

# codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

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CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION  
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REPORT OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF  
THE  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION  
Geneva, WHO, 10-13 July 1979

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Executive Committee held its Twenty-Fifth Session at WHO Headquarters, Geneva, from 10 to 13 July, 1979. The Executive Committee was presided over by the Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Prof. Dr. E. Matthey (Switzerland) and in the presence of its three Vice-Chairmen, Prof. Dr. D. Eckert (Federal Republic of Germany), Mr. D.A. Akoh (Nigeria) and Dr. S. Al Shakir (Iraq). The following representatives from the geographic locations mentioned were present: for Africa, Mr. J.C. Obel, from Kenya; for Asia, Prof. Amara Bhumiratana from Thailand; for Europe Mr. A. Burger from Czechoslovakia; for Latin America Mr. Eymar da Cunha Franco from Brazil; for North America, Mr. E. Kimbrell from USA; for the South-West Pacific, Mr. H. McPhail from New Zealand. The Coordinator for Africa, Dr. T. N'Doye (Senegal), the Coordinator for Europe, Prof. Dr. H. Woidich (Austria) and the Coordinator for Latin America, Dr. E.R. Méndez (Mexico) were present. Apologies for absence were received from the Coordinator for Asia Dr. A. Regala (Philippines).

## OPENING ADDRESS

2. The twenty-fifth session of the Executive Committee was opened by Dr. D. Tejada-de-Rivero, Assistant Director-General, WHO on behalf of the Directors-General of FAO and WHO. Dr. Tejada-de-Rivero drew attention to the interest which had been expressed by members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in the re-orientation of the Commission's programme of work, especially towards meeting to a greater extent the needs of developing countries. WHO welcomed the establishment of two new Codex Committees on (i) Cereals and Cereal Products and (ii) Vegetable Proteins as well as the reactivation of the Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene to deal with, among other matters, the elaboration of a Code of Practice on the post-mortem judgement of meat. The strengthening of the activities and revised terms of reference for the Coordinating Committees for Africa, Asia and Latin America were in line with the re-direction and greater emphasis to be placed on matters of interest to the developing regions of the world.

3. Dr. Tejada-de-Rivero emphasized the need to expedite the work of elaborating standards by making greater use of the provisions to omit steps in the procedure for elaboration of standards. He stressed the importance of securing more acceptances from governments of the Codex standards and referred to the views expressed at the Second Session of the Coordinating Committee for Asia that some developing countries which had implemented Codex standards for their exports were disappointed with the progress of acceptances by the major food importing countries.

4. Dr. Tejada-de-Rivero referred briefly to the new proposed international programme on the evaluation of the effects of chemicals on health which had been approved by the World Health Assembly. He expressed the hope that the new programme would constitute a means of strengthening the existing joint FAO/WHO activities as well as the work of the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Pesticide Residues. Finally, it was hoped that arrangements could be made to hold the 14th Session of the Commission in Geneva in mid 1981.

#### ADOPTION OF AGENDA

5. The Executive Committee adopted the provisional agenda with one slight modification. It was agreed to consider the new proposed international programme on the evaluation of the effects of chemicals on health under "Other Business", when Dr. Vouk of WHO would be available to introduce this item. It was further agreed, upon a proposal of the representative of North America, to discuss under "Other business" the question of a "Code of Ethics for the Marketing and Advertizing of Infant Foods".

#### REPORTS ON MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE WORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION REPORT OF THE 35TH SESSION OF THE FAO PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

6. The Executive Committee had before it document CX/EXEC 79/25/4 which contained extracts from the report of the 35th Session of the FAO Programme Committee. The Programme Committee had welcomed the policy re-orientation given by the Commission to meet the needs and interests of developing countries. It had also welcomed the proposed new procedures to assess the economic impact of the food standards. The new proposed activities concerned with cereals and vegetable proteins were endorsed by the Programme Committee, but caution was expressed concerning the development of regional standards, and the view was expressed that work should be concentrated on standards for finished products rather than raw materials. It had been further recommended that the FAO Council, in view of the importance of Codex work within the overall context of nutritional improvement, food production and food trade, should follow general policy trends within the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

#### REPORT OF THE 74TH SESSION OF THE FAO COUNCIL

7. The FAO Council had, in general, agreed with the steps taken by the Commission at its 12th Session and with the observations of the FAO Programme Committee on these. The Council approved the Commission's new policy direction and re-orientation of its work, especially the procedures to examine the possible economic impact of the food standards. The Council agreed with the new activities to be undertaken by the Commission and its subsidiary bodies. The Council agreed that the Commission should continue to give priority, in the development of food standards, to finished products as well as exercise care in the elaboration of regional standards. The Council concurred in the view of the Programme Committee that it should follow general policy trends within the Commission.

#### REPORT ON THE CONSIDERATION OF THE WHO FOOD SAFETY PROGRAMME BY THE 32nd WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

8. The Executive Committee had before it document A32/WP/2 which was a progress report to the 32nd World Health Assembly on the Food Safety Programme by the Director-General of WHO. This document indicated that WHO's food safety programme was being developed in the following main directions: (i) review and analysis of national needs and transfer of information; (2) technical cooperation, particularly in developing national food safety policies and programmes and an effective infrastructure for sanitary food protection; (3) assessment of the risk to health of chemicals used as food additives or found in food as contaminants; and (4) coordination and collaboration with FAO and the Codex Alimentarius Commission as regards food safety standards.

