

# 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  
Twentieth Session  
Geneva, 28 June - 7 July 1993

REPORT OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE  
CODEX COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NORTH AMERICA  
AND THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC

Canberra, 2-6 December 1991

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Second Session of the FAO/WHO (Codex) Regional Coordinating Committee for North America and the South-West Pacific made the following conclusions and recommendations:

### Matters for Consideration by the Commission

- Recommended that the Commission should coordinate with OIE and IPPC to ensure the harmonization of sanitary, zöosanitary and phytosanitary certification (para. 67)
- Suggested that the Commission may wish to examine the implications for Codex of a broader application of the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) System (paras. 82-86)
- Nominated Mrs Katherine Gourlie (Canada) for appointment as Regional Coordinator (para. 97)

### Other Matters of Interest to the Commission

- Noted that a United States proposal to reform the Commission's Procedures to ensure that scientific principles would continue to be the only basis for the Commission's recommendations had been referred to the Executive Committee (paras. 13-14)
- Expressed its full support for a successful outcome of the negotiations on sanitary and phytosanitary measures and barriers (para. 29)
- Recommended that JECFA and JMPR give urgent attention to the matter of providing guidance on risk assessment procedures, especially in view of the importance which would attach to these procedures under GATT (para. 36)
- Agreed on a number of measures to share information between Member countries of the Regions on food import and export certification issues (para 64)
- Agreed that the acceptance of food safety certification as an alternative to inspection and sampling at the point of import would be an important issue for the Codex Committee on Food Import/Export Inspection and Certification Systems, and expressed the view that there was an urgent need to commence such work as quickly as possible (paras. 66-68)
- Suggested that certain aspects of the Proposed Draft Guidelines on "Organically/Biologically" Produced Foods should be reviewed by the Codex Committee on Import/Export Inspection and Certification Systems (para. 91)

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## **INTRODUCTION**

1. The Second Session of the Coordinating Committee for North America and the South-West Pacific was held from 2 to 6 December 1991 in Canberra by courtesy of the Government of Australia. The Session was chaired by Mr Digby Gascoine, Director, Food Inspection and Support Services Division, Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service.

2. The Session was attended by representatives of the following member countries of the North American and South-West Pacific Regions: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Western Samoa, and the United States of America; and observers from Mexico, Tonga, the South Pacific Commission, the International Life Sciences Institute, and the International Organization of Consumers' Unions. The Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Professor F.G. Winarno (Indonesia) participated in the Session. A list of participants, including the members of the Secretariat, is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

## **OPENING OF THE SESSION (Agenda item 1)**

3. The Session was opened by the Honourable Alan Griffiths M.P., Minister for Resources, who welcomed participants on behalf of the Government of Australia. He noted that Australia had been a strong supporter of the Codex Alimentarius Commission since its establishment in 1962. Australia had particularly welcomed the range of new initiatives proposed by the recent FAO/WHO Conference on Food Standards, Chemicals in Food and Food Trade (Rome, March 1991), and endorsed by the Nineteenth Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (July 1991) for the future direction of the Codex Programme. Amongst these was the proposal to establish a new Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems, the first meeting of which was being scheduled for 1992. Mr. Griffiths drew attention to the increasing world-wide concerns about food quality and safety, and the possibility that food control measures could be improperly used to inhibit world trade.

4. Although the Australian Government had already identified food quality and safety as top priorities, Mr. Griffiths noted that there was a need to address the fears of consumers who considered that the liberalization of trade in agricultural and food products could lead to a lowering of national standards and thus pose a threat to human health. Mr. Griffiths reminded delegates of Dr. B.P. Dutia's opening address to the Nineteenth Session of the Commission, to the effect that it was necessary to clearly explain that Codex standards provided adequate consumer protection when properly applied, and that national standards whose increased strictness could not be justified scientifically did not truly offer greater protection to the consumer, but could be and were used as barriers to trade. Mr. Griffiths warmly welcomed moves within the Commission to increase transparency of its procedures and to encourage greater consumer involvement and participation in its work.

5. In relation to international trade in foods, Mr. Griffiths noted that this trade would be increasingly based on government-to-government certification that specified commodities had been produced and handled in a way which assured their quality and safety. He stated that the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) had made significant progress in promoting the use of quality assurance systems to achieve food safety objectives, and expressed confidence that this work would contribute significantly to the work of the new Codex Committee.

