

codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

JOINT OFFICE: Via delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel.: 52251 Telex: 625825-625853 FAO I Cables: Foodagri Rome Facsimile: (6)5225.4593

ALINORM 95/28

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Twenty-First Session
Rome, 3-8 July 1995

REPORT OF THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE
CODEX COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA
Abuja, Nigeria, 8-11 May 1995

Note: This document incorporates Codex Circular Letter CL 1995/14-Africa.

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CX 3/5

CL 1995/14-AFRICA
May 1995

TO:

- Codex Contact Points
- Participants at the 11th Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa
- Interested International Organizations

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

SUBJECT: DISTRIBUTION OF THE REPORT OF THE 11TH SESSION OF THE CODEX COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA (ALINORM 95/28)

The Report of the 11th Session of the above Committee (ALINORM 95/28) will be considered by the Twenty-First Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, 3-8 July 1995).

PART A - MATTERS FOR ADOPTION BY THE COMMISSION

1. Draft Codex Standard for Couscous at Step 8 (para. 22; already issued as an Addendum to ALINORM 95/28)
2. Draft Code of Practice for Street Foods at Step 5 (para. 46, Appendix II)

Governments wishing to propose amendments or to submit comments on the above documents should do so in writing, in conformity with the Codex Alimentarius Commission Procedural Manual, to the Chief, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy, not later than 31 July 1995.

PART B - REQUEST FOR COMMENTS AND INFORMATION

3. Report on Acceptances, Adoption and Use of Codex Standards and on the Implementation of the Code of Ethics in International Trade in Food (paras 33-34)
4. Report on Provision of Adequate Data (Including GAP on Pesticides in Use in Each Country, to the CCPR (paras 58-59)
5. Report on the Implementation of Action Plan to Establish/Strengthen the National Codex Contact Point/National Codex Committee (paras 52-53)

Governments wishing to submit comments and information on points 3 to 5, are invited to do so not later than 30 April 1996 to the Chief, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Eleventh Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa reached the following conclusions:-

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMISSION

The Committee:

- agreed to recommend the adoption of the Draft Codex Standard for Couscous at Step 8 (para. 22; Draft Standard already issued as Addendum to ALINORM 95/28);
- agreed to recommend the adoption of the Draft Codex Standard for Street Foods in Africa at Step 5 (para. 46 & Appendix II);
- agreed to nominate Mr. David B. Nhari (Zimbabwe) for appointment as Coordinator for Africa, from the end of the 21st Session to the end of the 22nd Session of the Commission (para. 74);

OTHER MATTERS OF INTEREST TO THE COMMISSION

The Committee:

- considered the request of the CCCPL in respect of the Draft Standards for Gari and Cassava flour and agreed on the levels of cyanogenic glycosides in Gari and Cassava flour (paras 6-8);
- requested Tanzania in collaboration with Kenya, Mozambique and Nigeria, to undertake a collaborative study of cyanogenic glycosides in cassava products utilising the modified method described by the Netherlands (para. 9);
- noted that cooperation between Codex and ARSO would be considered by the 21st Session of the Commission (para. 26);
- requested more countries in Africa to undertake food contamination monitoring and assessment programmes (para. 29);
- encouraged member countries of the Region to prepare Action Plans to establish/strengthen their Codex Contact Points/National Codex Committees (paras 52-53);
- considered the Report of the "Meeting of Codex Contact Points in Africa" and agreed to endorse the recommendations and follow-up actions of the Meeting (para. 54);
- agreed to continue the consideration of the main problems associated with the use pesticides in the Region in the future work of the Committee (para. 59);
- requested policy makers to be informed of the implications associated with the application of WTO sanitary and phytosanitary measures, with the view of sensitising them into taking positive actions that would enable the countries derive maximum benefits from the implementation of the Agreement (para. 68);
- proposed that Import control (i.e. inspection and certification) be considered in its future work (para. 73).

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Eleventh Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa was held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 8-11 May 1995, at the kind invitation of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, under the chairmanship of Professor J.A. Abalaka, Director-General of the Standards Organisation of Nigeria. It was attended by 58 participants from 21 member countries and 5 international organizations. The list of participants is appended to the report as Appendix I.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

2. During the opening ceremonies the participants were welcomed by General Jeremiah Useni, Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, representing the Head of State, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, His Excellency General Sanni Abacha. Welcoming statements were also made by:

- Dr. Bamidele F. Dada, Assistant Director-General/Regional Representative for Africa;
- Dr. W.L. Aldis, WHO Representative in Nigeria;
- The Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Alhaji Muhammad Gambo Jimeta;
- The Honourable Minister of Industry, Lieutenant General M.B. Haladu ;
- The Codex Coordinator for Africa, Director-General of the Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON), Professor J.A. Abalaka; and
- The Director-General of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Professor G.E. Osuide.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 2)

3. The Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda, as presented in document CX/AFRICA 95/1-A. In order to facilitate the discussion of Agenda Item 7 - Draft Code of Practice for Street-Vended Foods, the Committee agreed to convene an informal Working Group including the Delegations of Ghana (Chairman), Benin, Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO THE COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 3a)

Matters Arising from the Codex Alimentarius Commission and Other Codex Committees¹

4. The Committee noted the importance and the application of risk assessment in Codex work. The Committee was informed that in response to the request by the Executive Committee FAO and WHO had convened an Expert Consultation on the development of consistent risk assessment methodology in Geneva (March 1995).

5. The Committee noted that the Codex Guidelines for the Application of the HACCP System had been adopted at Step 8 by the 20th Session of the Commission and had been published in the Volume 1, Supplement 1, of the Codex Alimentarius. Because of the importance of HACCP system as applied to food processing, the CCFH at its 27th Session in October 1994 had agreed to include the Guidelines as an Annex to the Draft Code of Practice on the General Principles of Food Hygiene now at Step 5 of the Procedure. Some Delegations expressed the need for technical assistance for training in the application of HACCP system in food control. The Secretariat replied that a HACCP Working Group of Experts had been convened by FAO in Rome (13-17 February 1995), to plan a training-the-trainers course in HACCP for developing countries, from which countries in Africa might wish to benefit, when finalized.

¹ CX/AFRICA 94/2, CX/AFRICA 95/2 Addendum 1, CRD1 (comments by France, Poland, USA).

Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Gari, and Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Edible Cassava Flour

6. The Committee considered the matters referred to it by the CCCPL² in relation to Cyanogenic glycosides in the Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Gari and Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Cassava Flour. The CCCPL requested clarification as regards: (i) the different levels applied in both standards, (ii) the specific contaminant for which the level applies and (iii) the listing as a "quality factor" as opposed to a "contaminant level" of the contaminant.

7. The Committee decided to list "cyanogenic glycosides" under the heading "Specific quality factors" because they were inherent in cassava as natural toxicants and not as contaminants. The Committee noted that Gari was a fermented product and that the process enhanced the reduction level of the factor. The longer the fermentation the better the quality of the final product.

8. The Committee noted that differences in the levels of cyanogenic glycosides in Gari and Cassava flour, were due to the different methods used in their production. Whereas Gari was fermented, Cassava flour was not. The concentration of Cyanogenic glycoside would therefore be more in Cassava flour than in Gari. The Committee agreed to retain the limits of 2 mg/kg and 10 mg/kg for cyanogenic glycosides in the Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Gari and the Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Cassava flour respectively, while more information is sought from institutions such as the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture, Ibadan, Nigeria or the Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi, Lagos, Nigeria.

9. The Committee was informed that a collaborative study utilising the modified Cooke's method was proposed by Tanzania and to be carried out in collaboration with Nigeria, Mozambique and Kenya. The study was postponed for lack of adequate funding. Meanwhile in the Netherlands, a method³ was described which was an improvement on the modified Cooke's method. Many delegations felt that the project for the collaborative study, utilising the improved method described by the Netherlands, should be resuscitated by Tanzania, possibly with the support of FAO.