9. It was reported by the WHO representative that the delegates of 16 countries spoke to this agenda item during the recent World Health Assembly, expressing general satisfaction with the progress report on the food safety programme. Included in the delegates comments were such matters as the safety of irradiated foods, the value of microbiological specifications; the need for seminars and workshops for training of food control personnel; the need to strengthen food control infrastructures at the national level, including legislation, inspection services and laboratory facilities; and the value of the toxicological evaluations of food additives, pesticide residues and contaminants. Relative to the concern expressed at the 32nd World Health Assembly as to the usefulness of microbiological criteria as a means for safeguarding the consumer from food-related hazards, Dr. Reinius referred to the attention given by the recent three FAO/WHO expert consultations as expressed by the following proposed language in the draft of the General Principles for the Establishment of Microbiological Criteria for Foods: "The basis of control of microbiologically sensitive foods should be through the application of Codes of Practice. A microbiological criterion should be established and applied only where there is a definite need for it and where it can be shown to be effective and practical".

#### VIEWS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

10. The Executive Committee noted with satisfaction that both the FAO Programme Committee and the FAO Council had stressed the importance of the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and had welcomed and approved the policy reorientation of the Commission, in recognition of the need to place increased emphasis on the needs and concerns of developing countries. In particular the FAO Programme Committee and the FAO Council had welcomed the new procedures which had been adopted by the Commission and which were expected to result in full consideration by governments and the Commission not only of the technical aspects of the food standards but also of their economic impact. The effectiveness of the new procedures would depend to a large extent on the mechanism evolved within the Commission and the Secretariat for dealing with trade impact statements from governments. The FAO Programme Committee and the FAO Council had generally approved and agreed with the various other actions which had been taken by the Commission, at its Twelfth Session, designed to make its work more responsive to the needs of the developing countries. The World Health Assembly had similarly endorsed the actions of the Commission in this regard.

11. The Executive Committee expressed its appreciation of the response of the FAO Programme Committee and the FAO Council to the actions which the Commission had taken to resolve the various questions and problems which had been put before the Commission for consideration in the context of making the Commission's work more responsive to the concerns of developing countries. The Executive Committee particularly appreciated the implicit recognition in the response of the FAO Programme Committee and FAO Council of the leadership role of the Commission in food standards work and that the Commission was the competent body for resolving within itself all problems falling within its scope of activities. At the same time the Executive Committee expressed its appreciation of the interest of the FAO Programme Committee and the FAO Council in following major developments in the work of the Commission.

12. Particular attention was drawn in the Executive Committee to the importance of the mechanism to be established for dealing with trade impact statements. It was noted that this matter would be considered by the Executive Committee under a later item of the agenda and that the matter would be considered in depth at the next session of the Codex Committee on General Principles.

13. The Executive Committee wished to place on record, on behalf of the Commission, its willingness to re-evaluate, as and when necessary, the work programme of the Commission.

14. Concerning the amendments adopted by the Commission at its Twelfth Session to the Procedure for the Elaboration of Worldwide Codex Standards, the Executive Committee noted that, in accordance with the instructions of the Commission, the Codex Committee on General Principles, at its next session, expected to be held in Paris in October 1979, would have an opportunity of fully considering the amendments already adopted and of proposing further amendments, if necessary, for consideration by the Commission at its Thirteenth Session. The Executive Committee stressed the need for governments to give serious consideration to the matter.

15. Concerning the view of the FAO Programme Committee and the FAO Council that the Commission should continue to concentrate on standards for finished products rather than for raw materials, the Executive Committee was generally in agreement with this view, although it recognized that in certain circumstances and for certain products it might be necessary to depart from this. In this connection, it was noted that the elaboration of standards for raw products was permissible under the General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius.

16. As regards the view of the FAO Programme Committee and Council that caution should be exercised in the elaboration of regional standards, the Executive Committee was generally in agreement with this. A view was expressed that regional standards could be the basis eventually for worldwide standards.

17. The Executive Committee decided to consider the views of the FAO Programme Committee regarding the question of an increased contribution from WHO to the joint costs of the FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme under the item of its agenda dealing with the budget of the Programme.

18. The Executive Committee took note of the comments made in the World Health Assembly regarding developments concerning the WHO Food Safety Programme. The representative of the South West Pacific region in the Executive Committee expressed some concern regarding section 4 of the document (A32/WP/2), but was informed by the Secretariat that the matter would be considered at a later stage in the agenda.

#### MEMBERSHIP OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

19. The Executive Committee noted that since the 12th Session of the Commission, Botswana had become a member bringing the membership to 117 countries.

#### ACCEPTANCES OF RECOMMENDED CODEX STANDARDS

20. The Executive Committee had before it the latest published Summary of Acceptances by Governments as at 30 October, 1978, of Recommended Codex Standards and Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues (CAC/Acceptances/Rev.1). This information was further updated by document CX/EXEC 79/25/2 which contained information on further acceptances by Argentina, Bahamas, Egypt, Jordan, United Kingdom and the USA.

21. The attention of the Executive Committee was drawn to the discussion on acceptances which had taken place at the Second Session of the Coordinating Committee for Asia, held in Manila in March 1978. Concern had been expressed at that session at the comparatively slow response of developed countries in accepting the standards. Many developing countries wished to use the recommended Codex standards for their export trade and several had already adopted the standards in their national legislation. It was disheartening for them to find that, with very few exceptions, the importing developed countries had not accepted more of these standards. The Coordinating Committee for Asia had decided to bring specifically to the attention of the Commission the need to urge the importing and developed countries to accept the standards, so as to enable the developing countries to accept and adopt the standards without the risk of adverse effects on their exports.