6. Mr. Griffiths stated that there was an increasing awareness that the Pacific Region provided the basis for economic and cultural cooperation and development. Noting that these countries had many common problems and a great deal to learn from

each other, Mr Griffiths stated that the Regional Coordinating Committee was an excellent opportunity for strengthening these relationships.

7. Mr. R.J. Dawson, Chief of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme welcomed participants on behalf of the Directors-General of FAO and WHO. He particularly noted the increased participation of developing countries in the meeting since the Committee's First Session in 1990 and expressed the hope that this trend would continue.

8. The Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Prof. F.G. Winarno, welcomed delegations to the session, particularly the participants from the Pacific Island countries. Prof. Winarno noted that the Commission was the only truly world-wide intergovernmental body working on food standards, with a unique role in promoting the availability of a safe and sound supply of wholesome food and to ensure fair practices in the food trade. He noted that the concerns expressed by consumers in relation to the hazards associated with food-borne diseases, additives and contaminants and the need for the Commission to address these concerns so that they did not become negative factors in international food trade. While noting the increasing globalization of the food industry and food trade, Prof. Winarno called attention to the increasing trend towards regional free trade groupings, and that this trend was especially noticeable in the Asia and Pacific Regions. However, he underscored the importance of free trade for all countries and the need to conclude successfully the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations under GATT. In this regard he noted the importance of the proposals in relation to Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and the potential impact for Codex.

9. The Chairman of the Commission drew attention to the benefits of participation in Codex for the developing countries of the Region. He noted that in Asia, the Codex Coordinating Committee had been the forum where developing countries had been able to impress upon FAO and WHO their needs in the areas of food control and import and export inspection and certification. He expressed the hope that the same benefits would be realized by the developing countries eligible to participate in the present session. Finally, Professor Winarno expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to exchange views and information in the important areas of food control and food import and export inspection.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda item 2)**

10. The Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda, document CX/NASWP 91/1, as its Agenda for the Session. It agreed to take Items 3(a) and 3(b), dealing with matters of interest arising from FAO and WHO, as one item based on the combined working paper (CX/NASWP 91/3-4) prepared for this purpose.

#### **MATTERS OF INTEREST (Agenda item 3)**

- a) Matters arising from the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the Executive Committee and other Codex Committees

11. The Secretariat introduced document CX/NASWP 91/2 which contained a summary of matters of interest to the Committee, based principally on the follow up to the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee's First Session. The Committee noted that many of its recommendations had been endorsed by the 37th Session of the Executive Committee, and subsequently by the Commission. Brief oral reports of the recent sessions of the Codex Committees on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods, Food Hygiene, and Tropical Fresh Fruits and Vegetables were also made. The

Committee also noted, later in the session, the outcome of the Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene.

12. The Committee welcomed the efforts, especially of FAO, to improve participation at Codex meetings by holding pre-session workshops of direct interest to the subject matter on Committee agendas. It noted, however, that the proposals of the March 1991 Conference to amend Rule XI.4 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, which required that the costs of participation be met by the countries concerned, would have to be considered in relation to the parallel General Rules of FAO when discussed by the forthcoming session of the Codex Committee on General Principles. It also welcomed the actions taken to strengthen national Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees by the convening of FAO Workshops for Codex Contact Points in Santiago (Chile) in December 1990, and Bangkok (Thailand) in December 1991.

13. The Delegation of the United States drew attention to discussions held in the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods on a United States proposal arising from the decision of the Nineteenth Session of the Commission not to adopt at Step 8 the draft Maximum Residue Levels for residues of certain growth promoting substances. The Delegation noted that the cumulative experience of the Commission was to base its recommendations on scientific principles, and that it was clear that governments at the Commission Session had voted in the light of their own national situations. The United States paper had recommended reform of the Commission's procedures to ensure that scientific principles would continue to be the only basis for the Commission's recommendations. The Committee noted that the proposal had been referred to the Executive Committee to determine whether it should be submitted to the Codex Committee on General Principles for consideration.

