

codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Twenty-first Session
Rome, 3 - 8 July 1995

REPORT OF THE NINTH SESSION OF THE CODEX COORDINATING
COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Brasilia, Brazil
3 - 7 April 1995

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April 1995

TO: - Codex Contact Points
- Participants at the Ninth Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Interested International Organizations

FROM: - Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, 00100 Rome, Italy

SUBJECT: Distribution of the Report of the Ninth Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean

MATTERS FOR ADOPTION BY THE 21st SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Draft Code at Step 8 of the Procedure

- Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for the Preparation and Sale of Street-Vended Foods (para. 80, Appendix II)

Government wishing to propose amendments or comments should do so in writing in conformity with the Guide to the Consideration of Standards at Step 8 (see Procedural Manual of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, pp.33-35) to the Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy, **before 30 May 1995**.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The summary and conclusions of the Ninth Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean are as follows:

Matters for adoption by the Commission:

The Committee:

- agreed to advance to Step 8 the Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Street-Vended Foods (para. 80, Appendix II)
- agreed to nominate Dr. Galdos Ugarte (Uruguay) for appointment as Regional Coordinator by the 21st Session of the Commission (para. 81)

Other matters of interest to the Commission:

The Committee:

- expressed support for retaining the present quorum for the amendment of the Statutes and Rules of Procedure (para. 18)
- proposed to extend the terms of reference of the Committee on Tropical Fresh Fruits and Vegetables to cover all fruits and vegetables (para. 84)
- endorsed the recommendation of the Workshop on Imported Food Control that rules and regulations for food control be established in a transparent manner and on the basis of science (para. 70)
- noted the progress of harmonization of food legislation and the extensive use of Codex standards and MRLs as reference in the framework of economic integration organizations, especially MERCOSUR, and at the national level (paras. 24; 37-62)
- presented information on the legislation and monitoring of pesticide residues, for transmission to the Committee on Pesticide Residues (para. 25)
- agreed to consider consumer participation in Codex work at its next session (paras. 14 and 86)
- agreed to consider contamination by Salmonella in the Region at its next session (para. 86)

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Codex Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean held its Ninth Session in Brasilia, Brazil, from 3 to 7 April 1995, by courtesy of the Government of Brazil, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Carlos A. Ferreira Guimaraes, Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean. The Session was attended by 106 delegates from 25 Member Countries, one observer country and 6 international organizations. A complete list of participants is included as Appendix I to this report.

OPENING OF THE SESSION (Agenda Item 1)

2. The session was formally opened by His Excellency Ambassador Luis Felipe Lampreia, Minister of External Relations, who welcomed all participants and recalled that Brazil was hosting for the second time the Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean. This responsibility had contributed significantly to develop awareness of the issues considered in the framework of Codex nationally and regionally, as appeared from the large number of delegates attending the present meeting. The Minister stressed the continued commitment of Brazil to the Codex programme and expressed his appreciation to FAO, WHO and PAHO for their active support to countries in the Region.

3. In the perspective of the globalization of economy and following the conclusion of the WTO Agreements, it was essential for all countries to participate in international meetings such as the present one. The implementation of trade agreements required the participation of all sectors of the economy at the national level; adequate consultation should be developed on principles of transparency so as to involve the population and contribute to the improvement of its well-being. He also stressed the importance of continued cooperation with FAO, as evidenced by the stamp issued by the Brazilian authorities to commemorate 50 years of FAO activities, and expressed his thanks to FAO for the assistance in preparing the Regional Conference for Food Security, scheduled to be held in 1996 in Brazil, following the World Food Summit.

4. Mr. Edmur Pastorelo, Representative of the Minister of Health drew the attention of the Committee to the new challenges the Region had to face in a changing environment. He pointed out that the Ministry of Health had taken a very active part in the National Codex Committee in order to address health protection issues such as residues of pesticide or veterinary drugs, and the implementation of food control programmes on the basis of international recommendations. The establishment of MERCOSUR provided a great opportunity for countries in the Region, and offered greater possibilities for exchange of information and concerted action.

5. Mr. Richard J. Dawson, Chief of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, welcomed all participants on behalf of the Directors-General of FAO and WHO and recalled that the Codex Alimentarius Commission had been established in 1962 with the objectives of protecting consumers' health and facilitating international food trade. Codex standards, codes and related texts had received wider acknowledgement following the conclusion of the WTO Agreements on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), as Codex was specifically mentioned under SPS, while reference to international standards under TBT applied to Codex. He stressed the importance of such international standards in world trade and particularly for countries in the Region which sought to improve their economic situation through increased exports. Reference to Codex texts was also integrated in the NAFTA and MERCOSUR Agreements. Mr. Dawson also pointed out that Mexico had been the first developing country to host a Codex session, the Committee on Tropical Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, and the first Chairman of the Commission from a developing country had been Dr. E. Mendez from Mexico, which reflected very positively on the commitment of the Region to the objectives followed by the Codex programme.

6. The representative of WHO/PAHO for Brazil, Dr. Armando Lopez Scavino, stressed the need to protect consumers' health and ensure food safety in the new environment created by increasing world trade in food, the development of regional economic integration and emphasized the importance of

international standards based on scientific evidence. He recalled the continued support of WHO/PAHO to the development and application of Codex standards, as they provided an international reference in the area of food safety.

7. The President of the National Institute of Metrology, Standardization and Industrial Quality (INMETRO), Dr. Julio Cesar Carmo Bueno, on behalf of the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, indicated that a new approach in standardization had been initiated in 1992 so as to take into account international and regional developments, and a number of programmes were currently implemented with the participation of the Brazilian industry. INMETRO was involved in the harmonization of national regulations with Codex standards as well as in the MERCOSUR consultations, where international standards were also used as a reference. The President pointed out that consensus from interested parties should be sought in order to achieve greater benefits for consumers, as well as ensuring the competitiveness of industry and economic development. In this perspective, the present session offered a wide forum for discussion and exchange of information.

8. Dr. Carlos A. Ferreira Guimaraes, Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean expressed his gratitude to the Minister of External Relations for his support in the organization of the 9th CCLAC Session and highlighted the active participation of Brazil in Codex work since it became a Member of the Commission in 1968. He pointed out that the Ministry of External Relations, as Codex Contact Point for Brazil, coordinated with other relevant Ministries (Agriculture, Health, Trade) in order to strengthen Codex activities in the Region and address issues of common concern. The Coordinator also expressed his thanks to FAO, WHO/PAHO for their assistance and noted that the meeting would have to consider issues of great importance for the Region, such as a Code of Hygienic Practice for Street Foods and pesticide residues. He concluded by wishing all participants success in their work, while trusting that constructive results would be achieved through open discussion and a spirit of cooperation.