22. The Executive Committee wished to place on record its recognition of the fact that, even if responses from governments concerning acceptances were not as yet forthcoming to the extent that might have been hoped for, there was, in fact, a continuing steady increase in the number of acceptances of the standards being notified by governments. The Executive Committee also wished to stress the health protection aspects of the standards which were of interest and of value to all countries. Concerning specific practical measures for encouraging more acceptances of the standards, the Executive Committee in general accepted a proposal of the Secretariat that there should be a regular item on the agenda of the Codex Commodity Committees and, where appropriate, Codex General Subject Committees, covering review of acceptances of standards elaborated by each Committee.

23. In connection with this suggestion of the Secretariat, the representative of the region of North America considered that more could be achieved by stressing the importance of acceptances at Commission sessions, rather than by dealing with the subject at Codex Committee sessions. He also thought that not enough recognition was given to the benefits in practice accruing from the standards, even when not accepted. In this connection he thought it would be useful to determine, through the services of a consultant, the use being made of the standards internationally, even though not officially accepted, i. e. to evaluate the effects of the standards on trade and health protection.

24. Following a report on the discussion on acceptances which had taken place at the most recent session of the Coordinating Committee for Europe, the Executive Committee additionally endorsed the suggestion that acceptances of standards should also be reviewed at the regional level by Coordinating Committees.

25. The Executive Committee also considered that it would be helpful if, in requesting acceptances of the standards, the Secretariat were to stress that even if a country was not in a position to give acceptance, a statement from the country concerned that products complying with the recommended Codex standards would be allowed entry would be fulfilling one of the objectives of the work of the Commission, i. e. the facilitation of international trade. It was important, therefore, for governments to respond and to make known their views on the standards. The point was also made that the recently completed GATT Code of Conduct for Preventing Technical Barriers to Trade might be helpful in this regard, in that it encouraged the use of international standards.

#### ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEES

##### AFRICA

26. The Executive Committee had before it the report of the most recent (third) session of the Coordinating Committee for Africa, held in Accra in September 1977 (document ALINORM 78/28). The report was reviewed by the Coordinator for Africa, Dr. T. N'Doye (Senegal). The Coordinator stressed the importance of the role of the Coordinating Committee in identifying the basic needs of the region in the food standards and food control field. The need for sound food control infrastructure was a necessary pre-condition to the development of meaningful standardization work. In this connection he referred to the FAO/WHO Consultation on Food Control Strategy which had taken place at the end of 1977. The report of this consultation (document HCS/78.1(WHO)) would be considered by the Coordinating Committee for Africa at its next session, to be held in Dakar in September 1979.

27. The Coordinator referred to the Model Food Law which had been placed before the African countries for consideration and eventual adoption at the national level in the region. In some countries of the region, the national legislation had been up-dated and was very close to the Model Food Law; in others the national legislation still dated back to pre-independence times. The Coordinator also referred to the Draft Code of Ethics for the International Trade in Food which had received only preliminary consideration at the last session of the Coordinating Committee, because the Draft Code had become available only shortly before the session; the Draft Code was on the agenda for consideration by the Coordinating Committee at its next session in Dakar in September 1979.

28. Concerning the development by the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene of the Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Groundnuts - a code which was of particular interest to African countries - the Coordinator regretted that so far little or no comment on the draft code had been made by African countries. He also referred to the Draft African Regional Standard for maize, which would be considered by the Committee at its forthcoming session at Step 4. The Coordinator drew attention to the Resolution which had been passed by the Committee at its last session stressing the need for greater attendance and participation by African countries in the work of the Commission. At the next session of the Coordinating Committee, attempts would be made to achieve better co-operation in food standards work between the Coordinating Committee and various economic groupings in Africa.

## LATIN AMERICA

29. The Executive Committee had before it the report of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Regional Conference for Latin America, held in Mexico City in September 1978 (document CX/Latin America 78/12). The report was reviewed by the Coordinator for Latin America, Dr. E. Méndez (Mexico). Having outlined the main features of the report, the Coordinator drew the particular attention of the Executive Committee to the three basic recommendations of the Conference, as contained in the Resolution adopted by the Conference and set forth in Appendix IV to the report of the Conference.

30. The first recommendation was addressed to national authorities in the countries of the region and urged that higher priority be given to strengthening food control systems and food inspection services, in order to achieve better consumer protection and better returns from trading. The second recommendation urged improved regional cooperation and the development of better machinery for assistance in food control. Thus the development of a regional approach in the establishment of standards for foods of special interest to the region and especially for foods in intra-regional trade was recommended through the medium of the Coordinating Committee for Latin America. Exchange of information and expertise within the region on food standards and food control was recommended, as was the strengthening of FAO and WHO Regional Offices in the food control area. It was also recommended that high priority be given to the training of food inspectors.

31. The third recommendation urged that international activities be strengthened through the Codex Alimentarius Commission, by its work on food standards, with special emphasis on the needs of developing countries and the need to further develop exports of their food commodities. It was also mentioned in the recommendation that the capabilities of FAO, WHO and PAHO to provide programmes for consumer protection and safety of food supplies be strengthened, as well as assistance to developing countries in the area of food control.

32. The Coordinator for Latin America informed the Committee that this was the first time that a Conference of this kind had been held in Latin America. The Coordinator indicated that the Conference had drawn up a provisional agenda for the second session of the Coordinating Committee for Latin America. The Coordinating Committee would develop further the work of the Conference.