Proposed Draft Codex Standard for Couscous

10. The Committee was informed that the Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes (CCCPL), at its Ninth Session had considered the Draft Codex Standard for Processed Couscous. The CCCPL noted however, that the version of the Draft Standard which was circulated in CX/CPL 94/8 was not the same draft adopted by the Commission at Step 5. The CCCPL however agreed to advance the draft standard to Step 8 for adoption by the 21st Session of the Commission with the understanding that the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa would be advised of that decision. In view of this the Codex Secretariat circulated for comments, the version of the Draft Standard which was adopted by the Commission at Step 5. In response to the circular letter, comments were received from France, Poland and the United States. The Committee was invited to consider these comments and those which were proposed by the CCCPL⁴ at its Ninth Session.

General Comment

11. The Committee noted that in Section 1.1 - Scope, the term "couscous" referred to "processed couscous" and agreed to delete the term "processed" throughout the text.

Description

12. The Committee accepted a proposal to replace "...to which drinking water has been added ...", with "...the elements of which are bound by adding drinking water..", in section 2.1 of the Draft

² ALINORM 95/29, para. 105.

³ "Optimization of the Assay of Cyanogens in Cassava Products Using a New Chromogen" by A.J.A. Essers, M. Bosveld, R.M. van der Grift and A.G.J. Voragen.

⁴ ALINORM 95/29, paras 107-113.

standard. The Delegation of Uganda, proposed that the term "drinking water" should be replaced with "potable water" in order to emphasize the quality of the water to be used in processing.

Moisture

13. Two levels for the moisture content had been proposed; i.e. 12.5% and 13.5%. Many delegations felt that the keeping quality of the product depended in part on the relative humidity. The Committee agreed to adopt the higher maximum limit of 13.5% for moisture in Couscous.

Additives

14. The Committee agreed with the view expressed by the United States that the word "industrial" should be deleted, as the description 2.1 covered the definition of Couscous adequately. The term "industrial" was deleted.

Packaging

15. The Committee deleted the proposed requirements for pack sizes, because declaration of the volume/weight was a mandatory requirement by the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged foods CODEX STAN 1-1985 (Rev. 1-1991).

Name of the Product

16. The Committee agreed that the name of the product should allow for the marketing of couscous made from cereals other than durum wheat.

ANNEX

Composition

17. The Committee decided to delete "roughly", which occurred at the end of the first paragraph, because ranges within a particular grading of semolina were already stipulated, there was no need to retain the word "roughly".

Granularity

18. The Committee accepted a proposal that the range of 630 to 2000 microns for granularity should be accompanied by a tolerance of 6%.

Fat Acidity

19. Noting that no limits were set for fat acidity in the Codex Standard for Durum Wheat Flour and Durum Wheat Semolina, the Committee agreed not to set a limit for fat acidity in Couscous.

Ash

20. The Committee agreed to retain the current value of maximum 1.1% for ash in couscous.

Carotenoids, Disaggregation, Dry Gluten

21. The Committee agreed to delete these three factors, and the corresponding methods were also deleted.

STATUS OF THE DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR COUSCOUS

22. The Committee agreed to advance the Draft Codex Standard for Couscous to Step 8 of the Procedure for adoption by the 21st Session of the Commission. The Draft Standard had been issued as an Addendum to ALINORM 95/28.

REPORT ON COOPERATION WITH ARSO (Agenda Item 3 (b))

23. The Secretariat recalled that following discussions held during the 20th Session of the Commission, and in view of the agreement between ISO and Codex as to their respective responsibilities, a meeting was held in Nairobi between ARSO, the Codex Secretariat, and the Coordinator for Africa. Besides a number of working arrangements designed to facilitate cooperation

(presented in document CX/AFRICA 94/2-Add.1), it noted that Codex would no longer work on elaboration of Regional Standards, whereas ARSO was to continue to do so for the Region of Africa, and that ARSO would take into account Codex texts when dealing with food standardization.

24. The Observer from ARSO emphasized the need to optimize existing resources and drew the attention of the Committee to the regional network of documentation and information ARSO-DISNET, established in 1991; 5 members of ARSO were connected by E-mail at the moment and other countries were invited to join this system to improve exchange of data on standardization, which would be useful in the perspective of the WTO Agreements and contribute to regional cooperation in general.

25. Some delegations and the Observer from Consumers International was of the view that African countries should make better use of the possibilities offered by the cooperation between ARSO and Codex, and participate more actively in ARSO to benefit from its information network. The Committee noted that cooperation between ARSO and the Regional Office of Consumers International could also be developed.

26. The Committee had an extensive exchange of views on the implications of the agreement with respect to regional standards. Some delegations expressed the opinion that Codex, as the expert body on food standardization, should not disengage itself at the regional level, and called for the same agreement that exists between ISO and Codex at the highest level to be established at the regional level. The Chairman pointed out that the responsibilities of the Coordinating Committee were not affected by the general agreement between ARSO and the Commission, and the Secretariat indicated that, in the framework of the cooperation agreement, regional standards developed by ARSO could be later forwarded to Codex for development into a Codex standard if necessary. The Committee noted that cooperation between ARSO and Codex would be considered by the 21st session of the Commission.

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO COMPLEMENTARY TO THE WORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION SINCE THE 10th SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 4)⁵

27. The delegation of Zimbabwe pointed out that the practical utilization of food irradiation in developing countries as discussed by the Tenth Session of the FAO/WHO/IAEA International Consultative Group on Food Irradiation, was jeopardized by the high cost of this technology. The delegation also noted that aspects of safety, labelling and consumer view should also be taken into consideration.

28. In reply to a question by the Delegation of Cameroon regarding the possible substitution of cocoa fat with other vegetable fat, the Committee was informed that no changes had been introduced in the Codex Standard for Chocolate and Cocoa Products, which would be circulated for comments with a view to their revision and updating in the light of the Commission's recommendations. The next Commission Session would consider the opportunity to reconvene the Codex Committee on Cocoa Products and Chocolate, adjourned *sine die*, for this purpose. Aspects of economic implication, position of importing and exporting countries would be considered in the process.

29. With respect to an improved participation of more African countries in the Joint UNEP/FAO/WHO Food Contamination Monitoring and Assessment Programme (GEMS/Food), the Committee was informed that the programme was opened to all countries including experienced and qualified laboratories in the monitoring of contaminants. In some cases assistance and training could also be provided in the management of data at the national level and participating institutions could receive support for the improvement of the accuracy and reliability of their results.

PROGRESS REPORT ON ACCEPTANCE, ADOPTION AND USE OF CODEX STANDARDS AND PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF ETHICS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE (Agenda item 5)⁶

30. The Secretariat recalled the amendments to the acceptance procedure adopted by the 20th Session of the Commission, whereby "target acceptance" was deleted and "free distribution" was introduced for all standards; it was also recommended that countries make positive statements concerning the acceptance and use of Codex standards and pesticide MRLs. No notifications from the Region had been received so far and delegations were invited to report on the status of acceptances as well as the use of standards.

31. Several delegations indicated that although acceptance had not been notified in view of a number of administrative difficulties, such as restructuring or review of their food laws. However, they intended to use Codex standards as a reference, and notify acceptance and use in the future. The Committee noted the difficulties related to lack of continuity and coordination in relevant authorities at the national level.

32. With reference to MRLs, many countries indicated that at this stage the infrastructure and laboratory capacity for MRL monitoring did not exist or was insufficient, and that they had no specific regulations for pesticides. In the case of exports, the legislation of the importing country was taken into account. Some countries had established specific structures for the homologation of pesticides and used Codex MRLs as reference.

33. The Chairman encouraged countries in the Region to provide regular update on these matters, and the Secretariat noted that widespread use was made of Codex standards and related texts, although no formal acceptance was notified. This was a significant indication that countries were aware of the obligations they had to meet under the SPS and TBT Agreements. The Committee was informed that the first meeting of the SPS Committee had been held at the end of March 1995 and that the 21st Session of the Commission would consider matters related to acceptance of Codex standards in the perspective of the WTO Agreements.

34. The Committee noted the recent publication in booklet form of the Code of Ethics for International Trade in Food, developed by the CCGP; when no specific legislation existed at the national level, countries could refer to the Code to ensure protection against unfair trade practices.

CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN CODEX WORK AND RELATED MATTERS (Agenda Item 6)⁷

35. This item had been placed on the Agenda following consideration of consumer participation in Codex work by the 20th Commission Session. Because it was mainly a national issue, and should be addressed by governments as such Coordinating Committees had been requested to consider this matter regularly to assess the progress made in this respect.