9. The Executive Secretary of the Ministry of Communications, Mr. Fernando Xavier Ferreira, was pleased to inform the Committee that in order to express the support of the Brazilian Government for the action of FAO to improve the nutritional status of the population, and especially children, a commemorative stamp was being issued to celebrate 50 years of FAO activities.

10. Mr. Peter Rosenegger, FAO Representative in Brazil, recalled that FAO had been established in 1945 with the objective to eliminate hunger; this had proved a very difficult task and FAO had contributed to the reduction of hunger, through the implementation of a great number of projects. It should be noted that such projects concentrated on the development of food production, but also on the involvement of the all sectors of society. The Representative expressed his thanks to the Government of Brazil for its continued support of FAO activities, and especially for the issuing of a commemorative stamp during the present session of CCLAC.

11. The Secretary for Agriculture of the Federal District, Joao Luis Homem de Carvalho and the FAO Representative informed the Committee that a book by Dr. Maria Reis Canêdo "Nutritional Education" was published with the support of FAO and the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture; this book was the result of an extensive research carried out by the author into traditional foods and plants, especially in the Cerrado region and contributed to the preservation of the traditional culture and diet which may otherwise have been lost.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 2) ¹

12. The Delegation of Brazil proposed to consider the recommendation of the Committee on General Principles to reduce the quorum for the amendment of the Rules of Procedure under Agenda Item 4 - Matters of Interest. The Delegation of Mexico proposed to consider the Terms of Reference of the Committee on Tropical Fresh Fruits and Vegetables under Agenda Item 16 - Other Business and Future Work. The Committee accepted these proposals and adopted the Provisional Agenda as proposed.

¹ CX/LAC 95/1

ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (Agenda Item 3)

13. The Delegation of Costa Rica proposed to elect as Vice-Chairman Mr. Dudley B. Rhynd of Barbados and the Committee unanimously concurred with the proposal.

MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 4)²

14. The Secretariat recalled that the Commission had recommended that Coordinating Committees consider consumer participation in Codex work on a regular basis. The Delegation of Brazil informed the Committee that consumers' organizations participated in the consultations of the Brazilian Codex Committee. The Observer from Consumers International stressed the need for governments to involve consumers' representatives in preparatory meetings and to integrate them in national delegations. It was agreed that a Circular Letter would be sent to request information on consumer participation at the national level, for consideration by the next session of the Committee.

15. The Secretariat presented the conclusions of the Committees which had met recently, and noted that the following decisions of the CCFICS were of particular relevance to the work of the CCLAC: the advancement to Step 8 of the Draft Principles for Food Export and Import Inspection and Certification and the Draft Guidelines for the Exchange of Information in Food Control Emergency Situations; the advancement to Step 5 of the Proposed Draft Guidelines for the Exchange of Information Between Countries on Rejections of Imported Food.

16. The Delegation of Mexico expressed the view that in addition to aspects related to the facilitation of trade, Codex work should be considered in a general perspective, especially as Codex recommendations were used as reference by national authorities. It was therefore essential that a scientific methodology should be used throughout the decision-making process. The Secretariat indicated that Codex Committees most directly concerned with food safety were currently reviewing their procedures for risk analysis and decision-making criteria, following the recommendations of the Commission to harmonize such procedures. The Expert Consultation on Risk Analysis, which had been convened especially to address this essential issue, would provide general guidance and specific recommendations to Codex Committees in order to develop a consistent methodology in this area.

17. The Observer of the United States emphasized the need for Codex to proceed in this direction and strengthen the scientific basis of the decision-making process, as this was essential to the credibility of Codex work in the framework of the WTO SPS Agreement. He also pointed out that, in this respect, the principles adopted by the Executive Committee concerning the role of science provided the required guidance for further action.

18. The Delegation of Brazil recalled that the Committee on General Principles had proposed to reduce to one third the quorum required for the amendment of the Statutes and Rules of Procedure and expressed its opposition to this proposal, which would not solve the problem of participation by developing countries in Codex sessions; adequate measures should be taken to promote such participation. In reply to a question, the Secretariat indicated that the 20th Session of the Commission had not been able to adopt non-controversial amendments to the Rules of Procedure for lack of a quorum, and stressed the need for member countries to attend the next Commission session, which should take a decision on this important issue. The Committee expressed its concern that the interest of countries in the Region would not be adequately represented with a reduced quorum and supported the view that the present quorum should be retained.

² CX/LAC 95/2

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES CONCERNING FOOD SAFETY AND FOOD CONTROL IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (Agenda Item 5) ³

FAO Activities

19. The Committee was informed of the FAO technical cooperation taken as follow-up to the International Conference on Nutrition (ICN) in the area of food control and consumer protection in the Region, including the strategies taken into consideration by the Organization in the planning, execution and evaluation of the Programme. The Committee noted that 14 projects related to the strengthening of food control activities and training of food control personnel from the Region were being implemented in the 1993-95 period with an approximate total value of US \$ 3 million. The Committee was also informed about several regional and national activities in various aspects of food control that were being carried out by FAO under its Regular Programme. Special reference was also made to the assistance provided by FAO in the harmonization of food standards and inspection/certification procedures aimed at facilitating the food trade and economic integration within the Region, including the assistance provided to countries in the creation of national Codex Committees

WHO/PAHO Activities

20. The Committee was informed of the action developed by PAHO in the following major areas: strengthening of inspection services and laboratories, epidemiological surveillance of foodborne diseases, monitoring of contaminants, street foods inspection. Programmes were operated through training, planning, dissemination of information, applied research and specialized consultancies, directly or through the services provided by INPPAZ as a centre of reference for food control and zoonoses, with a total budget for food control activities in 1993-94 of US \$ 8.6 million excluding salaries.

21. The Committee commended the efforts of FAO and PAHO in assisting countries within the Region to strengthen their national food control programmes in order to protect the health of consumers and promote food trade in the framework of economic integration and recommended that such assistance and technical cooperation be continued in the area of food safety. The Committee further strongly recommended the need to base decisions on various aspects of food control on science, including the use of risk analysis.

REPORT ON ACCEPTANCES OF CODEX STANDARDS BY COUNTRIES IN THE REGION (Agenda Item 6 a)

22. The Committee was informed of the revised procedure for acceptance and the recommendations of the Commission concerning the use of Codex standards, as well as the status of acceptances in the Region⁴. The Delegation of Costa Rica indicated that several Codex standards such as milk products and food labelling were used as national regulations. The Delegation of Trinidad and Tobago informed the Committee that Codex standards applied when no national standard existed, and that Codex MRLs were used as reference.