14. Other delegations supported the basic principle that the Commission's recommendations should be based on scientific evaluations, but noted that some countries under some circumstances took social and political considerations also into account. These delegations, nevertheless, agreed that such considerations should be limited or isolated to the greatest extent possible, and that science should be the primary determinant.

15. The Committee also noted that the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods had requested the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) to examine the problem of evaluating older veterinary drugs for which the safety and residue data may not be in conformity with modern requirements. The Committee welcomed the initiative of WHO in the preparation of a policy document on this matter.

16. In regard to the evaluation of food additives "generally recognized as safe", but for which no JECFA evaluation was available, the Committee expressed its concern that to date no expedited review mechanism had been established for the review of a large number of such compounds by JECFA, as had been recommended by the previous session of this Committee and endorsed by the 19th Session of the Commission. The Committee, noting the financial constraints on FAO and WHO in organising additional sessions of JECFA, expressed its continued interest and concern in this matter. It noted that the matter would be discussed by the forthcoming 1992 Session of JECFA.

- b) Matters arising from FAO, WHO and other international organizations
- c) Report on FAO/WHO food safety/food control activities

#### Joint FAO/WHO Activities

17. The Secretariat introduced document CX/NASWP 91/3-4 which contained information on current Joint FAO/WHO and individual FAO and WHO activities on food quality and safety. The results of the recent FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) meeting and the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) were presented in outline form. The Committee was informed that two JECFA meetings were planned in 1992, one for the review of certain food additives and the second on the review of certain veterinary drugs. The number of meetings in 1993 would depend upon whether sufficient resources could be obtained for convening additional meetings. The JMPR was continuing its current schedule each biennium and was carrying out work to evaluate compounds that were covered several years ago, as well as new pesticides that had been developed.

18. Information was also presented on the Joint FAO/WHO/UNEP Food Contamination Monitoring Programme and its work to collect food contamination data on priority compounds and assess trends and identify areas where technical assistance could be useful. The Secretariat pointed out that check sample surveys carried out under the Programme had revealed quality assurance problems in several of the participating laboratories, which indicated a need for additional training and for more standardized quality assurance and analytical systems. The Committee was advised that there had recently been held a joint FAO/WHO/UNEP management meeting to review current activities of the Joint Programme and plan for future activities.

19. The Meeting was advised concerning the Joint FAO/WHO Consultation on Assessment of Biotechnology in Food Production and Processing as related to Food Safety held in Geneva, 5 - 10 November, 1990. The Consultation had identified a strategy for evaluating safety and provides a sound technical basis for action by national food regulatory agencies and the food industry. The report of the meeting was to be published by WHO at the end of 1991.

20. Information was presented on the outcome of the Joint FAO/WHO Conference on Food Standards, Chemicals in Food and Food Trade, held at FAO Headquarters, Rome, 18 - 27 March, 1991. The Conference was attended by 78 Countries and 20 international organizations. The Conference made recommendations of far reaching effects to enhance the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, JECFA, JMPR and to improve international trade in foods. The recommendations had been reviewed at the 19th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, July, 1991 and action was being taken on the recommendations so as to ensure prompt follow up.

21. The Committee was advised concerning the 8th meeting of the International Consultative Group on Food Irradiation (ICGFI) which took place in Vienna, 4-6 November, 1991. The report of this meeting should be available in early 1992. Some of the subjects considered were: acceptance and introduction of the food irradiation process and removal of technical barriers to trade in irradiated foods, operation and control of food irradiation facilities, maintenance of inventories of information and creating public awareness.

22. The Secretariat presented information on the proposed Joint FAO/WHO International Conference on Nutrition (ICN) to be held at FAO Headquarters, Rome

in the first half of December, 1992 and which was to be preceded by a preparatory meeting of government representatives at technical level in August, 1992, at WHO Headquarters, Geneva. The Conference would be the first global intergovernmental conference on nutrition whose final results and recommendations would be based on extensive preparatory activities at both national and regional levels. To date, some 115 governments have appointed ICN Country Focal Points and were currently preparing country papers on their nutritional problems and needed actions. Another key feature of the ICN process would be the convening of Joint FAO/WHO regional/sub-regional meetings in early 1992. These regional/sub-regional ICN meetings would provide a mechanism for linking country-level and global preparations and an opportunity to review the nutrition situation in each region, to evaluate relevant policies and programmes and to discuss strategies for ensuring nutritional well-being. The first regional meeting was scheduled to be held in Bangkok, 27-31 January, 1992 and was intended to encompass the countries of Asia and Pacific regions. The need of many countries for assistance to participate in these meetings was highlighted.