## EUROPE

33. The Executive Committee had before it extracts from the report of the 11th Session of the Coordinating Committee for Europe (ALINORM 79/19-Extracts). The Coordinator for Europe, Dr. H. Woidich (Austria) informed the Executive Committee that the Coordinating Committee had expressed concern about the slow progress regarding acceptances of Codex standards by countries of the region. It had emphasized the need for the Secretariat's "drive" on acceptances to be continued. Closer liaison among the Secretariat and National Codex Committees was considered to be an important need to further the acceptance of standards as well as closer relations among the various economic groups in Europe. The Coordinating Committee, as requested by the Codex Alimentarius Commission at its 12th Session, had examined the proposed terms of reference for the Coordinating Committees of other regions. The Coordinating Committee for Europe considered that with some slight modification the proposed terms of reference could also serve for Europe.

34. The Coordinating Committee for Europe examined its current and future programme of work in the light of the proposed new terms of reference. The Coordinating Committee proposed to initiate for its next session, three general studies of interest to the region of Europe. These would deal with information on recent developments in European food legislation, information on the activities of European Organizations concerned with the harmonization and standardization of food requirements and information on the food control and enforcement systems of European countries with particular reference to a recent WHO survey.

35. Concerning its work on regional standards the Coordinating Committee proposed to complete its current work on standards for vinegars and then to embark upon standards for emulsified and non-emulsified sauces, mayonnaises and other condiments. Individual delegations attending the session of the Coordinating Committee proposed the following as matters which, subject to the approval of the Commission, might be dealt with by the Coordinating Committee:-

"General guidelines concerning undesirable substances in foods such as mycotoxins, nitrosamines, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, PCBs, etc."

"Problems related to the Migration of Substances from packaging materials into the food."

"A Review of national food control certification procedures, taking into account work being undertaken by OECD and the UN/ECE".

"The preparation of guidelines concerning hygiene in catering establishments, with emphasis on mass catering for travel and tourism".

"General guidelines or standards for raw materials or semi-finished products used by bakeries and catering establishments".

"Boneless meat for further processing".

36. The Coordinating Committee had noted that the latter proposals for new standards and guidelines would have to be submitted to the Codex Alimentarius Commission at its next session, for its consideration.

#### ASIA

37. The Executive Committee had before it the report of the second session of the Coordinating Committee for Asia, held in Manila in March 1978 (ALINORM 79/15). In the absence of the Coordinator for Asia, Dr. A. Regala (Philippines), the representative of the region of Asia, Prof. A. Bhumiratana (Thailand) was invited to review the report of the session. Prof. Bhumiratana referred to the principal matters discussed at the first session of the Coordinating Committee for Asia, held in New Delhi in January 1978, and the second session of the Committee. He indicated that most of the countries of the region did have a food law, even if in some cases the national law was not quite the same as the Model Food Law. The main task to be accomplished in Asia was the strengthening of food control and training facilities. Also the Coordinating Committee for Asia had had a very full discussion on acceptance of the recommended Codex Standards. The developing countries of Asia wished to use the Codex Standards as a guideline for production and exports. He also referred to the consideration given by the Coordinating Committee to the Proposed Draft Standard for Follow-up or Supplementary Foods.

38. Prof. Bhumiratana mentioned the discussions which had taken place in the Coordinating Committee concerning the problems being encountered in Asia in meeting the limits for maximum tin content in some Codex Standards for canned fruits, vegetables and fruit juices. The Coordinating Committee had concluded that in the case of some of the standards the maximum limit for tin content had been fixed at an unreasonably severe level, and the Commodity Committees concerned would need to re-examine these limits. He drew attention to the list of recommended Codex Standards which, in the opinion of the Coordinating Committee for Asia, needed re-examination. He stressed the view of the Coordinating Committee that the recommended Codex Standards would be very helpful to, and useful for, developing countries, if all countries show a willingness to accept the standards.

39. He indicated that, unlike the position in Africa, no Asian regional standards were being elaborated so far by the Committee. The Coordinating Committee had placed great emphasis on the importance of technical cooperation among the developing countries of the region. Finally, Prof. Bhumiratana referred to the consideration in the Coordinating Committee of proposals for a coordinated and standardized approach to Islamic religious requirements in relation to processed meat products.

#### VIEWS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

40. The Executive Committee noted the increased activities of the Regional Coordinating Committee in identifying problems in the food standards area. The Executive Committee agreed that it was very useful that such problems were being identified and discussed at the regional level and expressed appreciation to developing countries for bringing these problems to the attention of the Commission. The Executive Committee agreed that these developments at the regional level were in accord with the increased emphasis placed by the Commission on the needs and concerns of developing countries.

41. The representative of the region of Europe expressed the view that regional standards tended to be developed where there was no appropriate Commodity Committee for the product concerned. He thought it would be helpful if the terms of reference of the regional Coordinating Committees could be extended to enable them to develop world-wide standards in the absence of an appropriate Commodity Committee. Following this proposal, a discussion ensued on the powers of Coordinating Committees so far as the development of regional standards was concerned. The Secretariat referred to Rule VI.3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission under which it was possible for a majority of member countries of a region to embark on a regional standard even though a large majority of the Commission might be in favour of a world-wide standard. The Secretariat also referred to discussions at the Commission's Twelfth Session on this topic in relation to the draft African Regional Standard for maize (ALINORM 78/41, para. 145).

42. Different opinions were expressed in the Executive Committee concerning the meaning of Rule VI.3. The point was made that this Rule concerning the voting requirements and procedure seemed to be in conflict with Step 1 of the Procedure for the Elaboration of Regional Codex Standards where it is stated that "... the Commission decides on the elaboration of a Codex Standard for the region concerned ...". The Executive Committee requested the Legal Officers of FAO and WHO to prepare a paper on this subject for its next session. In particular, the Executive Committee wished to have a legal opinion on how Rule VI.3 would operate.