SURVEY OF NATIONAL ACCEPTANCE SYSTEMS FOR CODEX STANDARDS (Agenda Item 6 b)

MAXIMUM RESIDUE LIMITS FOR PESTICIDES IN FOODS OF INTEREST TO THE REGION AND DIFFICULTIES FOR ACCEPTING CODEX MRLS (Agenda Item 6 c)

23. The Delegation of Brazil introduced document CX/LAC 95/4-Add.1 and Add.2, which included both Agenda Items 6 b) and 6 c) in order to facilitate discussion. Following the creation of a Working Group on Pesticide Residue Problems in Developing Countries (PRDC) in the framework of the

³ CX/LAC 95/3

⁴ CX/LAC 95/4

Committee on Pesticide Residues, Brazil had invited countries in the Region to provide relevant data for consideration by the CCLAC. In view of the new obligations under the WTO Agreements, the Delegation noted that the establishment of National Codex Committees in several countries would help develop coordination in this area.

24. The Delegation of Costa Rica informed the Committee that the Ministry of Agriculture had developed a monitoring programme for pesticide residues and its analytical capacity through the use of validated methods to determine a number of pesticide residues; national legislation including all imported pesticides in the country was currently being elaborated, with MRLs based on the limits set by Codex and EPA. The Delegations of Ecuador and Guatemala indicated that Codex MRLs were used at the national level. The Delegation of Uruguay pointed out that Codex MRLs had been adopted through Resolution No. 94/92 in MERCOSUR.

25. The Committee noted that the last session of the CCPR had amended the mandate of the PRDC Group and recommended that liaison be established with Coordinating Committees⁵. The Committee agreed to the proposal of the Delegation of Cuba to forward the information presented above to the next session of the CCPR.

CONSEQUENCES FOR THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION ARISING FROM THE FINAL ACT OF THE URUGUAY ROUND OF MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS RELATED TO SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES AND TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE (Agenda Item 7)

26. Mr. R.J. Dawson, Secretary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, highlighted the major obligations of member countries under the Agreements, as well as the recommendations of the CCEXEC concerning Codex work⁶ and informed the Committee that the first meeting of the SPS Committee had just been held in Geneva. Under the WTO SPS Agreement, specific reference was made to Codex as well as to OIE and IPPC for sanitary and phytosanitary measures. Transparency being one of the major principles of the Agreement, Member countries were requested to notify other Members (through the SPS contact point) of national sanitary and phytosanitary measures at an early stage in the elaboration, so as to allow them to comment on the trade implications of such measures. He also pointed out that there would be a shift in the emphasis from harmonization to equivalence between such measures, and that no discrimination should be created between imports and national production.

27. The Secretary recalled that FAO cooperation programmes took into account this new environment and that national or regional seminars were organized to assist countries to meet their obligations under the WTO Agreements, especially the updating of food legislation and the establishment of an efficient food control system. One such seminar on SPS Measures was scheduled to be held in May 1995 in Mexico for countries of the Region. In reply to a question by the Delegation of Barbados, the Secretary indicated that under SPS, countries wishing to establish more stringent requirements (with reference to international standards) would have to justify them on the basis of scientific evidence.

28. Several delegations expressed their appreciation for this presentation, as it clarified a number of important issues and trusted that FAO would continue to assist them where food legislation and food control were concerned, as their governments were aware of their obligations in this area.

⁵ see CX/LAC 95/2

⁶ CX/LAC 95/5

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES RELATED TO ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND HARMONIZATION OF FOOD LEGISLATION IN THE REGION (Agenda Item 8)⁷

MERCOSUR

29. The Delegation of Uruguay informed the Committee that the Southern Common Market entered into force on 1 January 1995 and presented the main provisions of the Agreement. Harmonization of Food Legislation was under the main responsibility of Sub-Group 3 - Technical Standards through its Food Commission and four Sub-commissions, which met on a quarterly basis and reached its decisions by consensus. It was noted that MERCOSUR had established agreements with the EC and was establishing contacts with Bolivia, Chile and NAFTA.

30. The Delegation of Brazil further noted that the Sub-Groups for Agricultural Policy and Consumer Protection also considered matters related to food legislation. The decisions of the Sub-Groups were approved as Resolutions by the MERCOSUR authorities and then adopted by Member countries, as indicated in the document on updated resolutions and approximation of national legislation⁸.

CARICOM

31. The Delegation of Barbados presented the structure and activities of the Caribbean Common Market Standards Council (CCMSC), where industry and trade, labour and consumers were represented in addition to official authorities. Codex standards had been used as a basis for a number of regional standards; such regulations should be mandatory in principle but a transitory period of voluntary application had been agreed upon to allow all CARICOM Members to develop the necessary infrastructures for their enforcement. CARICOM was in the process of developing agreements and common activities with other countries in the Region. The Delegation of Cuba indicated that a meeting had been held recently in Cuba on standardization matters. The Observer from Consumers International commended CARICOM for associating consumers to its discussions, and expressed the view that MERCOSUR should follow a similar policy.

CENTRAL AMERICA

32. The Delegation of Costa Rica presented the objectives and structure of the Central American Integration System at the political, economic and social levels⁹. The harmonization of food standards was currently under consideration for future work in the Sub-region.

NAFTA

33. The Delegation of Mexico informed the Committee that in the framework of the NAFTA Agreement, specialized Commissions were operating to consider matters related to the TBT and SPS Agreements, especially equivalence, compatibility of regulations and certification¹⁰. Member countries were requested to notify their counterparts of national measures under elaboration. Current harmonization activities concentrated on pesticide authorization and pesticide residues, food labelling, health claims and dietary supplements.

⁷ CX/LAC 95/6 (prepared by Brazil)

⁸ CX/LAC 95/6-Add.1 (prepared by Brazil)

⁹ CX/LAC 95/6-Add.2 (prepared by Costa Rica)

¹⁰ CX/LAC 95/6-Add.3 (prepared by Mexico).

REPORT ON HARMONIZATION OF REGIONAL AND CODEX STANDARDS (Agenda Item 9)

34. The Delegation of Cuba, while presenting document CX/LAC 95/7, stressed the necessity for harmonization or equivalence of national regulations with international Codex standards in the context of the WTO Agreements and regional economic integration; the CCLAC should follow this process on a regular basis as part of its coordinating activities for food legislation and inspection.

