container shall be coated with food grade lacquer, suitable for the product, with no mechanical defect and rust free.

7.4 The end product container shall have no swelling, the inner pressure shall be less than atmospheric pressure at 20° C.

8. WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

8.1 FILL OF THE CONTAINER

8.1.1 Minimum Fill

The container shall be well filled with fowl medames and the product shall occupy not less than 90% of the water capacity. The water capacity of the container is the volume of distilled water at 20°C which the sealed container will hold when completely filled.

9. LABELLING

The product shall be labelled in accordance with the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev.1-1991):

9.1 NAME OF THE FOOD

The name of the food shall be “Canned Foul Medames (processed fava beans)”.

10. METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

10.1 METHODS OF SAMPLING

Sampling shall be in accordance with Codex General Guideline on Sampling (adopted by the 27th Session of CAC).

[10.2 METHOD OF ANALYSIS

10.2.1 Method of Sample Preparation

According to the AOAC Method 945.68.

10.2.2 Salt Content

According to the AOAC Method 939. 10.

10.2.3 Total Acidity

According to the AOAC Method 925.53.

10.2.4 Fat Content

According to the AOAC Method 945.16.

10.2.5 Moisture Content

According to the AOAC Method 926.12.]

APPENDIX IV**PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL STANDARD FOR TEHENA****At Step 5 of the Elaboration Procedure****1. SCOPE**

This Standard applies to Tehena as defined in Section 2 below and offered for direct consumption

2. DESCRIPTION**2.1 PRODUCT DEFINITION**

Tehena is a product obtained by grinding mature, roasted and husked sesame seeds of the species *Sesame indicum* L.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS**3.1 BASIC INGREDIENTS**

Sesame seeds as defined in Section 2.

3.2 QUALITY FACTORS – GENERAL

The end product shall meet the following general requirements:

3.2.1 Sesame seeds used in processing “Tehena” shall comply with its standard and be safe and suitable for human consumption.

3.2.2 The product shall have a distinctive natural flavour and be free from rancidity.

3.2.3 The product colour and texture shall become homogeneous and free from agglomeration.

3.2.4 The product shall be free from extraneous and foreign matter.

3.2.5 The product shall be free from artificial flavour, filling agent, colours and bleaching agents (i.e: titanium dioxide).

3.3 QUALITY FACTORS – SPECIFIC

The following requirements apply to the product when prepared ready for consumption in accordance with the instructions for use.

3.3.1 The maximum content of moisture is 1.5%.

3.3.2 The minimum content of protein is 25%.

3.3.3 The minimum content of fat is 45%, as sesame oil only

3.3.4 The maximum content of total ash is 3.5%.

3.3.5 The maximum content of acid insoluble ash is 0.3% (m/m).

3.3.6 The maximum content of extracted oil acidity is 1.8%, as oleic acid.

4. CONTAMINANTS

The product covered by this Standard shall comply with the maximum limits for contaminants and the maximum residues limits for pesticides established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

5. HYGIENE REQUIREMENTS

5.1 It is recommended that the products covered by the provisions of this standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate Sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev.4-2003), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

5.2 The products 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).

6. PACKAGING AND STORAGE

6.1 The product shall be packed in containers, which will safeguard the hygienic, nutritional and organoleptic quality of the end product.

6.2 The product shall be stored in a well-ventilated store, protected against direct heat and contamination.

7. WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

7.1 FILL OF THE CONTAINER

7.1.1 Minimum Fill

The container shall be well filled with tehana, the product shall occupy not less than 90% of the water capacity of the container. The water capacity of the container is the volume of distilled water at 20°C which the sealed container will hold when completely filled.

8. LABELLING

The product shall be labelled in accordance with the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev.1-1991) :

8.1 NAME OF THE FOOD

The name of the food shall be “Tehena”.

[9. METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

9.1 METHODS OF SAMPLING

Sampling shall be in accordance with Codex General Guideline on Sampling.

9.2 METHOD OF ANALYSIS

9.2.1 Total ash

The total ash is determined in accordance with (ISO 6884:1980).

9.2.2 Acid insoluble ash

The acid insoluble ash is determined in accordance with (ISO 735:1977).

9.2.3 Moisture Content

The moisture content shall be determined in accordance with (ISO934: 1980).

9.2.4 Total Acidity

The total acidity shall be determined in accordance with (ISO 729: 1988).

9.2.5 Fat Content

The fat content shall be determined in accordance with (ISO 6983: 1997).

The Gas Chromatography method to verify the sesame oil origin of the fat content.

Sesame oil shall be inspected in accordance with Baudoin’s Test.]

APPENDIX V**PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL GUIDELINES FOR CODEX CONTACT POINTS AND
NATIONAL CODEX COMMITTEES (NEAR EAST REGION)****(Step 5/ 8 of the Elaboration Procedure)****Introduction**

1. Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees are amongst the essential organs of the Codex Alimentarius Commission that enhance the active involvement of various stakeholders at the national level, which translates to effective participation of Codex member countries in the activities of the Commission, resulting in a credible food code.