36. The Observer from Consumers International recalled the recommendations made by the Pan-African Conference (Kadoma, Zimbabwe, March 1994) highlighted the need for all food to conform to international Codex standards, especially when donated, as contaminated food provided for emergency relief had caused serious diseases in some instances. Governments were responsible for preventing the marketing of unsafe or sub-standard quality food, especially in view of economic difficulties facing the populations in Africa and the demand for cheap food. Consumers should therefore participate in the work of National Codex Committees and national regulatory bodies and should be able to develop government awareness of their concerns.

37. The Delegation of Zimbabwe indicated that its Consumers Council was supported by the government, as evidenced by the participation of its representative in this Committee, and was

⁶ CX/AFRICA 94/4

⁷ CX/AFRICA 94/5

represented in the activities of food standardization through the Standards Association of Zimbabwe, food legislation and food control authorities, in order to achieve the common objective of consumer protection. It was noted that the Committee on Food Hygiene had agreed to develop Guidelines on Consumer Education in Food Hygiene to improve risk communication, which was strongly supported by the Consumers Council.

38. The Delegation of Uganda pointed out that consumers were entitled to participate in technical committees dealing with food control but did rarely attend in practice in view of the lack of competent experts. The Bureau of Standards received complaints from consumers and issued information to the public. The Delegation of Zambia informed the Committee that the Consumer Protection Association participated in the work of the Standards Council and generally were consulted on food legislation and inspection issues. The Delegation of Tanzania reported that a Consumer Protection Act had been enacted by the government, mainly to address all kinds of frauds in trade practices. The body implementing the Act - "The Tanzania Consumer Protection Association", has actively started its work by collaborating with all food controlling agencies including the standardization of food. The Delegation of Nigeria indicated that consumer associations participated in the council of SON, as well as consultative meetings with NAFDAC, and that Consumer Protection Council included the ministries, consumers, NGOs, as well as industry and research institutes.
39. The Delegation of Burkina Faso stated that two consumers associations had been in existence in that country for 10 years; they had been encouraged by the authorities to facilitate the implementation of health and safety policy and develop consumer awareness in this area. Their advice was regularly sought to address health and welfare issues. The Delegation of Gabon noted that a recently created consumers association participated in the National Codex Committee, and in consultations for the establishment of a general food law, currently being developed as part of a restructuring project.
40. The Delegation of Kenya indicated that the Consumers Association attended regularly the meeting of the Kenya Bureau of Standards and the National Standards Council. The Delegation of Cote d'Ivoire pointed out that their Consumers Association participated in standardization activities as well as the National Food Council and had been active in the elaboration of regulations for the safety of street foods. The Delegation of Benin said that, in its country, there are two Consumers Associations and they participate in Codex activities. They were associated lately with the establishment of the Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition and the Plan of Action for Food Safety. The members of Codex have established relations with these associations for the exchange of technical information and they utilise these organized groups to facilitate their actions. The Delegation of Cameroon in its contribution said that, in its country there is a National Consumers Association working in close collaboration with the Sub-Direction of Consumer Protection in the Ministry of Economy and Finance. This association's objective is to defend the interests of its members.
41. The Delegation of Morocco indicated that consumers associations were recently created and were not yet integrated in an institutional framework. The Delegation of Senegal stated that several active associations existed; they developed information actions through the media on food safety problems, and they were involved in the discussions of food control authorities. The Delegation of Algeria pointed out that the role of consumers associations (2 national and 7 regional ones) was recognized by law and that they took legal action when cases came before the courts.
42. The Chairman took note of the efforts which had been made in this area and encouraged Member countries to involve consumers in Codex related matters and food safety issues for the common benefit. It was noted that this issue would be specifically discussed by the 21st Commission Session, on the basis of a discussion document prepared by Consumers International.

CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STREET FOODS (Agenda Item 7)⁸

43. The Committee was reminded that the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) had considered the Proposed Draft Regional Codes and had recognized that a general or global model code was inappropriate. The CCFH had invited the Coordinating Committees to reconsider their approach to determine whether regional codes in their present form were actually needed or guidelines should be developed to support local authorities in the countries to elaborate detailed national codes.

44. The Representative of FAO further informed the Committee of some of the activities undertaken by FAO on street foods. Following the recommendations from the Inter-country Workshop on Street Foods held in Accra, a regional Workshop on street foods in french speaking countries was held in Benin in November 1994 and recommendations were proposed for the promotion and control of street foods in the sub-region.

45. The Committee considered the amendments proposed by the Working Group (Benin, Ghana (Chairman), Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe). In paragraph 5.3.1 apart from making an editorial amendment, the Committee considered that the supply of hot running water by street food vendors was not feasible, and the relevant clause was deleted. Paragraph 6.4 was modified with respect to disposable and non-disposable crockery. The paragraph 7.4 of Section 7 was amended with respect to unsold cooked food and prepared beverages that cannot be properly preserved. In Section 9, a new paragraph was added after paragraph 9.5.3 concerning the need for advisers working with vendors to be familiar with the use of the HACCP concept and the General Principles of Food Hygiene (see para. 5 above).

Status of the Proposed Draft Code of Practice for Street foods

46. The Committee agreed to advance the Draft Code as amended to Step 5 of the Procedure. The Proposed Draft Code is appended to this report as Appendix II.

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF CODEX CONTACT POINTS IN THE REGION (Agenda Item 8)

47. The Committee had before it the document on Strengthening the role of Codex Contact Points in the Region. The Committee was reminded that in 1988 during its 8th Session, the Committee had considered the paper⁹ on Proposed Guidelines for setting up National Codex Committees or other infrastructures for Coordination of National Positions on Food Standards questions. The proposed guidelines suggested ways and means of improving on the effectiveness of the National Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees.

48. At its Tenth Session in 1992, the Committee considered the "Draft Guidelines for the work of Codex Contact Points in the Region and Strengthening National Codex Committees."¹⁰ It was stressed that good working relation should be forged between the Codex Contact Point and other relevant governmental, non-governmental agencies, NGOs, Industry, Research Institutions etc. The authority in charge of the Contact Point had the essential responsibility to ensure effective and continuing coordination of activities in this area, including the distribution of the relevant information to all interested agencies, official or otherwise (ALINORM 93/28, para. 30).

49. At this present session, it became necessary to review efforts made by member countries either in establishing their Codex Contact Points/National Codex Committees or to assist member countries in strengthening them. The Food Quality and Standards Service in collaboration with the FAO Regional Office in Accra organized a two-day Meeting of Codex Contact Points in Africa, which was held on 5

⁸ CX/AFRICA 95/6

⁹ CX/AFRICA 88/12

¹⁰ CX/AFRICA 92/6

and 6 May, 1995. The Meeting was attended by 24 participants from 16 countries. The Delegation of Senegal, presented the report of the Workshop.

50. The programme of the Workshop included five lectures and provided for discussions by participants on all the topics. Two of the lectures were designed to familiarize participants with the establishment of the Commission, how it was set up to achieve its purpose. Another two lectures were devoted to discussing National Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees, their roles and linkages to enable them to be effective in the discharge of their duties in support of the purpose of the Commission. One of the lectures was a critical review of the effectiveness or otherwise of the contributions so far made by the countries in the Region of Africa to the work of the Commission, while another lecture focused on the roles National Standards Bodies which are also Codex Contact Points could play in the work of the Commission. At the end of the talks, the participants identified obstacles to the effectiveness of National Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees, and meaningful recommendations were made.

51. Participants had identified 5 major obstacles to the effective and efficient performance of the Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees in their roles during the course of the Workshop and had also provided appropriate recommendations to match the obstacles.

Obstacle 1 The non-existence of a Codex Contact Point to link the country with the Codex secretariat, and also to provide administrative support to the National Codex Committee. This would also mean that there is no link with the appropriate arm of government.

Obstacle 2 Lack of government's political will and support to encourage the officials in the Codex Contact Point and National Codex Committee. Thus there is no provision of appropriate resources - financial, human and material, with which to effectively and efficiently execute its duties.

Obstacle 3 Management of the Codex Contact Point by officials with inadequate knowledge of the roles expected of the Codex Contact Point and or National Codex Committee.