35. The Delegation of Costa Rica indicated that the CCTFFV was currently considering the standardization of banana and chayote, and the review of provisions for asparagus, which would greatly facilitate the export of such products. The Delegation also drew the attention of the Committee to the computerized information system developed in Costa Rica with the support of PAHO, which might be used to facilitate harmonization for food standardization in Central America, and proposed that interested countries integrate this system.

36. The Chairman noted the consensus of the Committee on the need to proceed with regular reports on harmonization at the regional level.

FOOD INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (Agenda Item 10)¹¹

37. The Delegation of Bolivia emphasized the commitment of the government to improve the food control system, as evidenced by the recent creation of a National Codex Committee integrating all responsible authorities in the areas of legislation and inspection. The National Department of Food Control (Secretariat for Health) was mainly responsible for food control, the Ibnorca (Ministry of Industry) for standards setting. Cooperation between Bolivia and Mexico in this area was currently being formalized.

38. The Delegation of Paraguay pointed out that progress had been achieved in this sector through coordinated action by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Institute of Technology and Standardization (INTN). The National Food Safety Commission also took an important part in the process, with the cooperation of WHO/PAHO, as well as the Municipality of Ascunción. The INTN was also in charge of food standardization.

39. The Delegation of Brazil indicated that the Ministries of Health and Agriculture were mainly responsible for food inspection. A computerized system of information was used to collect data on imports and exports. Exchange of information on import/export matters was well developed within MERCOSUR and official contacts were also established with laboratories in other countries.

40. The Delegation of the Dominican Republic noted that national food legislation was currently under review, and that food control activities were coordinated by the Ministry of Health with the participation of other ministries such as Agriculture or Industry and Commerce. Codex standards were used in the absence of national standards, and a basic food control law was in the process of finalization, as well as a Regulation on sanitary inspection of street foods.

41. The Delegation of Costa Rica indicated that a programme for the certification of non-traditional foods for export had been implemented in 1991 with the assistance of FAO. Public or private certification bodies were accredited and supervised by the government. This system had contributed to develop exports of fresh fruits and it was proposed to extend it to processed products.

¹¹ CX/LAC 95/8 (Bolivia, Paraguay) and Add.1 (Brazil)

42. The Delegation of Peru recalled that in order to address the critical difficulties arising from the cholera outbreak, a system associating the public and private sectors had been established to certify exports and recognized by the EC. Emphasis had been put on training and the diffusion of manuals including recommendations of FAO, WHO, as well as Codex standards. The Delegation also indicated that a National Codex Committee would soon be established.

43. The Delegation of Cuba indicated that its legislation was being reviewed in order to meet the obligations resulting from the WTO Agreements, and that this matter was given specific consideration in relation to the work of CCFICS. Food legislation and control was under the responsibility of different Ministries including Public Health, Agriculture and Commerce and Economy through the National Standardization Office.

44. The Delegation of Mexico drew the attention of the Committee to the changes operated in its control system, with the development of quality assurance procedures, third party certification on the basis of risk analysis, which applied to imports as well as national production.

45. The Delegation of Argentina noted that the main responsibility for food control was shared by the Secretariat for Agriculture and the Ministry of Health and that coordination was achieved through the National Commission for Foods, where consumers were represented. Export control was carried out according to the requirements of the importer, in particular for pesticide residues, and laboratory accreditation was being developed.

46. The Delegation of Guatemala indicated that programmes for the control of street foods and food certification had been implemented with the assistance of FAO and PAHO and emphasized the participation of the Guatemala Technical Committees in the Central American Expert Committees and Codex Committees. The CA-4 Group (Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua) had thus achieved the harmonization of standards for additives and labelling, as well as control and registration systems. The Delegation highlighted the computerized systems for the registration and inspection of street-vended foods as sources of information for the Region.

47. The Delegation of Ecuador noted that, while the Ministries of Health and Agriculture were mainly responsible for food control, restaurants and street-vended foods were inspected by municipalities. The Standardization Institute, where consumers were represented, elaborated standards for foods, labelling and contaminants, and the Fisheries Institute implemented mandatory certification of fishery products.

48. The Delegation of Honduras pointed out that the possible incorporation of food control activities into the responsibilities of the Technical Committee for Environment and Health was being considered. The responsibilities of municipalities in food safety activities was also highlighted, as well as the necessity to develop laboratory capacity.

49. The Delegation of Trinidad and Tobago stated that the Ministries of Health and Agriculture were responsible for food safety, and raised the issue of food registration, in relation to the discussions of the Workshop. It was also noted that the Bureau of Standards encouraged industries to use the ISO 9000 Series for quality assurance, and that Codex standards were used when no national standard existed.

50. The Delegation of Nicaragua indicated that the Ministries of Health, Agriculture and of Economic Development shared the responsibility for food control; a law on consumer protection had been adopted recently and a basic food law was being finalized, thanks to FAO and PAHO assistance in this area.

51. The Delegation of Uruguay stressed the activities of LATU as a reference laboratory for import and export control of non-traditional products. The Ministry of Health was competent for food standardization, additives, contact materials, nutritional aspects of food, while the Ministry of Agriculture dealt with inspection and certification of vegetable, animal and fishery products.

52. The Delegation of Colombia indicated that quality control was under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture (unprocessed foods) and the Ministry of Health, which formulated policies for quality inspection of processed foods (national as well as imported). The National Institute for Surveillance of Food and Drugs (INVIMA), together with the regional and municipal Services, were in charge of the execution and application of prevention and safety measures. The National Reference Laboratory and a network of laboratories carried out surveys on pesticide residues, mycotoxins, heavy metals and microorganisms. Harmonization had been initiated between the standards of the Colombian Institute of Technical Standards and Codex standards, the latter being used when no national standard was available.

53. The Delegation of Grenada stated that certification for export had recently been initiated and that ISO Guideline 7 and 25 was used to develop laboratory capacity; control of fresh products for exports was carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture, while restaurants, imported and street-vended foods were inspected by the Ministry of Health.

54. The Delegation of Jamaica emphasized the improved coordination of food control activities under the Interministerial Committee; food legislation was under review, as well as inspection and certification procedures with the assistance of Canada, while the use of the HACCP system and the ISO 9000 Series was developed in the industry.

55. The Delegation of Saint Lucia indicated that the Ministry of Health was responsible for local and imported foods and the Ministry of Agriculture for export certification of fresh products and meat inspection, and also stressed the participation of the National Bureau of Standards in CARICOM food legislation activities.

56. The Delegation of Venezuela pointed out that many regulations had been based on Codex texts in their format and contents, especially for labelling, GMP and methods of analysis, and that manuals had been published for training purposes. Coordination involving ministries, industry and universities was well established in the elaboration of such regulations.

