

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 2.1

FL49/CRD29

Original language only

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING

Forty-ninth Session

Ottawa, Canada

11-15 May 2026

COMMENTS FROM AUSTRALIA, CANADA, COOK ISLANDS, NEW-ZEALAND, TONGA AND VANUATU

Agenda item 2.1: The use of “country of harvest” in addition to the mandatory declaration of country of origin in food labelling of spices

The Members listed above (the Members) thank the CCFL Chairperson, the EWG Chairs and co-Chairs, and all delegations for the extensive work undertaken on this matter and for the efforts made to identify practical and consensus-based approaches.

The members support the general direction proposed by the Chairperson in FL49/CRD05.

The members recall that Codex horizontal standards on food labelling already establish the framework for country of origin declarations, including the principle that country of origin is determined in accordance with Section 4.5.2 of CXS 1-1985 where processing changes the nature of the food. In this regard and noting that CCFL has not established a horizontal definition or mandatory requirement concerning “country of harvest”, the members consider that commodity standards should avoid creating mandatory provisions that could lead to inconsistency with existing horizontal guidance or create unnecessary regulatory burden.

The members therefore support the approach reflected in the CCFL Chairperson’s proposal that, in specific cases such as dried saffron, the country of origin and the country of harvest may be considered equivalent. The members note that this approach is conducive to consensus and appropriately addresses the concerns expressed by producing countries of saffron and dried saffron, while remaining consistent with existing Codex labelling principles.

The members further support the proposed conclusions intended to assist CCSCH and other commodity committees in the interpretation and application of origin labelling provisions, particularly those recognizing that:

- existing Codex texts already prohibit false or misleading origin declarations;
- packaging, sorting, and grading do not generally constitute a change in the nature of the food; and
- where country of origin and country of harvest are the same, a single declaration is sufficient and avoids redundancy.

In conclusion, the members support the Chairperson’s proposal and encourage CCFL49 to advance a pragmatic and consensus-based outcome on this matter.