Obstacle 4 Inadequate dissemination/retrieval of information to relevant ministries, consumer associations, the industry, Non-Governmental Organizations etc.

Obstacle 5 Lack of coordination of Codex activities by the Codex Contact Point and National Codex Committee.

Recommendation 1 As a matter of urgency, African governments were invited to seriously consider the establishment of Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees, where there were none, and to strengthen existing ones. Where a Codex Contact Point is to be established, government is invited to ensure that the Contact Point is located where it could effectively and efficiently execute its tasks. Furthermore government might wish to ensure that the composition of the National Codex Committee should be multidisciplinary comprising representatives from the relevant Ministries, the Industry, Consumers Associations, National Standards Bodies, Research Institutions, Non-governmental Organizations and Co-opted experts, who are knowledgeable in the areas of interest to the Commission.

Recommendation 2 The Codex Contact Points and or the National Codex Committees may wish to sensitize policy makers by developing strategies to fully inform policy makers of the usefulness of Codex Standards, Codes and Guidelines in food control, in ensuring the protection of the health and safety of consumers and the enhancement of the country's economy through facilitation of domestic and international trade in food. In response, Governments are invited to provide financial and other supports to the Codex Contact Point and National Codex Committee to enable them perform their roles effectively and efficiently.

Recommendation 3 The Codex Contact Point should periodically inform the Codex Secretariat of the progress made on acceptances of Codex final texts, maximum residue limits for pesticides etc. Similarly, Codex Contact Points should endeavour to acknowledge and make responses to Codex circular letters.

Recommendation 4 The Codex Contact Point should timeously disseminate Codex documents requiring comments and acceptance to the members of the National Codex Committee and any other interested parties.

Recommendation 5 The Codex Contact Point should encourage/foster proper coordination of Codex activities nationally.

Follow-up

52. As a follow-up to the Workshop, participants were requested to relate the identified obstacles to situations in their respective countries and thereby draw up an Action Plan to establish/strengthen the country's Codex Contact Point/National Codex Committee, which would be circulated to policy makers, and other concerned authorities. The Government may wish to consider requesting financial and technical assistance from interested donor agencies to implement the Action Plan.

53. Participants agreed that progress made on the implementation of the Action Plan by countries in the Region, should be included in the agenda for the 12th Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa.

Conclusion

54. The Delegations attending the 11th Session endorsed these recommendations and stressed the need for an improved flow of communication between the Codex Secretariat and the Codex Contact Points and vice versa.

**MAIN PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF PESTICIDES IN THE REGION
(Agenda Item 9)**

55. The Representative of FAO introduced document CX/AFRICA 95/8, recalling that, at its 20th Session the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) agreed to appoint an *ad hoc* Working Group on Pesticide Residue Problems in Developing Countries with the aim of facilitating the identification of inconsistency between national practices, registered use and Codex MRLs. He also emphasized the role of the Codex Coordinating Committees to analyze specific problems at regional level and to provide specific information and requests to the CCPR.

56. Several delegations informed the Committee of their national systems to control the use of pesticides. Most of the countries have established inter ministerial authorities for the registration of pesticides and have published national regulations, based on Codex standards or other standards established by economic groups, partners of their food import/export. Laboratories facilities are

available in some countries, while in other countries assistance was provided by FAO or other specialized international organization to improve analytical control of pesticides.

57. Other countries informed the Committee that at national level, residues of pesticides in food were not controlled and that the main problems were due to the misuse of pesticides and their formulation. The most evident problems were related to acute intoxication of people. Such countries emphasized their priority in the development of adequate national system to control the registration and use of pesticides.

58. Most delegations expressed their wish to examine these aspects with the national technical institutions with the objective to produce adequate information to the CCPR.

59. The Committee agreed to continue to include this Agenda Item in the future work of the Committee, with the objective of improving the coordination in the collection of data on imported/exported commodities of the region and on the main use of pesticides at regional level.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION ARISING FROM THE FINAL ACT OF THE URUGUAY ROUND OF MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS RELATED TO THE AGREEMENT ON THE APPLICATION OF SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES (SPS) AND THE AGREEMENT ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE (TBT) (Agenda Item 10)¹¹

60. The Committee was informed that, under the WTO/SPS and TBT Agreements, Codex standards and codes were presumed to meet the requirements of the Agreements as being both necessary for the protection of consumer's health and appropriate for use in international trade. The objective of the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade was to prevent the use of national technical requirements or standards in general as unjustified technical barriers to trade. WTO Members were encouraged to set up sanitary and phytosanitary measures which should apply to domestic as well as imported food products.

61. The Committee recognised the implications of the SPS Agreement for developing countries including those in Africa. The Committee was informed that in order to be able to implement sanitary and phytosanitary measures for the protection of the health and life of the people and animals, it becomes necessary to establish efficient food control systems or to strengthen existing ones. The Committee noted with disappointment the amount of money lost by countries in the region, due to the rejection of their exported food products. Some delegations remarked that higher sanitary and phytosanitary measures were being used by some developed countries to the disadvantage of developing ones which have no capabilities to monitor the safety of the food entering through their borders.

62. The Chairman invited Delegates to be well prepared to fully inform their governments as regards the implications of their concurrence to the agreement. The Committee was informed that in order that member countries have better understanding of the Agreement, the World Trade Organization was planning two seminars to be held in Africa, in Pretoria and in Dakar. The first training seminar was planned for the 2nd week of November 1995.

63. The Observer from Consumers International said that the implementation of the WTO/SPS measures should be to the benefit of the consumer because it would permit the consumer to benefit from a wider choice of safe, good quality and nutritive foods at competitive prices. The Observer said that because Africa contributes only about 2% to the world trade, the region might become dependent on food import. The Observer therefore urged African consumers to consume local food products. He said that foreign products might not necessarily be of satisfactory quality. The worst was still to be expected when agricultural subsidies were reduced. This would result in high cost of imported food. In conclusion the Observer advised governments to set up control measures that would enable them monitor the quality of their imports.

¹¹ CX/AFRICA 95/9

64. The Delegation of Burkina Faso and several other delegations admitted that African countries must take decisive steps to meet the challenges posed by the implementation of the WTO/SPS measures. Issues such as the activities of smugglers, the lack of cooperation among governmental food control agencies leading to duplication of efforts and wastage of scarce resources, should be addressed.

65. The Committee noted the importance of assistance to developing countries in the proper application of ISO 9000 and the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point concept as compliance with these systems in food processing were being demanded by some overseas buyers.

66. The Observer from ARSO said that the relevant paper was of great importance. It would appear that African countries were being edged out of the trade in food. The Observer proposed that the paper should be distributed among relevant ministries in order to sensitise them into positive action. He also referred to the paragraph on TCDC in the paper and encouraged delegations to utilise the services offered by ARSO-CERT and ARSO-DISNET.

67. The Committee was informed that a concrete proposal to strengthen the national food control systems of 34 countries in Africa was in the pipeline. The project would establish 4 centres for the training of food control officers in Africa. The Representative of FAO/RAFR urged delegates of the countries involved in the proposed project to appeal to concerned authorities in their various countries to indicate their concurrence with the project idea on receipt of the document.

68. The Chairman invited every delegation on their return home to take positive actions to inform policy makers of the implications of inadequate preparation to implement the WTO/SPS measures.

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE WORK (Agenda Item 11)

69. The Delegation of Tanzania drew the attention of the Committee to the importance of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD) and the need to establish a standard on the iodization of salt. The delegation further stated that the level of iodine in the salt at the production level/and at the port of entry in case of imported salt should be between 50 and 100 ppm. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the last session of the Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (March 1995) had initiated the revision of the Standard for Food Grade Salt to include the iodization of salt, and that it had been agreed to leave the definition of levels of iodine to national authorities according to the situation prevailing in the country. As this text was currently circulated at Step 3¹², countries in the region were invited to send their comments and information on their experience to the CCNFSDU. A WHO booklet on "Iodine and Health" had been published to assist countries in setting an adequate level of fortification.

70. In reply to a question on low fat spreads by the Delegation of Kenya, the Secretariat indicated that a standard for fat spreads was under elaboration, but that the use of nutrition claims such as "low" for a specific nutrient was a horizontal matter under the responsibility of the Committee on Food Labelling and the CCNFSDU; the conditions for the use of claims for low fat, saturated fat and cholesterol were included in the Table of Conditions for Claims for Nutrient Content, as part of the Proposed Draft Guidelines for Use of Health and Nutrition Claims (at Step 5), which also included provisions for the use of the "reduced" claim.