57. The Chairman thanked the delegations for the interesting information provided to the Committee, and for the commitment of governments to the development of efficient food control systems and updated legislation; he also noted the importance of quality assurance and the use of the ISO 9000 Series and ISO Guidelines in the industry. The Representative of FAO, while expressing her appreciation of the positive results achieved at the national and regional levels, stressed the importance of information exchange on import/export matters; a number of data banks existed, and it would be useful to develop larger access to such information. In reply to a question, the Secretariat recalled the CCFICS was currently considering the application of the ISO 9000 Series to the food inspection and certification and that the Guidelines for the Application of the HACCP System had been published in final form.

ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE STRENGTHENING OF CODEX CONTACT POINTS AND NATIONAL CODEX COMMITTEES IN THE REGION (Agenda Item 11)

58. The Secretariat introduced the document on the Strengthening of National Codex Committees and the Guidelines for Codex Contact Points, which had been previously considered by other Coordinating Committees (CX/LAC 95/9 and Add.1). The Delegation of Costa Rica pointed out that the National Codex Committee included official authorities and representatives of industry, trade, consumers and universities, and made proposals to the political authorities for final decision. The Delegation also proposed a diagram on the interaction between interested sectors (CRD 1).

59. The Delegation of Brazil expressed the view that National Committees should mobilize resources to enable experts to participate in the sessions of the Codex Commission and Committees; when there was no possibility for specialists to attend meetings, participation through the diplomatic representation in the host country should be considered. It was also necessary to maintain adequate administrative services for the translation and distribution of documents, in order to ensure their wide diffusion at the national and regional levels.

60. The Delegation of Cuba indicated that the National Codex Committee had been in operation for 10 years: it incorporated all concerned sectors and operated through a number of specialized committees. The Delegation put at the disposal of the Committee the methodology used at the national level to this effect.

61. The Observer from Consumers International expressed the view that consumer representation and participation was still very insufficient, as appeared from a survey carried out in the Region. The Brazilian government, however, had supported consumer participation in the National Committee. The Observer also highlighted the difficulties of consumers' organizations to participate in international meetings for lack of material resources, and referring to the recommendations of the Commission, stressed the need for government to establish Codex Committees where consumers could participate effectively.

62. The Delegation of Chile indicated that a National Committee including all official authorities concerned and the private sector was being established. The Delegation of Peru stated that relevant ministries participated in a Consultative Committee, which was currently being converted into a National Codex Committee, where consumer participation would be developed. The Delegation of the Dominican Republic pointed out that a National Codex Committee (with five Sub-committees) had been established with the assistance of FAO, under the coordination of the State Secretariat for Public Health and with the participation of other Secretariats concerned, as well as the industry, consumers, universities and technical institutes. The Delegation of Grenada expressed the view that a meeting of Codex Contact Points for the English-speaking Caribbean would be useful to facilitate the action of governments.

63. The Delegation of Bolivia indicated that the Codex Committee incorporated the official authorities for health, agriculture, standardization, and that the recent establishment of the Committee was especially important to facilitate the diversification of national production and exports. The Delegation of Uruguay emphasized the strong government support given to the creation of a National Committee, which operated officially since December 1994; it was chaired by the Minister of External Relations and incorporated authorities from the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Environment, Industry, Economy. Technical matters would be considered by specialized sub-committees with the participation of other official or private sectors, as well as consumers.

64. The Delegation of Guatemala indicated that, with the support of FAO and PAHO, a National Codex Committee had been established, including 7 Technical Committees with the participation of all concerned ministries, universities and the private sector. Efficient coordination was achieved at the level of the Committees for milk products and for additives.

65. The Delegation of Ecuador stated that the Institute of Standardization was responsible for the coordination of Codex related activities, and the incorporation of Codex texts in national standards, especially for pesticide residues, labelling and specific commodities, through technical Sub-committees in which consumers were entitled to participate.

66. The Chairman noted with appreciation the continued support for Codex activities at the national level, and the mobilization of resources which had enabled member countries to strengthen their structures effectively in a short period of time. He also indicated that an updated Directory of Codex Contact Points in the Region had been published by Brazil.

REPORT OF THE JOINT FAO/PAHO WORKSHOP ON IMPORTED FOOD CONTROL (Agenda Item 12)

67. The Committee had before it the report of the Joint FAO/PAHO Workshop on Imported Food Control (Conference Room Document). The report was summarized by Mr. B.L. Smith, FAO Consultant.

68. The Committee was informed that the Workshop had discussed the concepts of risk analysis, transparency, harmonization and equivalency, within the concept of trade liberalization and the provisions of the SPS and TBT Agreements under the new WTO Agreements and parallel agreements found in NAFTA. The importance of the role of science in decision making was also stressed in terms of the elaboration of Codex standards.

69. Papers presented by the delegations of Mexico and Chile respecting the modernization of food laws in those countries focused on how risk analysis had been incorporated into new procedures and on the impact of such measures on the simplification of food marketing through the elimination of product registration and intensified monitoring and control activities.

70. The Workshop presented the following recommendations with respect to modernizing import control procedures:

1. In view of the recent WTO SPS and TBT Agreements, it was recommended that countries in the Region should review their current import control systems to ensure that procedures applied to imported foods are no more rigorous and/or restrictive than those applied in the domestic market. In addition, a strong and effective infrastructure should be provided to assure proper control of food.
 2. Likewise, in view of the requirements of the new WTO SPS and TBT Agreements, it was strongly recommended that risk analysis techniques should be incorporated into procedures used to determine priorities and that the food control systems of national governments (including import control) should shift from the product registration, end product inspection and testing model to the preventative pro-active model based on the principles of HACCP.
 3. The establishment of new rules and regulations related to the control of food should be carried out in a transparent manner, utilizing science as the basis for decision making.
 4. The standards, codes of practice and guidelines elaborated by Codex for food should be used as applicable specifically within the context of the WTO Agreements.
 5. Countries in the Region should strengthen the exchange of information about problems, experiences and legislative and regulatory developments based on the principle of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC).
71. The Committee endorsed the conclusions and recommendations proposed by the Workshop.

REPORT ON MONITORING AND LEGISLATION OF FOOD CONTAMINANTS OF INTEREST FOR CONSUMER HEALTH PROTECTION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE (Agenda item 13)

72. The Delegation of Cuba informed the Committee that surveys of contamination, especially by heavy metals, had been initiated in 1979 with the assistance of FAO and WHO/PAHO and that present programmes were established according to the capacity of laboratories. National legislation existed for chemical and microbiological contamination and monitoring was carried out by the Ministry of Health on the basis of regular surveys. Computerized programmes were available and interested delegations were invited to make use of them.