#### CODEX COMMITTEE ON CEREALS AND CEREAL PRODUCTS

43. The Secretariat briefly outlined its thinking concerning the proposed programme of work for the new Codex Committee on Cereals and Cereal Products. The Secretariat had re-examined the various background documents which had been prepared on the subject of cereals, namely ALINORM 74/33, ALINORM 76/32 and CX/AFRO 77/7 against the terms of reference of the new Committee. The Secretariat was of the opinion that priority should be given to those items which were staple ones in the diets of large numbers of people and those which figured importantly in international trade. Discussions would need to take place with the host authorities and their Secretariat prior to the first session of the Committee concerning the preparation of the provisional agenda and working documents. The Secretariat indicated that in its view the work of the new Committee might embrace the following:

(a) Grains

- a code of practice for basic grains used for direct human consumption covering such matters as moisture, extraneous matter, infestation, contamination, broken kernels etc.

(b) Milled Products

- standards for milled products of wheat, rice, maize, rye, oats, bulgur (polished wheat), barley (pearl), sorghum and millets.



- (c) Composite Cereal Products - standards and/or guidelines for pasta, breakfast cereals (nutritional aspects), unleavened breads, and other processed cereals.
- (d) Composite Flours - e.g. legumes and groundnut flours etc. used for admixtures with cereal flours to enhance protein, fatty acid, amino acid content etc. of ordinary cereal flours.

44. It would be a matter for the first session of the Committee to further solicit the views of governments on the programme of work. The Secretariat wished to receive the views of the Executive Committee and the Coordinators for the regions on the above suggestions prior to its consultations with the chairman and host authorities of the new committee which was likely to meet in March 1980.

45. The Executive Committee expressed the view that the development of compositional standards for composite flours on an international or regional basis would be complicated and extremely difficult. The composition of such flours was inextricably linked to dietary standards and nutritional requirements on a national or local basis. Although it might not be easy to do so, the Executive Committee thought that the new Committee might be able to prepare guidelines which would be of assistance to governments wishing to formulate requirements for such flours to meet the nutritional needs of their populations and utilize local raw materials. The Executive Committee considered that standards for milled cereal products dealing not with detailed composition in nutritional terms but rather compositional factors relating to quality and value of the products might be elaborated. Matters such as moisture content, extraneous matter, hygiene, etc. could be covered by such standards. The fortification or replacement of lost nutrients through processing might be dealt with in such standards particularly in the case of cereal flours and meals. Codes of hygienic and technological practice could be considered, in conjunction with the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene. Such codes would be of particular value concerning grains intended for human consumption moving in international trade. Several members of the Executive Committee emphasized the importance of this latter aspect of the possible work of the new Committee for the countries of Africa. The Executive Committee whilst having regard to the Commission's philosophy and the view of the FAO Programme Committee concerning the need to give priority to finished products rather than raw materials, did consider that in the case of cereal grains, the new Committee should carefully examine the need for codes of practice and standards to meet the wishes and needs of countries importing grain for direct human consumption, because of the close inter-relationship between grains and finished cereal products.

46. The Executive Committee requested the Secretariat to bring to the attention of the new committee, relevant work previously undertaken within the UN system on cereals, in particular the compositional and nutritional aspects. The Executive Committee emphasized that it would be necessary for the new Committee to establish the scope of its activities and to define its priorities. The Executive Committee was also of the view that composite flours should not be regarded as special dietary products. In view of the fact that the products likely to be considered by the Committee were staple items in the diets of many developing countries, the importance of good attendance at the Committee's first session was emphasized, in order to ensure that the Committee's programme of work and priorities fully reflected world needs.

#### DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON VEGETABLE PROTEINS

47. The Executive Committee noted the Government of the United Kingdom had informed the Secretariat that it would be unable to host the new Codex Committee on Vegetable Proteins. An official offer had now been received from the Government of Canada to chair and to provide full host facilities for the Committee. A representative of the European Vegetable Proteins Association had visited the Secretariat in Rome and had indicated that the Association would be approaching the Government of Belgium with a view to Belgium hosting the Committee. The Secretariat had, however, not received any further information from the Association or the Government of Belgium in this regard.

48. The representative of the region of North America advised the Executive Committee that in view of the offer made by Canada, the USA would withdraw the tentative offer, made at the last session of the Commission, to host this Committee. The Executive Committee accepted, subject to the approval of the Commission at its 13th Session, the firm offer of the Government of Canada to host the new Codex Committee on Vegetable Proteins. The Secretariat was instructed to enter into discussions with the Canadian authorities concerning preparatory arrangements to hold the first session in 1980.

#### HYDROLYZED PROTEIN

49. The Executive Committee was informed that a Circular Letter had been sent to Codex Contact Points requesting the views of governments on the desirability of elaborating international standards or specifications for hydrolyzed proteins. Several delegations participating in the recently adjourned Codex Committee on Soups and Broths had expressed strong interest in developing a standard for hydrolyzed protein in view of its importance as a major component of soups and broths. A number of trade associations had also contacted the Secretariat with offers of assistance in the development of such standards. The Government of Switzerland had indicated its willingness to host a further session of the Codex Committee on Soups and Broths to deal with the question of hydrolyzed protein. The Executive Committee noted that this matter would be before the 13th Session of the Commission and expressed its preference for this work to be dealt with in a regular session of the Codex Committee on Soups and Broths rather than through any ad hoc arrangements.