71. In reply to a question on aflatoxins and other mycotoxins, the Representative of FAO informed the Committee of FAO activities in this area and the Secretariat informed the Committee that the Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes had set Proposed Guideline Level and Sampling Plans for Aflatoxins in Peanuts, 15 mg/kg for total aflatoxins in peanuts (ALINORM 95/29, Appendix II) on the basis of the sampling plans proposed by the Expert Consultation on Sampling Plans for Aflatoxins in Peanuts and Corn (FAO Food and Nutrition Paper 55). In view of the difficulties to reach consensus on maximum levels for mycotoxins and other contaminants, the Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants had agreed to approach this issue through the development of Codes of

practice for the reduction of contamination, and countries in the Region were invited to submit relevant information to the CCFAC.

72. The Delegation of Algeria suggested that in the framework of the ICN follow-up, Guidelines for the evaluation of the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Nutrition be established. The Representative of FAO/RAFR indicated that these were being considered by FAO and WHO.

73. The Committee agreed that in addition to future work arising from the questions discussed under previous Agenda items, consideration should be given to the problem of rejected products at the import stage and their ultimate destination, and import control in the Region.

NOMINATION OF COORDINATOR (Agenda Item 12)¹³

74. The Delegation of Botswana, supported unanimously by the Committee, proposed Mr. David Nhari (Zimbabwe) for appointment by the 21st Session of the Commission until the end of the 22nd Session of the Commission.

75. The Committee expressed its appreciation and warm thanks to Professor Abalaka and to the government of Nigeria for their support of the Committee's work, and the action of the Coordinator to represent the interest of the Region in the framework of Codex.

76. Mr. Nhari thanked the Committee for his nomination and expressed his willingness to work in cooperation with the present Coordinator and all Member countries in the Region to pursue the task of the Committee.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION (Agenda Item 13)

77. The Committee was informed that, subject to the approval of the Commission, the next session would be held in Zimbabwe in November 1996. The exact date and venue of the session would be determined between the Codex Secretariat and the host country.

SUMMARY STATUS OF WORK

Subject Matter	Action by	Document Ref. in ALINORM 95/28
Adoption of the Draft Codex Standard for Couscous at Step 8 of the Procedure	21st Session of CAC	Para. 22
Adoption of the Draft Code of Practice for Street Foods at Step 5	21st Session of CAC	Para. 46
Report on the Implementation of an Action Plan to Establish/Strengthen Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees	Governments	Paras 52-53
Initiating Food Contamination Monitoring Programme	Governments	Para. 29
Provision of Information on Main Problems Associated with the Use of Pesticides in the Region	Governments	Para. 59
Informing Policy Makers of the Implications of the Implementation of the WTO/SPS Measures	Governments	Para. 68
Continued Involvement of Consumers in Codex and Related Matters	Governments	Para. 42
Consideration of Problems Associated with Rejected Food Products at the Import Stage and Their Ultimate Destination	Governments, FAO	Para. 73
Import Control (Inspection/Certification)	Governments, FAO	Para. 73

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**PROPOSED DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE FOR
STREET FOODS IN AFRICA
(At Step 5 of the Procedure)**

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PREAMBLE

The Intercountry Workshop on Street Foods in Africa held at Accra, Ghana from 27 April to 1 May 1992, recommended amongst other things, that street food should be recognized and proper regulations (including licensing systems) be prepared by the national authorities in collaboration with local government and representatives of both vendors' and consumers' interests.

The Code that follows is proposed as a first step towards the implementation of that recommendation. The provisions of the Code reflect closely those included in a similar Code elaborated by Malaysia and presently under consideration for further development.

As it stands, the Code provides for the recommendations of the Accra meeting in respect to the licensing of vendors, the health, hygiene and behaviour of vendors; their training, water supply, appliances, food preparation and its cooking handling and serving, food storage, dealing with waste, street food centres and customer facilities.

The Code also provides for a Street Food Advisory Service whose proposed function is to work with vendors offering them on-site advice and guidance to improve their operations in accordance with the requirements of the Code.

The Code is presented as an advisory document and more as an operational manual than a set of mandatory or regulatory requirements demanding absolute compliance. Following trial of the Code it may very well be appropriate to incorporate those provisions proved valuable into regulations. However, as street food vending is a most important if not essential source of food for low income earners and a source of income for many others, including women who would otherwise be unemployed, care must be taken that it is not unnecessarily obstructed and discouraged by over-regulation and officiousness.

While there should be no compromise with the health of consumers, neither should controls greater than required be applied to purveyors of street foods. On-the-spot advice to vendors by qualified advisors may be sufficient in many cases to make the difference between unsafe and safe products. For this reason, '9.5 Street Food Advisory Service' has been included in the Code in addition to 4.3 Training of Vendors'; the former being less formal than the latter, with advisors working amongst vendors during business hours.

DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE
FOR STREET FOODS IN AFRICA

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION/SCOPE

The objective of this Code is to upgrade the operation of the street food industry to ensure that the population has available wholesome, safe and nutritious food in accessible places and at affordable prices.

The Code specifies the general hygienic requirements and practices to be observed in the conduct, preparation and sale of street foods.

SECTION 2 - DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Code, unless indicated otherwise, the following definitions apply:

- 2.1 **Street Foods:** ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors and hawkers especially in streets and other similar public places, (see FAO Food and Nutrition Paper 46).
- 2.2 **Static Vendor:** means any person setting up a stall in any public or private location for the purpose of preparing, serving or displaying for sale any street food.
- 2.3 **Mobile Vendor:** means any person with/without a vehicle going from place to place for the purpose of preparing, serving, displaying, distributing or delivering any street food.
- 2.4 **Street Food Centre:** means any public place or establishment designated by the relevant authority for the preparation, display and sale of ready-to-eat food and/or beverages by multiple vendors.
- 2.5 **Environment:** means location and surroundings pertaining to the purchase, transportation and storage of food ingredients and the preparation, storage, transportation, display and sale of street food.
- 2.6 **Sputum:** means saliva or spittle mixed with mucus or purulent matter, and expectorated in certain disease states of the lungs, chest or throat.
- 2.7 **Impermeable:** means not allowing the passage of water and/or fluid.
- 2.8 **Crockery:** means all glasses, plates, dishes, cups, saucers, spoons, forks, ladles, chopsticks and other articles used in serving and consumption of food, including disposable articles.
- 2.9 **Utensil:** means any appliance, container and equipment including traditional types used in the preparation, storage and sale of foods.
- 2.10 **Waste Water:** means sullage water arising as a result of the activity of vendors.
- 2.11 **Relevant Authority:** means the Ministry having responsibility and any local authority.
- 2.12 **Perishable Food:** means food that is of such a type or is in such a condition that it may spoil.

- 2.13 **Readily Perishable Food:** means perishable food that consists wholly or partly of milk, milk products, eggs, meat, poultry, fish or shellfish, or ingredients that are capable of supporting the progressive growth of microbiological organisms that can cause food poisoning and other food borne illness.
- 2.14 **Potable Water:** means treated water which shall comply with applicable potable water requirements, (e.g. WHO Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality).
- 2.15 **Clean Water:** means water from any natural source where there is no reason to believe the water is contaminated.
- 2.16 **Microorganisms:** means any microscopic living organism that can cause disease or food spoilage.
- 2.17 **Pest:** means any member of the animal kingdom, including domestic animals, capable of directly or indirectly contaminating food.
- 2.18 **Sealed Container:** means all forms of containers that are:
- hermetically sealed
 - sealed jars, with anchor and crown type closures
 - milk bottles sealed with aluminium caps
 - glass jars and bottles with screw caps; and,
 - cans and similar containers with or without hermetic seals.
- 2.19 **Disposable Articles:** means any appliance, container, implement, utensil or wrapper that is intended for use only once in the preparation, storage, display, consumption or sale of food.
- 2.20 **Water Container:** means any form of food grade container which is used solely for the purpose of storing water and has not been used previously for any other purposes.
- 2.21 **Street Food Stall:** means a place where street food is prepared, displayed, served or sold to the public. It includes carts, tables, benches, baskets, chairs, vehicles with or without wheels and any other structure approved by the relevant authority where on it or in it, any ready-to-eat food or beverages are displayed for sale.
- 2.22 **Appliances:** means the whole or any part of any utensil, machinery, instrument, apparatus or article used or intended for use, in or for making, preparing, keeping, selling or supplying of food.
- 2.23 **Ready-to-eat Food:** Any food (including beverages) which is normally consumed in its raw state or any food handled, processed, mixed, cooked, or otherwise prepared into a form in which it is normally consumed without further handling.

