

CODEx ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 4(a)

CX/PR 21/52/3

May 2021

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEx COMMITTEE ON PESTICIDE RESIDUES

52nd Session

(Virtual)

26-30 July and 3 August 2021

MATTERS ARISING FROM FAO AND WHO

(Prepared by FAO and WHO)

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

Matters arising jointly from FAO and WHO

World Food Safety Day

1. On December 2018 the UN General Assembly adopted a Resolution proclaiming a World Food Safety Day (WFSD) on 7 June and designated FAO and WHO to lead alternatively the celebrations. WHO led the event in close coordination and collaboration with FAO in 2020 with a core focus on building and maintaining safe food in market places to ensure that people can access safe food throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Both FAO and WHO DGs highlighted that food safety should be everyone's business in every day. In late September, a FAO/WHO joint report on WFSD 2020 was published and this report gave an overview of the multi-stakeholder's engagement and virtual celebrations across the globe, which marked the great success for the WFSD 2020. The report is available in 6 UN languages¹.
2. For the WFSD 2021, FAO will lead the celebration together with WHO. To advance on the preparation, FAO and WHO have drafted the concept note and agreed on the slogan, theme, and calls to actions. FAO and WHO will continue the preparation of the event. The visual identity and advocacy materials will be available by early 2021.

UN Food Systems Summit 2021

3. In 2021, UN Secretary-General António Guterres will convene a Food Systems Summit as part of the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The Summit will launch bold new actions to deliver progress on all 17 SDGs, each of which relies to some degree on healthier, more sustainable and equitable food systems. More details are available on its dedicated website.² FAO and WHO are heavily involved in the preparation and would like to share the current state with Codex members.

Food Systems Summit

4. The outcomes of the Summit have been defined as:
 - a) Significant action and commitment to action, with measurable outcomes and impact that enable achievement of the SDGs by 2030. This will include highlighting existing solutions and celebrating leaders in food systems transformation, as well as calling for new actions worldwide by different actors, including countries, cities, companies, civil society, citizens, and food producers.
 - b) Dramatically elevated public discourse about the importance of food systems leading to the achievement of the SDGs and reforms implemented for people and planet.

¹ <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/world-food-safety-day-2020-overview-of-an-inspiring-virtual-celebration-7-june-2020>

² <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit>

- c) A high-level set of principles developed through the process that will guide Member States and other stakeholders to leverage their food systems capacity to support the SDGs. Distilled through all elements of the preparatory process, these principles will set an optimistic and encouraging vision in which food systems play a central role in building a fairer, more sustainable world.
- d) A system of follow-up and review that will drive new actions and results; allow for the sharing of experiences, lessons and knowledge; and incorporate new metrics for impact analysis.
5. In order to deliver on the outcomes of the Summit, several structures have been put in place including Action Tracks and Food Systems Summit Dialogues.
6. The Action Tracks are tasked to create synergies and solutions at local, national, regional, and global levels and to scale up and to accelerate existing initiatives which align to the Summit Vision and principles. To support this work, the Action Tracks will identify challenges, opportunities, and barriers, with the goal of reaching a multi-stakeholder alignment on actions for transforming food systems. The Action Tracks are:
1. Ensure Access to Safe and Nutritious Food for All
 2. Shift to Sustainable (and healthy) Consumption Patterns
 3. Boost Nature Positive Production at sufficient scale
 4. Advance Equitable Livelihoods
 5. Build Resilience to Vulnerabilities, Shocks and Stress
7. Each Action Track is expected to develop exemplary aligned game changing and systemic solutions and mechanisms that foster, encourage and allow the alignment of initiatives and actions. The implementation of these actions are enabled through policies, institutions, finance, incentives, data, innovation, advocacy, education, and empowerment.
8. Diverse and multistakeholder membership of the Action Tracks is constituted by the Chairs and Vice Chairs. Each Action Track is supported by a UN Anchor Organization.
9. Member States have been encouraged to engage in the five Action Tracks and are expected to provide on the ground expertise for the direction of the Action Track, promote and advocate for the work of the Action Tracks at governmental level and ensure participation and dialogue across government, host inclusive dialogues for the Food Systems Summit at national level bringing relevant findings into the work of action tracks and leading mechanisms to drive implementation of proposed changes post-Summit.