2. This document outlines basic guidelines for the establishment, structure, tasks and organisation of effective Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees. Should there be existing Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees, these guidelines could serve to further improve on their efficiency.

CODEX CONTACT POINT**Description**

3. In order to facilitate efficient and effective communication and working relations between the Codex Alimentarius Commission and governments, the Commission recommends the establishment of Codex Contact Points in every Codex member country.

4. The Codex Contact Point serves as the official link between the Codex Alimentarius and the member country concerned. In essence, the Codex Contact Point serves as the official national communication agent (for and on behalf of the member country) to the Commission. This implies that all communication from the member country to the commission and vice versa, as well as within national authorities, goes through the Codex Contact Point.

Tasks

5. The tasks of the national Codex Contact Point should include the following, among others:
- (a) receiving all Codex communications, documents and publications from the Commission;
 - (b) initiating relevant action on the received documents either directly or through the National Codex Committee and/or the relevant sub-committee(s) or institution;
 - (c) maintaining a library of all Codex standards, Codes of Practice, Guidelines and any other documents and publications on or relating to Codex;
 - (d) distribution of Codex documents, publications and other information to all stakeholders;
 - (e) acting as the link between the Codex Secretariat and Codex member countries;
 - (f) performing any other tasks that may be recommended by the National Codex Committee and/or the government.

Location

6. Upon carefully reading and understanding the rule and tasks of the national Codex Contact Point, the decision on where to locate the Codex Contact Point basically rests with the member country concerned.

7. This decision may be made either by the government and/or through consultation with the relevant stakeholders at the national level.

8. However, it is common practice for the government to take up responsibility for hosting the national Codex Contact Point.

9. Whatever the location of the national Codex Contact Point, it is desirable that the location meets the following criteria:

- that it is as neutral as possible as regards all interested parties' involvement in Codex work;
- that it is capable of performing the tasks of the Codex Contact Point;
- that it is accessible to all parties interested and/or those involved in the activities of Codex.

Requirements

10. The basic requirements for a Codex Contact Point may include the following:

- committed staff;
- code of conduct;
- adequate office space;
- communication facilities, e.g. telephone, fax, e-mail, postal address, etc.
- stationery;
- printing and photocopying equipment, e.g. computer, printer, photocopier, etc.

NATIONAL CODEX COMMITTEE

11. The primary objective of the National Codex Committee is to act as a consultative group to the government on matters related to Codex.

12. Representatives from all relevant national bodies, including consumers' organizations, professional associations, etc. should be invited to attend meetings of the National Codex Committee to put forward their views for consideration and inclusion in the national negotiating position.

Tasks

13. The primary tasks of the National Codex Committee may include:

- (a) advising the government on the best possible decisions as regards Codex standards and their implementation;
- (b) formulating the country response to the proposals of the Codex Alimentarius Commission;
- (c) proposing relevant parties to represent the country at various Codex meetings;
- (d) appointing such technical sub-committees as may be necessary for the country's effective participation in Codex;
- (e) undertaking such other duties as the government may deem appropriate.

Composition and structure

14. An example of a National Codex Committee could include representatives from the following institutions:

i. Relevant Ministries/Government institutions such as:

- Ministry of Health;
- Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock;
- Ministry of Trade and Industry;
- Ministry of Environment;
- National Bureau of Standards;
- Government laboratories and analytical service;
- Any other national authorities related to food safety and food control.

ii. Local authorities

- iii. Consumers' organizations
- iv. Professional associations (e.g. food industry, manufacturers, food importers and exporters)
- v. Universities;
- vi. Leading research organizations;
- vii. Notable experts.

15. The responsibilities of the chairperson are decided by the National Codex Committee, and may include conducting meetings of the Committee, among other duties.

16. The responsibilities of the person who serves as the secretary of the National Codex Commission may include:

- taking minutes at meetings of the National Codex Committee;
- keeping all records relating to the Committee's activities;
- drafting agenda items and sending invitations to meetings, in conjunction with the chairperson;
- undertaking such other duties as may be prescribed by the Committee and/or the government;
- assuring the communication between all members of the National Codex Committee.

17. National Codex Committee members should agree among themselves on basic operational matters, including the quorum, the schedule and procedure at meetings.

18. Documents should be circulated as widely as possible and with ample time to enable those who are not able to attend a particular Committee meeting to submit their inputs, which should be considered at the meeting.

19. All sub-committees appointed by the National Codex Committee report to the Committee.

20. The Committee's decisions should be reached by consensus and as agreed at its respective meetings.

Nomination to the National Codex Committee

21. The procedure for nomination to/inclusion in the National Codex Committee should be known, open and transparent. Different countries may use different methods to select persons to participate in the work of the Committee, depending on the available resources and structures.

22. Participation in Committee meetings should be reviewed annually, and new members appointed to replace inactive members.

FUNDING

23. The source of funding for running and/or for the activities of the Codex Contact Point and the National Codex Committee must be known to all members of the Committee. Contributions must not be attached to any conditions in order to ensure impartiality and avoid any conflict of interest, so that the two bodies can operate effectively without fear or favour.