73. The Delegation of Costa Rica indicated that contamination by aflatoxins in corn as well as milk was monitored regularly, and that campaigns of information to promote Good Agricultural Practices had been developed. A data base on pesticides and contaminants in processed foods was also available and a quality management programme for small and medium industry, including the use of the HACCP system, was under development.

74. The Delegation of Brazil stated that the Ministry of Agriculture monitored residues of pesticides and veterinary drugs in exported products while problems related to toxins or environmental contaminants were addressed by the Ministry of Health through its specialized laboratories. The Delegation of Guatemala pointed out that two Interministerial Commissions dealt with the use and monitoring of pesticides in foods. Quality assurances programmes for contaminants were being developed with the assistance of FAO.

75. The Delegation of Trinidad and Tobago indicated that a specialized unit of the Ministry of Health had been established with the assistance of FAO for the determination of mycotoxins in peanuts and rice. Pesticide residues monitoring had also been significantly developed. Microbiological analysis had been expanded following the PAHO Workshop on Microbiological Contamination held in Trinidad in 1994.

76. The Delegation of Uruguay noted that the Ministry of Agriculture was responsible for the monitoring of aflatoxins in cereals and milk, pesticide residues, heavy metals as well as veterinary drugs in meat; fresh fruit and vegetables; fishery products. The Ministry of Health was in charge of microbiology and chemical contaminants in prepackaged foods, while the Ministry of Industry was monitoring imported foods for radioactivity.

CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STREET-VENDED FOODS AT STEP 7 (Agenda item 14)

77. The Committee recalled that its last session had agreed to return the Draft Code to Step 6 for further comments, following the recommendations of the CCFH that Regional Committees reconsider their approach to determine whether regional Codes in their present form were actually needed¹²; no further comments were received in reply to CL 1993/10-LAC.

78. With reference to the discussions held at the CCFH, the Representative of PAHO expressed the view that a regional Code would not contribute to ensure the safety of street foods, as the establishment of such recommendations should be left to local authorities; the Committee should therefore reconsider the focus of its activities in this area. The Secretariat noted that the recommendation of the CCFH, which did not necessarily entail discontinuation of work, had been taken into account by the Committee while returning the Code to Step 6. The Code was intended for use as a reference document by governments and could be adapted to national or local needs. The Representative of FAO pointed out that a number of projects had been implemented at the national and local level, especially through the municipalities, to improve the safety of street foods and develop the training of vendors; no contradiction existed between such actions and the establishment of a regional Code.

79. Several delegations stressed the extensive efforts made in recent years to develop guidance in this complex area; the Code of Practice had been developed with the consensus of all concerned countries and it was essential to finalize it as a reference text in the framework of Codex, as it had been used as a basis for government action in the control of street foods, with the assistance of FAO; many countries of the Region integrated such provisions in their national legislation.

Status of the Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Street-Vended Foods

80. In view of the general support for the finalization of the Draft in its present form, the Committee agreed to forward the Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Street-Vended Foods to the Commission for adoption at Step 8. The Draft Code is attached to the present report as Appendix II.

¹² see CX/LAC 95/2

NOMINATION OF THE COORDINATOR (Agenda Item 15)¹³

81. The Committee was informed that as the Coordinator had served two consecutive terms, he was not eligible under Rule II.4 (b) to hold office for another term. The Delegation of Mexico, unanimously supported by the Committee, proposed that Dr. Galdos Ugarte (Uruguay) be nominated for appointment as Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean by the 21st Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and until the end of the 22nd Session of the Commission.

82. The Committee expressed its warm appreciation to Dr. Carlos A. Ferreira Guimaraes and to the Brazilian Government for their support of the Committee's work during the last four years.

83. Dr. Galdos Ugarte expressed his thanks to the Committee and his awareness of the important responsibility conferred upon him, as well as his intention to work with all Member countries to strengthen Codex at the regional and international level in the new environment created by the WTO Agreements and regional economic integration.

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE WORK (Agenda Item 16)

84. The Delegation of Mexico recalled that the Committee on Tropical Fresh Fruits and Vegetables had elaborated several standards which had proved very valuable to countries in the Region for the development their exports; the CCTFFV should therefore extend its activities to cover all fresh fruits and vegetables in the interest of the region and to facilitate international trade. The Committee supported the proposal to extend the mandate and delete the term "tropical" in the title of the Committee and point (a) of the Terms of Reference.

85. The Delegation of Paraguay suggested that cooperation between developing countries (TCDC) should be further supported by FAO and WHO/PAHO through the relevant institutions in the Region. The Committee expressed its support for the continued organization of FAO/PAHO Workshops prior to the Sessions of CCLAC and it was especially suggested that a Workshop for Codex Contact Points in the Region be held in the future.

86. The Committee agreed that, in addition to standing items on the Agenda, the following matters would be considered at the Tenth Session:

- Harmonization of food legislation; inspection and certification (following the recommendation of the CCFICS)
- Activities of National Codex Committees and Contact Points, including an updating of the Directory
- Consumer participation
- Contamination by Salmonella
- Risk assessment
- Food safety in touristic areas

The Committee accepted the kind offer of the Delegation of Brazil to prepare a document on contamination with Salmonella for consideration by the next session of the Committee.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION (Agenda Item 17)

87. The Committee was informed that, subject to confirmation by the Commission, the next session would be held in Uruguay in April/May 1997. The exact date and venue would be determined between the Codex Secretariat and the Host Government.

¹³ CX/LAC 95/12

SUMMARY STATUS OF WORK

Subject Matter	Step	Action by	Document Reference in ALINORM 95/36
Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Street-Vended Foods	8	Governments 21st CAC	para. 80 Appendix II
Nomination of Coordinator		21st CAC	para. 81
Exchange of information on food legislation and food control		Governments 10th CCLAC	paras. 36 and 57
Progress report on activities of National Codex Committees		Governments 10th CCLAC	paras. 66 and 86
Follow-up of the Workshop on Imported Food Control		Governments 10th CCLAC	para. 70
Legislation and Monitoring of Pesticide Residues		CCPR 10th CCLAC	para. 25
Consumer Participation		Governments 10th CCLAC	paras. 14 and 86
Contamination by Salmonella		Brazil 10th CCLAC	para. 86

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CODE OF HYGIENIC PRACTICE FOR THE PREPARATION
AND SALE OF STREET-VENDED FOODS
(At Step 8 of the Procedure)

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CODE OF HYGIENIC PRACTICE
FOR THE PREPARATION AND SALE OF STREET-VENDED FOODS
(At Step 8 of the Procedure)

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

This Code contains a series of requirements and practices to be observed in the preparation and sale in the street of food and beverages for direct consumption.