Table 1 – Action Track Chairs, Vice Chairs and UN Anchor Organizations

	Action Track 1	Action Track 2	Action Track 3	Action Track 4	Action Track 5
	Ensure Safe and Nutritious Food For All	Shift to Sustainable Consumption Patterns	Boost Nature Positive Production	Advance Equitable Livelihoods	Build Resilience to Vulnerabilities Shocks and Stress
Chair	Lawrence Haddad, GAIN (Europe)	Gunhild Stordalen, EAT (Europe)	Joao Campari, WWF (Lat. America)	Michelle Nunn, CARE (N.America)	Dr. Saleemul Huq, ICCCAD, (Asia)
Vice Chair	Godfrey Bahigwa (Africa)	Ajay Vir Jakhar, Farmers Forum (Asia)	Tosi Mpanu-Mpanu (Africa)	Shakuntala Thilsted, WorldFish, (Asia)	Sandrine Dixson, Club of Rome (Europe)
Youth Vice Chair	Janya Green, 4-H (North America)	Lana Weidgenant Real Food Systems (Latin America)	Lavetanalagi Seru, Alliance for Future Generation (Pacific)	Mai Thin Yu Mon, UN Global Indigenous Youth Caucus (Asia)	Mike Khunga, Scale Up Nutrition Youth Movement, Malawi (Africa)
UN Anchor Organization	FAO	WHO	UNCCD	IFAD	WFP

10. Three iterations of Food Systems Summit Dialogues will take place at three levels between October 2020 and May 2021.

Member State Dialogues:

11. Organized by National Authorities, involving leaders of food system stakeholder groups, the dialogues will allow participants to explore options for the future of local and national food systems and shape the national pathway to sustainable food systems by 2030. The findings of the Dialogues will be posted on a Dialogue Gateway website and synthesised for input to the work of the Action Tracks towards the Summit.

Global Dialogues:

12. Organized on behalf of Summit Secretariat *a set of dialogues will be convened at high-level international events.* They will be an opportunity to explore interconnections of food systems with global action for good nutrition, climate action, biodiversity, the ocean, finance, against desertification, and more.

Independent Dialogues:

13. Organized by anyone, these dialogues will use toolkits accessed by individuals and organizations to establish multi-stakeholder dialogues. When dialogues follow the Summit principles their findings will be posted on the Dialogue Gateway website.
14. FAO continues to provide its full support to the Special Envoy in the preparatory process towards the Food Systems Summit. The Organization is fully represented in the Governance Structures outlined above with the Director-General a member of the Advisory Committee, the Chief Economist an ex officio member of the Scientific Group, FAO being the UN Anchor Agency for Action Track 1, and the Director, Food Systems and Food Safety Division representing the Organization on the UN Taskforce as well as (partly) seconded to support the Food Systems Summit Secretariat. WHO is represented by the Assistant Director-General Healthier Populations in the UN Taskforce.
15. FAO hosts the Rome-based part of the Food Systems Secretariat which is focused on ensuring the provision of evidence and knowledge as inputs to the Action Tracks and to the country level Food Systems Dialogues.
16. FAO directly supports Action Track 1 on “Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food” as the UN Anchor Agency. FAO will also support to the remaining Action Tracks through its involvement as a support UN Agency within individual tracks coordinated by the respective UN Anchor Organization, drawing in the extensive knowledge generated by its technical divisions. Similarly, WHO directly supports Action Track 2 on “Shifting to Sustainable (and healthy) Consumption Patterns”.
17. A Scientific Group, with FAO support, is developing a series of papers on, inter alia, definitions and concepts and the modelling of trade-offs intrinsic to food systems.
18. FAO will support the provision of data and evidence on food systems to inform the country level food systems dialogues and through its extensive country office coverage, will provide support the coordination and conduct of the Dialogues.
19. WHO is committed to work with the Action Track 2 members as well as across Action Tracks to ensure that food systems deliver healthy and safe diets and improve people’s health and wellbeing. WHO offers its guidance and guidelines, implementation tools and databases to inform the food systems transformation. WHO will encourage stakeholders to use a health lens when formulating game changing solutions and assessing impact.
20. FAO and WHO jointly lead the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition and as such aim to connect, align and leverage the Nutrition Decade’s action networks, accountability frameworks and commitment making process with the Food Systems Summit.

Risk Assessment Methods and Principles

Updated chapters of the Environmental Health Criteria 240³- Principles and methods for the risk assessment of chemicals in food

21. Since the publication of the EHC 240 in 2009 science has further evolved as well as risk assessment practices. FAO and WHO have recently finalized several projects to update (sub) chapters as follows:

³ <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241572408>

- **Section 4.5 - Genotoxicity⁴**: The updated section 4.5 on genotoxicity published in November 2020 will be incorporated in the online version of the EHC 240 in the coming months.
- **Chapter 5 - Dose-Response Assessment and Derivation of Health-Based Guidance Values⁵**: The updated chapter 5 on dose-response assessment and derivation of health-based guidance published in December 2020 will be incorporated in the online version of the EHC 240 in the coming months.
- **Chapter 6: Dietary Exposure Assessment of Chemicals in Food⁶**: The updated chapter 6 on Dietary Exposure Assessment of Chemicals in Food published in November 2020 will be incorporated in the online version of the Environmental health criteria 240 in the coming months.
- **Section 9.1.4.2 Enzymes⁷**: The updated section 9.1.4.2 on enzymes published in November 2020 will be incorporated in the online version of the EHC 240 in the coming months.