#### INTRODUCTION OF NUTRITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS INTO THE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

50. The reorientation of nutrition activities within FAO was outlined by the Secretariat. Reference was made to the 2nd Session of the ad hoc Committee on Food Policies and Nutrition and to the recent session of the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG). The terms of reference of COAG had been widened to include the consideration of nutrition matters. In particular COAG had discussed the introduction of nutritional considerations into agricultural and rural development programmes and projects. The proposed FAO Programme of Work and Budget for 1980/81 reflected the shifts of emphasis which had been recommended by member countries of FAO concerning nutrition activities. It had been suggested within FAO that the framework and expertise of the Codex Alimentarius Commission might be called upon to assist member countries in the development of dietary standards, guidelines on fortification of foods and legislative or regulatory matters to introduce effectively national nutrition policies regarding the nutritional value of staple items of diet or means of meeting specific nutritional deficiencies. The Secretariat had been requested by the Nutrition Units of FAO and WHO to obtain the views of the Executive Committee on how the Codex Alimentarius Commission might assist in these matters.

51. The Executive Committee welcomed the increased interest being shown by FAO and WHO in nutrition matters, especially the focus being placed upon nutrition in the agricultural and rural development programmes of FAO and the health programmes of WHO. The Executive Committee emphasized that in the Commission's work due consideration had always been given to nutritional aspects of food standardization as well as food safety. The need to provide consumers with nutrition information concerning the composition of foods had received and would continue to receive particular attention by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling and Foods for Special Dietary Uses. Throughout the whole of the Commission's work on food standardization, great care was paid to the essential compositional and quality factors which are of fundamental importance for good nutrition. The Commission would be giving particular attention to nutritional considerations in the work of the two new Codex Committees on Cereals and Cereal Products and Vegetable Proteins. The Executive Committee did not think the Commission should in any way duplicate the activities of other bodies or of other programmes of FAO and WHO in this field but wished to place on record its interest to continue to meet nutritional needs as appropriate within its terms of reference, which many members of the Executive Committee thought should not be widened. Some members of the Executive Committee thought that it would not be realistic to attempt to solve fundamental nutrition problems of developing countries through seeking to reach international agreement on these matters in the Codex Alimentarius Commission because the nature of these

problems was such that they could only be tackled at a national or local level.

52. The Executive Committee concluded that in view of the increased attention being given to nutrition activities by FAO and WHO that it would be appropriate for the Commission to include as a standing item on the agenda of its regular sessions a review of its nutrition related activities and those of FAO and WHO.

#### JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME - FINANCE

53. The Executive Committee had before it the approved budget for 1978/79 including details of expenditure in 1978 and details of the allotment for 1979. The Executive Committee noted it was expected that the 1979 allotment would be sufficient to enable the Programme to meet its planned commitments for the remainder of 1979.

54. The Executive Committee also had before it details of the proposed budget for 1980/81, including details of expected cost increases affecting the joint budget of the Programme. Apart from mandatory cost increases, the total budget for the programme for 1980/81 was almost the same as for 1978/79. A small reduction in the budget base of approximately 2.3 per cent had been made, but it was not expected to have any serious repercussions on the development of the Programme as envisaged by the Commission in 1980/81.

55. The Executive Committee noted that the FAO Programme Committee had considered that the WHO contribution towards the costs of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme was rather small compared with FAO's. In this connection the Programme Committee had suggested that the cost sharing arrangement (FAO 75%, WHO 25% of the Joint Budget items) should be reconsidered, with a view to securing in the future an increased contribution from WHO.

56. Having, in response to questions from members of the Executive Committee, given explanations concerning various aspects of the budget for 1978/79 and the proposed budget for 1980/81, the Secretariat informed the Executive Committee that the base figures of the budget for 1980/81 (i.e. not including cost increases) had been approved, in global terms, by the FAO Council and that these figures with the mandatory cost increases added would be put before the FAO Conference in November 1979 for approval. Concerning the WHO contribution to the Joint Budget of the Programme for 1980/81 (i.e. \$340,000), this figure had been approved by the recent World Health Assembly. However, in view of the revised cost increases notified by the FAO Budget Office, the revised contribution of \$371,000 was being requested from WHO.

57. The Executive Committee wished to place on record that, having noted the budget proposals for 1980/81, it considered them to be the absolute minimum necessary to enable the Programme to be maintained.

58. Concerning the views of the FAO Programme Committee on cost sharing, the importance of the role of WHO in relation to the health protection aspects of the Programme was stressed by the Executive Committee. The WHO participation in and financial support to the Programme would be expected to be commensurate with the importance of WHO's role in the Programme. The Executive Committee recognized that it might not be practicable at this point in time, to envisage an increased contribution from WHO in the 1980/81 biennium, but considered that an increased contribution should be made by WHO to the Joint Budget of the Programme in 1982/83 to achieve more equitable cost sharing of the Joint Budget. One member of the Executive Committee thought that this matter was so important as to warrant consideration as a substantive item on the agenda of the Commission's next session. The Executive Committee requested the Director-General and Governing Bodies of WHO to give very sympathetic consideration to this request, particularly in view of the importance of the health protection role of WHO in the Programme. Two members of the Executive Committee expressed the view that WHO should be more active in the field in developing countries in food safety matters.

59. In response to a question from a Member of the Executive Committee regarding the extent to which FAO and WHO were utilizing UNEP funds, the Secretariat gave an indication of the wide ranging activities in the food and health fields supported by UNEP funds.