SECTION 3 - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Regulations

To enable official recognition and control of the street food industry as an integral part of the food supply, appropriate regulations should be prepared either separately or for incorporation into existing food regulations.

3.2 Licensing of Vendors

No vendor shall conduct his/her business of preparation, packing, storage, display and sale of any ready-to-eat food and beverages unless he/she is licensed under the relevant food regulations.

3.3 Conditions for Licensing

No relevant authority shall register or renew the registration of any vendor who does not comply with all requirements of this Code and any other requirements that are specified by the relevant authority.

3.4 Display of Notices

Every registered vendor shall at all times display conspicuously

3.4.1 His/her vendor's License

3.4.2 Where required by the relevant authority:

- i) A notice printed in plain capital letters not less than 25 mm point lettering in the following or similar words, namely, "ANIMALS ARE NOT ALLOWED" in and around the business-area. Posters and/or graphical illustrations could alternatively be used.
- ii) A notice indicating the proper attire for vendors specified by the relevant authority.
- iii) Any other notices that are required to be displayed.

3.5 Pest Control

Every vendor shall at all times take suitable and appropriate measures as may be necessary to keep his/her stall free from pests, including rodents, flies, insects or vermin infestation to prevent contamination of the food.

Every vendor shall, on becoming aware of the presence of any such pest or harbourage, immediately take all practicable measures to get rid of the pest or harbourage and to prevent reinfestation.

Any food found to have become contaminated by pests shall be appropriately destroyed in a hygienic manner.

SECTION 4 - VENDORS

4.1 Health Status of Vendors

4.1.1 Any vendor, helper or food handler, whether suspected of suffering from a communicable disease or not, who is likely to transmit disease producing organisms to food shall not conduct his business until he furnishes a certificate from a medical practitioner that he is free from infection.

4.1.2 Any vendor, helper or food handler who is suffering from diarrhoea and/or vomiting shall cease from handling food in any capacity and seek medical treatment.

4.1.3 Any vendor, helper or food handler who has been identified as or is known to be or has previously been a carrier of foodborne disease organisms, shall not be involved in any food handling activity until certified by a Medical Officer of Health as a non-carrier.

4.1.4 Any vendor, helper or food handler may be required to undergo medical examination and necessary investigation by the relevant authority before he is issued a licence and at any other time as deemed necessary by the relevant authority.

4.1.5 Any vendor, helper or food handler shall be required to be immunized against food and water borne disease such as typhoid or any other food and water borne diseases as required by the relevant authority.

4.2 Personal Hygiene and Behaviour

Every vendor, helper or food handler, during the conduct of his business, shall observe the following:

4.2.1 Wear an identification tag if issued and required by the relevant authority.

4.2.2 Dress in clean and proper attire.

4.2.3 Wear clean, light coloured overalls, aprons and other appropriate outer wear, head gear and shoes.

4.2.4 Wash hands thoroughly with soap and clean water before and after handling food, after visiting the toilet, after handling insanitary articles, after handling toxic and dangerous materials as and when necessary.

4.2.5 Finger nails should be kept short and clean at all times.

4.2.6 Hair should be kept clean and tidy and should be covered during operation.

4.2.7 Persons with open sores, wounds, boils or skin eruptions which are infected shall not handle food. Non-infected cuts shall be completely protected by a waterproof dressing which is firmly secured and routinely changed.

4.2.8 Shall not eat, drink, smoke, or chew tobacco, chewing gum, or other materials, while preparing or serving food.

4.2.9 Refrain from any unhygienic practices such as spitting and cleaning nose, ears or any other body orifice.

4.2.10 Shall not wear rings, bracelets, bangles, jewellery or accessories on finger and wrists.

4.2.11 Shall not lick fingers while handling food.

4.2.12 Shall not sneeze or cough onto the food.

4.2.13 If gloves are used, they shall be clean, sound and sanitary and used for the specific purpose of:

a) handling foods, they shall be of the disposable type;

b) for cleaning, washing and sanitizing they may be of another type, disposable or non-disposable.

4.2.14 Shall not allow visitors or customers into the food preparation and handling area to avoid food contamination.

4.2.15 No vendor is allowed to use the stall as a sleeping or dwelling place, or for any other personal activity.

4.3 Training of Vendors

Every vendor, helper or food handler shall undergo a basic training in food hygiene prior to licensing and further training as required by the relevant authority. Training is to be conducted by the relevant authority or other institutions recognized or approved by the relevant authorities. Vendors should also be made aware of their responsibility to consumers and be informed of available credit facilities and other sources of finance to assist and improve their businesses.

Simple posters illustrating the "dos" and "don'ts" of street food preparation and vending should be widely and prominently displayed in relevant places for the benefit of both vendors and consumers.

4.4 Vendor's Associations

The formation of street food vendor associations or cooperatives should be encouraged to provide a liaison point with food control authorities, provide training for members and formulate and apply industry standards.

SECTION 5 - DESIGN AND STRUCTURE

5.1 Location

5.1.1 The location should be suitable for the purpose of avoiding contamination of the food prepared and served or sold at or from the stall. Stalls shall not be located in restricted areas such as solid waste disposal areas (rubbish dumps, sewage treatment or oxidation lagoons), animal habitats or husbandry centres (abattoirs, wet markets), offensive, dangerous and nuisance trades areas or other areas designated by relevant authorities.

5.1.2 In addition to 5.1.1 mobile vendors shall operate in areas which are free or reasonably free from objectionable odours, smoke, dust, toxic fumes or other non-prohibited areas as designated by the relevant authority.

5.1.3 The area where the stall is located and immediate surroundings should be paved with smooth impervious material that is easily cleaned and capable of withstanding repeated washing and scrubbing.

5.1.4 The space in and around the vendors' stall shall be free of unnecessary stored goods or articles, discarded articles and any obstruction in order to enable every worker to carry out his duties efficiently and to permit easy access for cleaning.

5.1.5 The stall should be conveniently located near an inlet of a drainage system or any suitable means of disposing waste water in a sanitary manner.

5.2 Structures

5.2.1 Vendors' stalls shall be of a type approved by the relevant authority and shall be constructed from impervious materials that can be easily cleaned such as stainless steel, aluminium, glazed tiles

or any other materials as approved by the relevant authority. It shall be properly constructed as to be readily cleaned and maintained in a good state of repair at all times.

5.2.2 Food Preparation areas and working surfaces should be made of a smooth and impermeable food grade material.

5.2.3 All cooking ranges, washing equipment, working tables, shelves and cupboards on or in which food is placed should be at least 45cm above the ground.

5.2.4 There should be adequate provision of artificial light of sufficient intensity to ensure a reasonable standard of illumination for every part of the stall.

5.3 Sanitary Facilities

5.3.1 Water Supply: Vendors should ensure sufficient supply of hot and cold running water at all times. Where necessary, such as in the case of mobile vendors or where potable water supply is not yet available, potable water should be stored in clean water containers.

5.3.2 Waste Water Disposal: Vendors' stalls should have an efficient waste water disposal system which should be maintained in a good state of repair. The system should be large enough to carry peak loads and be provided with traps to ensure only liquid waste is discharged into the drain/sewer.

5.3.3 Solid Waste Disposal: Solid waste material should be handled in such a manner as to avoid contamination of food and/or potable water. Waste should be removed from the working area of the stall as often as necessary and at least daily. All solid waste should be properly disposed into suitable containers which are secured with tight fitting lids or placed in rubbish bins or central rubbish bins. Immediately after disposal of the waste, receptacles used for storage and any equipment which has come into contact with the waste should be cleaned and disinfected. The waste storage area should also be cleaned and disinfected daily. In areas without garbage collection service, solid waste is to be disposed in a sanitary manner, as recommended or approved by the relevant authority.