Publications

22. FAO issued the publication “Understanding international harmonization of pesticide maximum residue limits with Codex standards: A case study on rice” which offers insights for decision-makers involved in setting of standards and design of food policy at national and international level on the significance of harmonization of pesticide MRLs⁸. A virtual session and discussion on the subject were held at a side event (on November 5th) of the WTO SPS Committee.
23. Aiming to increase the notification of food safety incidents in international food trade through INFOSAN and to facilitate related risk communication between the involved countries and regions the INFOSAN Member’s Guide⁹ has been published.

Matters arising from FAO

Organizational updates

24. FAO has re-organized its internal structure and a new organigram is available.¹⁰ Of particular interest to Codex members may be:
 - The Codex Secretariat is now located within the Joint FAO/WHO Center (Codex Food Standards and Zoonotic Diseases), CJW; this centre also hosts the lead unit for AMR
 - The scientific advice program (JEMRA, JECFA and most ad-hoc expert committees) and food safety capacity building is now located within the new Food Systems and Food Safety Division, ESF
 - The FAO secretariat for JEMNU remains with the Food and Nutrition Division, ESN
 - The FAO secretariat for JMPR is now located within the Plant Production and Protection division, NSP.

International Year of Plant Health (IYPH)

25. The United Nations General Assembly declared 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH). The Year was extended until July 2021 due to the postponement of some key initiatives caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to raise global awareness on how protecting plant health can help end hunger, reduce poverty, protect the environment, and boost economic development.
26. A large number of events - from exhibitions, to cultural performances, contests, panel discussions and conferences – are taking place across the world to mark the International Year of Plant Health. The detail information is available at the FAO website <http://www.fao.org/plant-health-2020>

⁴ https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/food-safety/publications/section4-5-genotoxicity.pdf?sfvrsn=8ec3434_2

⁵ https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/food-safety/publications/chapter5-dose-response.pdf?sfvrsn=32edc2c6_5

⁶ https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/food-safety/publications/chapter6-dietary-exposure.pdf?sfvrsn=26d37b15_6

⁷ https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/food-safety/publications/section9-1-4-2-enzymes.pdf?sfvrsn=e238e86e_2

⁸ FAO. 2020. *Understanding international harmonization of pesticide maximum residue limits with Codex standards: A case study on rice*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb0463en>

⁹ <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca8588en>

¹⁰ <http://www.fao.org/about/org-chart/en/>

Matters arising from WHO

WHO Global Strategy for Food Safety

27. With the endorsement of the resolution, “Strengthening Efforts on Food Safety” by the World Health Assembly in late July, WHO is mandated by Member States to update the WHO Global Strategy for Food Safety (“the strategy”), in coordination with FAO and in consultation with Member States and OIE, eventually report back to WHA75 in 2022. This strategy is aiming to address current and emerging challenges, incorporate new technologies and include innovative approaches for strengthening food safety systems.
28. The WHO Director-General already approved the establishment of a new Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on Food Safety: safer food for better health and the nominated experts. This TAG is composed of 24 renowned international food safety experts encompassing different technical areas. One of the functions of this TAG is to advise WHO on the update of the strategy in the coming two years. Besides the establishment of the TAG, WHO is in close dialogue with FAO to brainstorm different essential components to be considered in the updated strategy and ensure the complementarity is well reflected in both food safety strategies that are under development. TAG meetings, Member States and other relevant stakeholders’ consultations are also planned in 2021.

WHO Transformation

29. In March 2019, WHO announced reforms to strengthen the WHO’s role as the world’s leading authority on public health and to effectively support countries in achieving the “triple billion” targets. As part of this transformation of WHO, in January 2020, the Department of Nutrition and Food Safety (NFS) was created under the UHC/Healthier Populations Division, through bringing together the Department of Nutrition for Health and Development and the Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses, to address the burden of disease from physical, chemical and microbial hazards in food and unhealthy diets, maternal and child malnutrition, overweight and obesity.
30. The new Department aims to ensure universal access to safe, sufficient, nutritious food and effective nutrition actions, through setting science-based international food standards, promoting nutrition action in health systems, fostering sustainable food production and consumption, improving food environments and empowering consumers in all situations, monitoring nutrition status, and managing food safety events at the international level, closely working with Member States, UN partner agencies and non-State actors.

MATTERS FOR ACTION
Matters arising jointly from FAO and WHO

Publications
Guidelines for Predicting Dietary Intake of Pesticide Residues

31. In 1997 the GEMS/Food Programme, in collaboration with the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues published the “Guidelines for predicting dietary intake of pesticide residues” as a follow up of a Joint FAO/WHO Consultation on Predicting Dietary Intake of Pesticide Residues (York, 1995). This document is now outdated after the publication of the revised chapter 6 of the EHC 240 (Dietary exposure assessment for chemicals in food – 2020).
32. CCPR is requested to decide if the Guideline should be updated and aligned on the EHC 240 or simply be withdrawn from the list of publications.