#### MECHANISM FOR EXAMINING ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENTS

60. The Executive Committee took note of the observations and proposals received from Members of the Commission to date. The Executive Committee emphasized that this subject would be one of the most important to be considered by the Codex Committee on General Principles and instructed the Secretariat to reissue its Circular Letter stressing the background to the issue and the need for more countries to submit proposals concerning this matter. The Coordinator for Africa informed the Executive Committee of his intention to seek the views of the next session of the Coordinating Committee for Africa on this matter so that these could be communicated to the Codex Committee on General Principles. The Executive Committee also stressed the need for a good attendance of Member Countries at the Codex Committee on General Principles especially those countries which felt the need for procedures to examine the question of the possible economic impact of food standards and also those countries which had been most active in seeking to establish such arrangements. The Executive Committee also considered it would be desirable for as many members of the Executive Committee as possible to attend the Codex Committee on General Principles.

#### PROPOSALS TO BRING THE PROCEDURE FOR THE ELABORATION OF REGIONAL STANDARDS AND PESTICIDE RESIDUE LIMITS INTO CONFORMITY WITH AMENDMENTS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION TO THE PROCEDURE FOR WORLD-WIDE STANDARDS

61. The Executive Committee had before it document CX/EXEC 79/25/6. The Executive Committee noted that the amendments proposed were consequential upon decisions taken by the Commission at its 12th Session.

62. The Executive Committee approved the proposed changes for submission to the Commission with the following slightly revised text for the last sentence of Step 5:

"In taking any decisions at this step, the majority of the Members of the region concerned will give due consideration to any comments that may be submitted by any of the Members of the Commission regarding the implications which the proposed draft standard or any provisions thereof may have for their economic interests."

#### PROPOSAL TO DELETE STEP 11 FROM THE PROCEDURE FOR THE ELABORATION OF CODEX STANDARDS

63. The Executive Committee had before it document CX/EXEC 79/25/7. The Secretariat explained that subsequent to the preparation of this document Legal Officers of FAO and WHO had conferred and drawn attention to the provisions of Article 1(d) of the Commission's Statutes. The matter had been re-examined by the Secretariat which wished to arrange for the standards adopted at Step 8 by the Commission and sent to governments for acceptance to be considered as comprising "the collection of internationally adopted food standards presented in a uniform manner" referred to in the General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius.

64. The publications giving details of government notifications of acceptance should also be considered as an integral part of the Codex Alimentarius. The Executive Committee concurred in these proposals and requested that the Legal Officers of FAO and WHO prepare a document for consideration by the Executive Committee at its next session which would achieve this end, if possible, within the existing statutes and General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius.

## PROPOSED GATT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PREVENTING TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE

65. The Executive Committee had before it document CX/EXEC 79/25/5 which set forth recent developments concerning the above draft Code. The Executive Committee noted that negotiations on the text of the proposed GATT Code (now formally known as the "Draft Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade", copies of which were made available to the members of the Executive Committee) had now been completed. The Executive Committee noted that it was expected that the final text of the GATT Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, which applies to all products, including industrial and agricultural products, would be signed by representatives in time for the Agreement to enter into force, as planned, on 1 January 1980.

66. The Executive Committee, noting that the GATT Agreement calls for the use of international standards, where they exist, rather than national standards, considered that the Agreement would enhance the development of international Codex standards. Concerning section 2.5 of the Agreement regarding notification of national requirements under certain circumstances, the representative of the region of North America informed the Executive Committee that there would be no duplication of effort with notifications concerning acceptances made by governments under Codex procedures.

67. The Executive Committee noted with satisfaction the specific reference in section 13.3 of the Agreement to the need for avoiding any unnecessary duplication of effort with the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The Executive Committee considered that this aim could best be served by having representatives of the Codex Secretariat present when such matters might arise for discussion in GATT.

## HARMONIZATION OF DEFINITIONS IN THE AREA OF FOOD HYGIENE

68. The Executive Committee had before it document CX/EXEC 79/25/8 concerning discussions which had taken place in the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene on the need for the harmonization of definitions in the food hygiene field. At its 14th Session, held in September 1977, the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene had again discussed this subject when it had before it a glossary of definitions used in various Codex codes of practice compiled by the delegation of Australia. The Committee on Food Hygiene had expressed its appreciation of the glossary of definitions which had been prepared by the delegation of Australia, which had further undertaken to prepare, in consultation with the various subsidiary bodies concerned of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and in consultation with the WHO Technical Terminology Service and FAO a more comprehensive glossary of definitions in the food hygiene field, covering Codex codes of practice and standards, the Procedural Manual of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and related non-Codex documentation in FAO and WHO.

69. Dr. D. Armstrong Lowe from the WHO Technical Terminology Service informed the Committee that a series of glossaries of terminology used in the Organization's technical work was being prepared. One of the issues in this series would be directed to terms and definitions within the field of food hygiene and food safety. This issue was planned to be available in about one year's time and could be used as a background document for possible further work in the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene on a Codex glossary covering a selection of the terms and definitions with particular relevance to the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Dr. Lowe indicated that while it was true that certain terms important in food hygiene could always have a specific meaning in a particular context or for the purpose of a particular document, there were also fundamental terms that apply to food hygiene in general where no difference in meaning was permissible, as otherwise confusion even leading to adverse effects could arise.

70. The Executive Committee agreed that it might be useful to elaborate a short glossary of terms in the food hygiene field, the meaning of which should not vary. The Executive Committee accepted the offer of Dr. Lowe to make the preliminary version of the WHO glossary on food hygiene available to the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene for use as a working document.