This standard shall govern all individual and legal entities involved in the preparation and/or sale of food and beverages in the public street and shall apply to places where they are prepared, points where they are sold and means of transport used. Its purpose is to ensure a food or beverage product that is safe and fit for consumption, and thus protect the health of the persons who use this type of food service.

SECTION 2 - DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Code, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- *Running water*: Water coming out of a tap.
- *Waste water*: Water from domestic and industrial drains.
- *Street foods*: Ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors especially in streets and other similar public places.¹
- *Environment*: That which surrounds the food.
- *Drinking water*: That which has been treated and is contaminant-free and fit for human consumption.
- *Food and beverages for direct consumption*: Any type of hot or cold food or beverage that requires some degree of preparation before being consumed.
- *Coproculture*: The sowing of excrement on a culture medium to identify the microorganisms it contains.
- *To taste*: To test the taste or flavour of a preparation.
- *Sputum*: Naso-pharyngeal secretion which is ejected by spitting.
- *Enteric*: Pertaining or relating to the intestines.
- *Germ*: Microbes.
- *Hermetic*: Complete and impenetrable (closure).
- *Ingredients*: Components of a mixture.

¹ Street foods: the term approved at the Regional Workshop on Street-Vended Foods held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in November 1986.

- *Impermeable*: Not allowing the passage of water.
- *Informal*: Not official or authorized.
- *Input*: Element needed to obtain a product.
- *Organoleptic*: Assessment made through the sense organs (sight, smell, touch, taste).
- *Perishable*: Easily spoiling or decomposing.
- *Sales point*: Any fixed or mobile structure intended for the sale of food or drink for direct consumption in the street.
- *Pests*: Undesirable animals.
- *Crockery*: All glasses, plates and dishes used in serving meals.

SECTION 3 - REQUIREMENTS FOR INPUTS AND INGREDIENTS

3.1 Purchase of Inputs and Ingredients

3.1.1 Purchase inputs and ingredients sold in clean places and stored on shelves, in boxes or baskets, as such inputs and ingredients will not be contaminated. Never buy products that are placed directly on the ground.

3.1.2 Purchase meat from approved slaughterhouses; reject products of clandestine slaughter, as clandestine meat has not been inspected and may come from diseased animals.

3.1.3 Purchase packaged inputs and ingredients that bear a guarantee or manufacturers' brand name (not unlabelled, unpackaged food of informal origin) so that should any illness result from their consumption, the manufacturer or producer may be easily located to clarify the question of responsibility and avoid new outbreaks.

3.1.4 Purchase products whose sensory properties (smell, taste, colour, texture, etc.) are those of fresh, not spoiled food, as this is a sure way of purchasing the best quality food.

3.2 Transport, Reception and Storage of Inputs and Ingredients

3.2.1 Products used in the preparation of meals shall be transported in such a way as to avoid their being spoilt by heat or the length of the journey, or contaminated by undesirable substances or products (contaminants) that may be transported together and accidentally become mixed with them, causing poisoning.

3.2.2 Inputs and ingredients must be received in a clean and protected place; meat, offal and fish shall be placed on trays, and bulk commodities in clean containers.

3.2.3 Non-perishable food which is not used immediately should be kept covered, in closed containers, etc.; this will prevent contact with pests (flies, cockroaches, rodents) which may contaminate it.

3.2.4 Perishable food (milk, fish, meat and shellfish) which is not going to be prepared immediately, should be kept refrigerated; this will prevent the food spoiling and becoming dangerous to eat.

3.2.5 Keep recipients containing food clearly labelled and in separate areas from those containing soap and toxic or poisonous substances; correct labelling may prevent fatal accidents.

SECTION 4 - REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PLACE OR AREA OF PREPARATION

4.1 **Place of Preparation:** Food shall be prepared in a place set aside exclusively for that purpose; the place of preparation shall be sufficiently lit, kept clean at all times, and shall be far from any source of contamination (rubbish, waste water, animals). The reason for this is that food is most likely to become contaminated during preparation, the danger being all the more serious if the food is going to be eaten raw or only slightly cooked.

4.2 **Final Place of Preparation:** Similarly, if food preparation is completed in sales points on the public street, the area must be clean, protected from the sun and wind, separate from and not accessible to the public, for the same reasons as above (4.1).

4.3 **Sanitary Facilities:** The places where food is prepared must have a drinking water supply, waste water disposal facilities and bins for rubbish and refuse; these are the basic sanitary arrangements needed to ensure that food is kept free of contamination.

4.3.1 When food is prepared at points on the public street care must also be taken to ensure that good quality water and waste water and rubbish disposal facilities are available.

4.3.2 Water at sales points may be kept in duly protected stainless containers of at least 20 litres capacity. Rubbish and refuse bins must be made of impermeable material, easy to clean and have a plastic bag inside in order to facilitate handling of the rubbish.

4.4 **Working Surfaces:** Working or preparation surfaces must be made of hygienic, impermeable material that is easy to clean and in good condition; they should be at least 60 to 70 cm. from the ground.

4.5 **Utensils:** Saucepans, other cooking utensils and crockery must be clean and in good condition. Unsuitable materials such as copper, cadmium, lead and other toxic materials should not be used, BECAUSE these metals react easily with food, forming toxic compounds, particularly if the food is acid.

SECTION 5 - REQUIREMENTS FOR PRELIMINARY PREPARATION

5.1 Handling Utensils

5.1.1 Surfaces that are in contact with food shall be scrubbed with soap, water and detergent after every operation. This prevents recontamination of food if the product previously in contact with the surfaces was contaminated. Scrubbing removes germs and scraps of food from the surfaces.

5.1.2 Wash all utensils with soap and water before use; this lowers the risk of contaminating food with dirty utensils.

5.1.3 Keep fuel or any inflammable product in closed, labelled containers, far from food and cookers.

5.1.4 The mixing of ingredients before cooking or serving should be done in receptacles specially intended for that purpose.

Do not use others which may have previously contained toxic products (e.g. insecticide containers, paint tins, motor oil cans, etc.) as they may still be impregnated with residues of the toxic substance which could pass into the food, and also, because the material they are made of is not suitable for holding food.

5.2 Hygienic Practices

5.2.1 Wash hands with soap and water before handling food or when changing from one activity to another. A container should be kept exclusively for washing hands; dirty hands are the main source of contamination and carriers of most food-borne diseases.

5.2.2 Wash greens and other vegetables in plenty of water, taking special care with those to be eaten raw; they might have been irrigated with waste water, in which case they would be highly contaminated, and eating them would constitute a serious health risk.