5.3.4 Sanitizing Practice: All working surfaces, table tops, floors and surrounding areas should be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized at least daily. Only appropriate and suitable sanitizing agents should be used.

SECTION 6 - APPLIANCES

6.1 The requirements of the appliances shall be as follows:

- a) The appliances should be kept clean. The equipment should be made of materials which do not transmit toxic substances, odour or taste, is not absorbent (unless its use is intended for that purpose and will not result in food contamination), is resistant to corrosion and capable of withstanding repeated cleaning and disinfection.
- b) Every cutting surface used in the preparation of food should:
 - i) be readily and easily removable for cleaning,
 - ii) be free from cracks and crevices, with only reasonable wear and tear, and
 - iii) have cleanable surfaces on all sides.

6.2 Every vendor should ensure that all defective, damaged, cracked, chipped and unsuitable appliances and crockery are removed from use and discarded from the stall.

6.3 All utensils should be regularly cleaned by thoroughly washing them in warm water containing adequate amount of soap or other suitable detergents and then either immersing them for one-half (1/2) minute in boiling clean water and draining them for two (2) minutes in potable water at a temperature of not less than 77°C and draining them.

6.4 Disposable crockery shall be used only once and properly disposed. In the case where non-disposable crockery is used, the crockery is to be cleaned after each use using the method described for utensils in paragraph 6.3.

In the case where non-disposable crockery is used and water at 77°C or boiling temperatures is unavailable, clean potable water, wash soap or detergent and running water rinse is allowed. However, this method is not preferred.

6.5 All appliances are to be maintained in good state of repair.

6.6 All washed and clean utensils and crockery should be handled, stored or transported, in the case of mobile vendors, separately from unclean and used utensils and crockery and other sources of contamination. They shall be stored in a clean and protected area which is not accessible to pests or vermin.

6.7 Only containers made of food grade material, not previously used for non food use, shall be used.

6.8 Wash basins and sinks for cleaning utensils and washing hands should always be clean and maintained in a good state of repair.

SECTION 7 - FOOD PREPARATION

7.1 Requirements for Ingredients

Every vendor should ensure the following:

7.1.1 Supply of ingredients, including ice, must be from known and reliable sources.

7.1.2 Freshness and wholesomeness of ingredients to maintain quality and safety of food.

7.1.3 Transportation of ingredients should be in a manner so as to prevent exposure to the environment, spoilage and contamination.

7.1.4 Only permitted food additives should be used and the amount added should follow the specifications provided.

7.2 Cooking and Handling

7.2.1 Soak and thoroughly wash fresh vegetables and fruit whether for cooking or consuming raw, with sufficient running potable water, to remove adhering surface contamination.

7.2.2 Wash all meat, poultry, fish, eggs and other perishable raw food before using in food preparation, to reduce the risk of contamination. Never wash the above perishable raw food with other foods that will be consumed raw or in semi-cooked state.

There should be an area for handling, storing, cleaning and preparing raw food ingredients, separate and apart from the cooked, ready-to-eat food display, handling and serving area.

7.2.3 Thawing

Frozen products, especially frozen vegetables can be cooked without thawing. However, large pieces of meat or large poultry carcasses often need to be thawed before cooking.

When thawing is carried out as an operation separated from cooking this should be performed only in:

- a) a refrigerator or purpose-built thawing cabinet maintained at a temperature of 4°C
or
- b) running potable water maintained at a temperature not above 21°C for a period not exceeding 4 hours
or
- c) a commercial microwave oven only when the food will be immediately transferred to conventional cooking units as part of a continuous cooking process or when the entire, uninterrupted cooking process takes place in the microwave oven.

Note: Hazards associated with thawing include cross-contamination from drip and growth of micro-organisms on the outside before the inside has thawed. Thawed meat and poultry products should be checked frequently to make sure the thawing process is complete before further processing or the processing time should be increased to take into account the temperature of the meat.

7.2.4 The process of preparation of ingredients before cooking such as cutting, chopping, mixing should be done in a clean place. Cooked and uncooked food should have separate utensils.

7.2.5 The time and temperature of cooking should be sufficient to ensure the destruction of non-sporing pathogenic micro-organisms.

7.2.6 Water used for the purpose of drinking, preparation of hot or cold drinks and beverages should be of clean quality and boiled before use, or be of potable water quality.

7.2.7 Ice should be made from potable water. Ice should be handled and stored so as to protect it from contamination. Containers used to transport or store ice should meet the requirements for water containers prescribed by definition 2.20.

7.2.8 Food should not be reheated more than once; only the portion of the food to be served should be reheated to a minimum of 60°C, uninterrupted.

7.2.9 Utensils used for tasting food should be washed immediately after each use.

7.3 Serving Food

Every vendor should observe the following:

7.3.1 All vendors purchasing ready-to-eat foods for the purpose of serving or selling must assure that such food is from licensed and reliable sources.

7.3.2 Ready-to-eat food should not be handled with bare hands. Clean tongs, forks, spoons or disposable gloves should be used when handling, serving or selling food.

7.3.3 Ensure all crockery used are clean, dry and handled in a sanitary manner.

7.3.4 Plates filled with food should not be stacked one on top of the other during display, storing or serving.

7.3.5 Vendors should not handle crockery used to serve food, by touching the rim, inner side, or the food contact surface.

7.3.6 Printed material should never be used to serve food. Only food grade aluminum foil, waxed paper, food grade plastic and any other suitable material should be used for packing food.

7.3.7 Never blow into plastic bags, wrappers or packages used for food or drinks.

7.3.8 Towels used for wiping crockery should be clean, handled in a sanitary manner and only be used for that purpose.

7.3.9 All beverages offered for sale should be dispensed only in their individual original sealed containers or from taps fitted to bulk containers and made of food grade plastic or other suitable material. Bulk containers should be covered with tight fitting lids.

7.3.10 Cut fruit or other foods ordinarily consumed in the state in which they are sold may be set out in an enclosed display case, cabinet or similar type of protective device and should be displayed in a manner which will not affect the wholesomeness and cleanliness of such foods.

7.3.11 Food handlers should not handle money. If this is unavoidable, the food handler should wash his hands after handling money and before handling food again.

7.3.12 Ready-to-eat foods intended for continuous serving, should be kept at the following holding temperatures:

- i) for food served hot.....60°C or above;
- ii) for food served cold.....7°C or below;
- iii) for food served frozen...-18°C or below.

7.3.13 A food warmer should be used to maintain continuous holding temperatures (7.3.12 (i), and should not be used for reheating purposes (7.2.8).

7.4 Unsold Food

All unsold cooked food and prepared beverages that cannot be properly preserved should be disposed of in a sanitary manner at the end of the day.

7.5 Transportation of Ready-to-eat Food

7.5.1 Ready-to-eat food and beverages which require transportation to the point of sale should be placed in a well protected, covered and clean container to avoid contamination. The place where the food is prepared should be near the point of sale.

7.5.2 Any vehicle used in transporting food should be clean and in good condition, appropriately equipped to accommodate any special requirements of the food being transported and provide protection from environmental contamination.

7.5.3 Milk should be transported to the point of sale in an insulated container maintained at a maximum temperature of 4°C.

7.5.4 Ready-to-eat food and beverages should not be transported together with raw food and ingredients, animals, toxic substances and any other materials which may contaminate the food.

7.6 Food Storage

7.6.1 The food should at all times be kept clean and free from contamination, and be adequately protected from pests, environmental contaminants and stored at proper temperatures where appropriate.

7.6.2 The food should be placed or stacked so that it is not likely to be contaminated by contact with raw food, pet food, toxic materials or any other materials which may cause contamination.

7.6.3 All dry ingredients should be stored and maintained in their original labelled commercial container or subsequent containers should be properly labelled as to the content and designed to prevent moisture absorption.

7.6.4 All non-perishable food should be stored in a clean, protected and closed container/cupboard to prevent contamination by pests.

7.6.5 Perishable food, including wet milled legumes, cereals or pulses should be stored in a refrigerator or freezer to prevent spoilage.