#### **FAO Activities**

23. In discussing FAO activities related to Codex work, the Chief of the FAO Food Quality and Standards Service provided information on FAO food control assistance (review of national food quality control programmes and infrastructure, food legislation assistance, training of government and industry food quality personnel, strengthening of food inspection and analysis facilities); on food contaminants such as mycotoxins, pesticide residues and radionuclides; on studies and control problems related to sale of foods by itinerant vendors ("street foods"); and on FAO publications on chemical and microbiological analysis of foods, food sampling, quality assurance for the food microbiological laboratory and food exports. Specific FAO project assistance in countries of the NASWP regions and related Asian countries was mentioned, including regional activities on food control training.

#### **WHO Activities**

24. The food safety activities of WHO at the global, regional and national levels were summarized. The activities related to health education in food safety were highlighted and included the first meeting of the WHO Task Force on Integrated Approaches to Health Education held in Geneva, December, 1990 and an Inter-Regional Seminar on Health Education in Food Safety, Islamabad, Pakistan, September, 1990. WHO was assisting Member States in the identification and early warning of health problems associated with food contamination and had initiated action in setting up regional surveillance systems. In addition, a global databank on the incidence and outbreaks of foodborne diseases as reported by Member States had been established at WHO Headquarters, Geneva. To protect travellers from health hazards posed by contaminated food and drink, WHO had prepared a leaflet entitled "A Guide on Safe Food For Travellers." Activities of the Joint WHO/ILO/UNEP International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) were highlighted. In addition various activities related to animal production hygiene were mentioned. WHO publications of interest were mentioned and included such items as HACCP, guidelines for the use of wastewater in agriculture and aquaculture, listeriosis and food virology. Specific WHO assistance activities in countries of the NASWP regions and related Asian countries was mentioned.

25. The Meeting noted with great interest the important work being carried out by both FAO and WHO and commended both Agencies for their efforts in assisting developing countries to improve on the current systems of food control with a view

to improving consumer protection and improving the international trade of food. The Delegation of Papua New Guinea and the observer from Tonga congratulated FAO for its efforts and especially for providing assistance to developing countries that permitted them to participate in various Codex meetings such as the current one. However, they informed that much technical assistance was still needed by the Island countries and they looked forward to increased cooperation.

**STATUS REPORT ON THE GATT URUGUAY ROUND TRADE NEGOTIATIONS ON AGRICULTURE; WORKING GROUP ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY BARRIERS (Agenda item 4)**

26. The Chairman of the Coordinating Committee advised that the negotiations towards a GATT agreement on sanitary and phytosanitary measures had advanced little in the course of 1991, pending progress in the wider agriculture negotiations. The basic framework of the draft agreement remained as before: GATT contracting parties who aligned their sanitary or phytosanitary (food standard and quarantine control) measures with international standards, guidelines and recommendations would be exempt from challenge by other contracting parties; but measures more stringent than the international norms could require justification in terms of sound science, risk assessment and consistency in risk management.

27. Several important issues remained to be settled, including the scope of application of the agreement, the treatment of national systems for approving the use of food additives and establishing tolerances for contaminants in foods, feedstuffs or beverages and procedures for monitoring the process of international harmonization and the use of international standards, guidelines and recommendations. It was expected that there would be further examination of these issues in the near future.

28. The Chief of the FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme reported that the FAO Conference had given its approval for the establishment of a new professional post within the Food Quality and Standards Service of FAO to provide increased liaison between GATT, Codex, and other food control related activities of FAO. The Committee warmly welcomed this development. He also stated that a Secretariat report would be made to the next Session of the Executive Committee on the redirection of activities within the Secretariat and on progress in simplifying and up-dating Codex Standards to meet the requirements of the new environment under GATT.