5.2.3 Wash all food, including meat, before preparing it in order to reduce the risks of contamination.

5.2.4 Food should be washed with drinking, running water, because as it flows over the food, it washes away some of the contaminants.

5.2.5 Clothes should be protected with an overall or apron and hair covered with a cap throughout food handling, as this prevents clothes touching the food or hair falling into dishes.

5.2.6 Do not wear rings or bracelets while handling food.

5.2.7 Food should not be handled by persons with cuts or sores, as these are a source of germs that can contaminate food on contact.

SECTION 6 - REQUIREMENTS FOR FINAL PREPARATION

6.1 Cooking and Handling

6.1.1 Cook the food sufficiently (whether boiling or cooking directly over a fire), as heat destroys many contaminants, especially germs and parasite cysts.

6.1.2 If the food is not served immediately it should be kept in a cool, well-ventilated place or, better still, refrigerated, but never outdoors or exposed to the sun; germs proliferate easily in food that is not kept cool.

6.1.3 As regards reheating food, only the portion to be served should be reheated and not more than once, because reheating insufficiently or more than once causes germs to multiply to the point where the food becomes dangerous.

6.1.4 Cooking utensils should be of suitable, hygienic material and recipients should be heat-resistant and used only for food preparation.

6.2 Hygienic Practices

6.2.1 Always wash the utensil used to taste food before putting it back into the pot, as food can become contaminated with germs from the cook's mouth.

6.2.2 Avoid sneezing or coughing over the food, particularly when it is ready to be served; coughs and sneezes contain germs which can contaminate food.

6.2.3 Wash hands with soap and water before starting preparation and after every change of activity during food handling.

6.2.4 Salads should be prepared with the aid of utensils, never with the hands which are the main vehicle of contamination.

SECTION 7 - REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TRANSPORT OF PREPARED FOOD

7.1 When food is transported to the place of sale, it should be in hermetically sealed and protected containers in order to avoid contact with dirty surfaces; if the vehicle is not suitable for transporting foodstuffs, maximum precautions should be taken to protect the food.

7.2 The place where food is prepared should be as near as possible to the place where it is sold, so as to avoid deterioration in transport over long distances.

SECTION 8 - REQUIREMENTS FOR MARKETING

8.1 The Sales Point and its Surroundings

8.1.1 Sales points (kiosks, barrows, mobile stalls, etc.) shall be built of solid, resistant materials, kept clean and in good condition, and in a clean place when not in use. They should not be used for any other purpose.

8.1.2 They should be stationed in authorized areas where they do not interfere with vehicular traffic and/or obstruct pedestrians.

8.1.3 The sales points, including working surfaces, awnings, tables, benches and boxes, cupboards, glass cases, etc.) should always be kept clean and tidy, as they should not only look nice, but also be suitable for selling food.

8.1.4 Never keep in the sales point articles that are not needed for the handling and marketing of food, such as clothes, blankets, footwear and baby's clothes, as these objects are further sources of food contamination.

8.1.5 Sales points should not be used as permanent or temporary dwellings, but exclusively for the handling and marketing of food, in order to reduce the risk of food contamination.

8.1.6 The surroundings of the sales points should be kept clean and litter-free. This will make the site more attractive to consumers and prevent further pollution of the environment and contamination of the food by the environment.

8.1.7 No animals should be allowed in or near the sales point as they could contaminate the food and transmit diseases.

8.2 Protection and Serving of Food

8.2.1 The food and beverages displayed for sale must be protected in glass cases, covered with bell-shaped wire-netting or plastic covers (minimum height 60 to 70 cm).

8.2.2 Disposable plates, covers and glasses should be used to serve food and beverages. If this is not possible, plates, covers and glasses used should be clean and in good condition.

8.2.3 If the sales point is a vehicle, the driving compartment shall be duly separated from the area where food is handled.

8.2.4 Prepared food which is not sold during the day may not be used the following day.

8.2.5 Take-away food shall be wrapped in unused paper and/or plastic. The use of printed plastic paper is forbidden, particularly if it comes into direct contact with the food.

8.2.6 Only final preparation, heating and serving of food is allowed in the sales points.

8.2.7 The utensils in which food is displayed for sale must be kept clean, covered and protected, AS they easily become contaminated if left dirty or unprotected.

8.2.8 Wash utensils with detergent and running, drinking water, and categorically reject the use of buckets or other receptacles containing water that is not thrown away immediately after use; if the same water is used twice it may lead to contamination and recontamination of the utensils washed in it.

8.2.9 Serve the food in easily washable utensils, AS this will make it more difficult for scraps of food to remain on them and germs to develop.

8.2.10 Serve the food using serving utensils in order to avoid touching the food or the surface with which it will be in contact.

8.2.11 Do not handle money and food at the same time, as money is a contaminating element. The person handling food should not have any contact with money, but if this is unavoidable, he/she should wash his/her hands before handling food again.

8.3 Requirements for the Vendor/Handler

8.3.1 Any food vendor/handler should wear appropriate clothing, consisting of at least an apron and cap for men and a hairnet or headscarf for women, which should always be clean and in good condition, and preferably white or pale in colour.

8.3.2 Every handler/vendor should receive training in hygienic food handling, BECAUSE training gives the handler/vendor the knowledge needed to provide a food product for direct consumption under adequately hygienic conditions.

8.3.3 Handlers/vendors should observe elementary hygienic practices: short hair, clean, short fingernails, clean hands, no coughing or sneezing over the food, no handling of food with cuts or skin infections, no smoking during the preparing and serving of food, BECAUSE hygienic habits enable consumers to be provided with food prepared and served in proper hygienic conditions.

8.4 Handling and Disposal of Wastes

8.4.1 Rubbish bins must be kept away from where food is handled and always be covered with lids, as this will prevent them from attracting pests.

8.4.2 Solid (sweepings, etc.) and liquid (washing water) wastes should always be kept separate, as this makes their removal easier and reduces the risk of contamination.

8.4.3 The separate wastes shall be disposed of as follows:

- cleaning wastes shall be put into a receptacle reserved for this purpose for later removal by the garbage collection service; and
- liquid wastes will go into the nearest drain.

This will prevent the drains being blocked by solid wastes and thus becoming a hotbed for contamination and pest proliferation.

8.5 Vector Control

- The area shall be kept clean and tidy in order to prevent the proliferation of insects and rodents.
- The area shall be fumigated from time to time (methods approved by the health authorities), as this will help prevent disease.
- Waste should be properly managed, i.e. rubbish should be placed in receptacles fitted with lids and emptied regularly.
- Left-over food should not be kept in the sales points.