7.6.6 Refrigerators and freezers should not be overloaded and their temperatures should be maintained at a maximum of 4°C and -18°C or below, respectively.

7.6.7 All enclosed spaces and cupboards used for the storage of food should be of adequate size to enable comfortable storage, and should be constructed so as to be easily cleaned and to protect the food from pests.

7.6.8 All shelves and racks used or intended to be used for or in connection with the storage of food should be at least 45 cm above the floor and should be constructed and placed to enable cleaning.

7.6.9 All food stored in bulk should be stored in an orderly fashion and should be placed so as to facilitate ventilation, inspection and the detection of pests.

7.6.10 All food should be stored and handled separately from toxic, poisonous, deleterious and injurious substances.

7.6.11 The principle "First in, first out" should be applied to stock rotation.

SECTION 8 - CUSTOMER FACILITIES

8.1 If the vendor provides tables and chairs, they should be of proper design and construction, and the table top lined with impermeable material approved by the relevant authority. Any form of extension to the stall is not allowed other than the use of awnings, umbrellas and canopies (subject to the specifications of the relevant authority).

8.2 Containers used for table side condiments should be kept clean and maintained in good condition and protected from pests.

8.3 All hand service articles such as napkins, towels and hand wipes should be of the disposable type.

8.4 Hand washing facilities such as hand wash basins, clean towels and soap should be provided at all times.

8.5 All chairs, benches, tables, canopies and umbrella stands should be cleaned regularly and maintained in good condition.

SECTION 9 - STREET FOOD CENTRES

9.1 General Requirements

9.1.1 All vendors located in a street food centre shall be licensed and comply with all provisions stated in Section 3, General Requirements of this Code.

9.1.2 All vendors located in a street food centre should at all times comply with all provisions stated in Section 4, Health Status, Personal Hygiene and Behaviour and Training of Vendors of this Code.

9.2 Location, Design and Construction

9.2.1 The location of any street food centre is to be approved beforehand by the relevant authority, having taken into consideration the provisions stated in Section 5.1 - Location, of this Code.

9.2.2 The design of the street food centre shall:

- a) be reviewed and approved before hand by the relevant authority;
- b) provide sufficient and adequate space and orderly placement of vendor stalls, carts, display cases, food preparation, handling, storing, serving and selling areas;
- c) allow for the orderly flow of materials and goods, in and out of the centres, which will prevent possible routes of food contamination;
- d) allow for the proper placement of client facilities, such as toilets, hand washing and eating facilities and be located or arranged in a manner that prevents routes of food contamination;
- e) provide suitable, sufficient and properly placed areas for solid waste storage and crockery and appliance cleaning, washing and sanitizing;
- f) be adequately ventilated to remove hazardous obnoxious gases and odours, cooking fuel fumes and other offensive airborne materials and provide a continuous and sufficient supply of fresh air to support the activities within the centre;
- g) be provided with sufficient and adequate electrical power supply to support the vendors in the centre to operate appliances, equipment and other implements used in the preparation, handling, storage, serving and selling of food; and
- h) have available an ample supply of potable water, which complies with the WHO "Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality" under adequate pressure and of suitable temperature, with adequate facilities for its storage, where necessary, and distribution, and with adequate protection against contamination.

Note: Samples should be taken regularly, but the frequency should depend upon the origin and the usage of the water, e.g. more fequent from private supplies that from public supplies. Chlorine or other suitable disinfectants may be used. If chlorination has been employed checks should be made daily by chemical tests for available chlorine. The point of sampling should preferably be at the point of usage, but

occasionally it would be useful to sample at the point of entry of the water to the establishment.

9.2.3 Street food centres shall be properly constructed in a manner using materials approved by the relevant authority, taking into consideration the provisions stated in Section 5.2, Structure, of this Code. In addition to these provisions, street food centres should:

- a) have smooth cement, glazed tile or tarmac paved floors, equipped with properly placed floor drains for the purpose of removing surface water and to facilitate cleaning and sanitizing;
- b) have, where applicable, smooth non-permeable surface walls or partitions, such as glazed tile, to facilitate cleaning and sanitizing;
- c) have, if applicable, a smooth non-absorbent ceiling to facilitate cleaning;
- d) provide sufficient artificial lighting, properly placed to facilitate food preparation, handling, storage, serving and selling for each vendor located at the centre;
- e) provide for smoke hoods and flues above cooking ranges to enable the removal of fuel and cooking gases, smoke and fumes from the centre into the open air.
- f) provide centralized or individualized appliance, crockery, utensil and other implement washing facilities, equipped with hot and cold running potable water, wash basins or sinks with appropriate drains to an approved sewer or drain system, detergent and sanitizing agents to satisfy the proper sanitary and complete cleaning needs of the vendors in the centre; and
- g) comply with any other requirement of the relevant authority related to the structure of street food centres.

9.3 Liquid and Solid Waste

9.3.1 Pertaining to liquid waste disposal, street food centres are to:

- a) be equipped with an efficient centralized or individual (for each vendor in the centre) liquid waste disposal system(s) approved by the relevant authority and of suitable size and design to exceed the level of demand for liquid waste disposal at peak levels of activity by the vendors in the centre;
- b) maintain the liquid sewage disposal system in good working condition;
- c) ensure that the liquid waste disposal system exits to a relevant authority approved sewage drain system capable of efficiently carrying away the liquid waste from the centre; and
- d) comply with any other relevant authority requirements related to liquid waste disposal.

9.3.2 Regarding to solid waste disposal, street food centres are to have an efficient system for disposal of solid waste complying with all solid waste disposal requirements of the relevant authority, to include:

- a) the allocation of an appropriate and separate amount of space for solid waste storage, located at a convenient but suitably distant location from food preparation, storage, handling, serving or selling areas to prevent contamination;
- b) sufficient number of suitably designed and constructed waterproof solid waste containers with tight fitting lids to adequately contain the volume of accumulated solid waste produced by vendor activity in one day. Containers should be lined with suitable disposable liners or inner containers for securing waste and which are easy to handle at time of disposal;
- c) the daily, and more often if necessary, disposal of solid waste from the street food centre to:
 - i) rubbish bins approved, designed and intended for the centralized collection of solid waste by garbage service agencies;
 - ii) approved sanitary land fill; or
 - iii) other disposal methods authorized and approved by the relevant authority.
- d) routine inspection of solid waste disposal areas for the presence or harbourage of pests, taking any and all practical measures to eliminate and further prevent, any infestation; and
- e) compliance with any other requirement of the relevant authority related to solid waste disposal.

9.4 Customer Facilities

Street food centres should have sufficient toilet facilities for each sex to accommodate the vendors, their employees and clientele, conveniently located but separate and apart from food preparation, handling, storage, serving and selling areas to prevent contamination of the food. The toilet facilities should be approved and subject to all requirements for such facilities by the relevant authority. Among other requirements the facilities should:

- a) have smooth walls of glazed tile to a height of at least two (2) meters;
- b) should be clean, free of bad odours and provided with flushing system;
- c) be well lit, ventilated, and routinely cleaned and sanitized and maintained in good working condition;
- d) include hand washing and drying facilities and properly supplied with soap and other needed supplies;
- e) contain posters instructing vendors and employees to wash hands thoroughly after each use of the toilet facilities before returning to work; and
- f) have doors which are equipped with self-closing devices.

9.5 Street Food Advisory Service

9.5.1 The appropriate authority should provide advisors to work with vendors offering them on-site advice and guidance to improve their operations in accordance with the requirements of the Code.

9.5.2 Advisors should be good communicators, familiar with the requirements of the Code, sympathetic to both problems of the vendors and the protection of consumers and whose activities are in no way associated with enforcement.

9.5.3 Advisors should possess the trust and respect of vendors.

9.5.4 The advisers should be as far as possible conversant with the application of the HACCP System (CAC/GL 18-1993), and the provisions of the General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 2 (1985)), in order to assist vendors to optimize the use of scarce resources.

9.6 Consumer Education

9.6.1 The appropriate authority should inform consumers through posters, the media and publicity campaigns about hazards associated with street foods and the steps the authority requires street food vendors to take to minimise those hazards.

9.6.2 Consumers should also be informed of their responsibility in ensuring that they do not contaminate, dirty or litter street food vending sites.