On the other hand any comment that the Food Hygiene Committee might make would be most helpful in finalizing the WHO glossary. The Executive Committee considered that the WHO glossary would be very useful to the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene in the further development of this work. The Executive Committee expressed its appreciation to Australia for the preliminary work it had done in this regard and noted with satisfaction the willingness of Australia to collaborate in the development of the glossary referred to above.

#### DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND TIMETABLE FOR THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

71. The Executive Committee had before it a draft provisional agenda and timetable for the 13th Session of the Commission, to be held in Rome from 3 to 14 December 1979. The Committee was informed by the Secretariat that the following corrections should be made to the draft provisional agenda:

- (i) Item 13(d). Include reference to report of the 14th session of the Committee.
- (ii) Item 14(b). Should read "Consideration of Codes of Practice at Step 8".
- (iii) Item 15(a). Secretariat to check Step reached by the Code of Hygienic Practice for Peanuts and the Code of Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods.
- (iv) Item 20. Include reference to proposed amendments to Step 9 standards for fats and oils.
- (v) Item 22. Include reference to consideration of proposal of Chile to amend the Step 9 standard for canned peaches.
- (vi) Item 23. Include reference to proposed amendments to Step 9 standards for fruit juices.
- (vii) Item 24. Include quick frozen broccoli under standards to be considered at Step 8.
- (viii) Item 25. Include reference to proposed amendments to Step 9 standards for foods for special dietary uses.
- (ix) Item 32. Include reference to report on methods of analysis for sugars.
- (x) Item 33. Include consideration of standards for bouillons and consommés at Step 8.

72. The Executive Committee agreed that item 10 should be dealt with later on in the agenda, i.e. at some point after item 30. The Executive Committee also agreed that item 7 should appear after item 11, so as to be linked with the Report of the Codex Committee on General Principles. The Executive Committee agreed that the new international programme on the evaluation of the effects of chemicals on health should be a separate item of the agenda of the Commission. It was noted that developments within the governing bodies of FAO and WHO of interest to the Commission would be covered under item 8 of the agenda. Concerning item 9 of the agenda, the Executive Committee expressed the wish to have a paper on this topic.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

##### (a) International Programme for the Evaluation of the Effects of Chemicals on Health

73. The Executive Committee was provided with the WHO document A32/12 which had been presented to the 32nd World Health Assembly dealing with the international programme on the evaluation of the effects of chemicals on health. Dr. V. B. Vouk, Manager, Environmental Health Criteria and Standards Unit, Environmental Health Division, WHO, in introducing this item, made reference to the need for such a programme, the extent of the problem; the scope of the subject matter to be considered; programme components; outputs such as risk assessment, methodology and guidelines, handling of emergencies, advisory services, etc.; structure of the programme including national lead and participating institutions, central unit, advisory board, and technical committee; coordination with other organizations; and resource needs and funding mechanisms.

74. In response to questions raised by members of the Executive Committee, Dr. Vouk assured them that the intent of this international programme was to strengthen and build upon the existing activities in this area such as those carried out by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives and the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues. He further stated that the final toxicological evaluations under the new programme would continue to be carried out by international groups of experts acting in their personal and independent capacity as had been done in the past and found to be so satisfactory.

75. The Executive Committee was informed that the Director-General of WHO had written to the Director-General of FAO inviting FAO to co-sponsor this new programme.

76. The Executive Committee noted with pleasure the intention to strengthen the activities of FAO and WHO concerning food additives and contaminants and pesticide residues which represented a corner stone of the Commission's activities. The Executive Committee further noted that no change was proposed in the relationship with the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Pesticide Residues which determined work priorities for evaluation and also constituted the principal users of the recommendations of FAO/WHO in these areas.

77. The Executive Committee expressed its sincere thanks to Dr. Vouk for his excellent presentation of this important matter to which it gave general approval. The Executive Committee further agreed to place this matter on the agenda of the next session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and invited Dr. Vouk to make a presentation to that body similar to the one which he had made to the Executive Committee.

(b) Proposed Code of Ethics on the Marketing and Advertizing of Infant Foods

78. The representative of North America informed the Executive Committee that he had been requested by the government of Canada to seek a clarification of the work proposed to be undertaken by the Codex Committee on Foods for Special Dietary Uses, the World Food Council, the ACC Sub-Committee on Nutrition and a Joint WHO/UNICEF Meeting, on the development of a Code of Ethics for the Marketing and Advertizing of Infant Foods. The Executive Committee noted that the World Food Council attached particular importance to such a Code being developed within the Codex framework in order to provide governments with a Code or Guideline which they could consider for enforcement by regulatory authorities rather than voluntary compliance by industry. At the request of the Codex Committee on Foods for Special Dietary Uses, the ACC Sub-Committee on Nutrition, whose membership comprised all the agencies of the UN System concerned with nutrition, had endorsed the view that these practices should be considered in the widest possible context by the Joint WHO/UNICEF Meeting on Infant and Young Child Feeding scheduled to be held at WHO Headquarters 9-12 October 1979. Following this meeting, arrangements would be made to provide the Codex Secretariat with a draft Code for further elaboration by the Codex Committee on Foods for Special Dietary Uses at its next session in 1980 and a finalized proposed Code would be put before the Codex Alimentarius Commission for adoption at its 14th Session. The Executive Committee considered that in view of the importance attached to this matter by the World Food Council and to urgent needs expressed by delegations from developing countries for the early elaboration of a Codex Code of Practice, that progress in this matter should be reported to the Commission at its next session and an opportunity afforded to the members of the Commission to discuss these matters. It was agreed to provide for this under item 8 of the Provisional Agenda of the Commission's 13th Session.

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