29. The Committee expressed its full support for a successful outcome of the negotiations on sanitary and phytosanitary measures and barriers with the Multi-lateral Trade Negotiations. It also expressed the opinion that within these negotiations the primacy of the scientific basis for decision making should be maintained and that this process should be fully transparent. Some delegations also stated that societies had a right to take other factors into account, but that in doing so the scientific basis of the decision must be sound. The Observer from IOCU, while supporting the objectives of the Uruguay Round in general, expressed reservations on some aspects, particularly the exclusive emphasis on scientific evaluations. The Observer stated that consumers' preferences and certain ethical considerations should also be considered so that countries could maintain the right to set food standards in response to consumers' expectations and concerns.

**REVIEW AND PROMOTION OF ACCEPTANCES OF CODEX STANDARDS AND CODEX MAXIMUM RESIDUE LIMITS FOR PESTICIDES (Agenda item 5a)**

30. The Secretariat introduced document CX/NASWP 91/6 which summarized the status of acceptances of Codex Standards and Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) for pesticides for countries of the Region. The Committee noted that the Eighteenth Session of the Commission (1989) had adopted the concept of "free distribution" as a positive form of acceptance for pesticide and veterinary drug residues, and that governments had been requested to notify their acceptance of pesticide MRLs in the light of this new procedure. Similarly the Nineteenth Session of the Commission had adopted in principle that a similar form of acceptance should be included in the Codex Procedures to facilitate acceptance of standards by countries which up until now had found Codex Acceptance Procedures too difficult to follow.

31. The Delegation of Canada noted that acceptance under the concept of free distribution could imply the application of double standards; nevertheless it stated that commodities containing residues at levels of less than 0.1 ppm (mg/kg) where there is no established Canadian tolerance for a residue, could be distributed freely in Canada under this concept.

32. The Delegation of New Zealand stated that within its law, commodities containing residues in conformity with Codex MRLs were allowed to enter that country, and that a detailed reply to the Codex Secretariat on acceptances of MRLPs adopted at the 19th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission would be provided in the near future.

33. The Delegation of the United States reported that to formulate Food and Drug Administration (FDA) policy for supporting international harmonization, the Deputy Commissioner for Policy had formed a Task Force to review FDA's participation in all international activities and organizations, including the Codex Alimentarius Commission, to determine their relationship to broad US Government goals and FDA's primary consumer protection mission. A report was to be available in early 1992.

**APPLICATION OF RISK ASSESSMENT IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MAXIMUM RESIDUE LIMITS FOR PESTICIDE RESIDUES (Agenda item 5b)**

34. The Delegation of the United States introduced document CX/NASWP 91/7 which outlined the United States Environmental Protection Agency's process for assessing risks to human health associated with pesticide exposures through the diet. The paper outlined the steps included in the risk assessment process, namely; hazard identification, exposure assessment, dose-response assessment, and risk characterizations. It noted that regulatory decisions made in regard to pesticides also included a benefit assessment on the effectiveness and economic value of the pesticide compared to alternative chemical and non-chemical controls. The Delegation noted that some aspects of the US risk assessment process were not without controversy, especially the approach taken in assessing the risks associated with residues of carcinogenic pesticides. It was also noted that this process differed from that used by the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR). In regard to the establishment of national tolerances (MRLs) for pesticides not registered for use in the United States, the Delegation noted that in view of the small level of exposure to the population in most cases, it was possible to obtain approval for such tolerances when this could be justified scientifically.

35. Several delegations noted that the evaluations of JMPR did not provide for a statistical risk assessment of potential carcinogens as had been described in CX/NASWP 91/7, and that JMPR had up until now been of the opinion that if a substance was carcinogenic it should not be used. These delegations called for an internationally harmonized approach to risk assessment, preferably one which did not exclusively focus on the harmonization of the assessment of carcinogenicity. There seemed to these delegations considerable opportunity for harmonization of toxicological assessment.

36. The Committee recommended that JMPR and JECFA give urgent attention to the matter of providing guidance on risk assessment procedures, especially in view of the importance which would attach to the use of such procedures under GATT.

**NATIONAL REPORTS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN FOOD STANDARDS, REGULATIONS AND CONTROL, AND HARMONIZATION WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS (Agenda item 6)**

37. The Coordinating Committee was provided with reports by the delegations of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America on recent developments in food standards, regulations and control measures, and progress in relation to international harmonization. These reports are summarized below on the basis of information provided by these delegations. More complete information was provided in Conference Room Documents circulated as CX/NAWSP 91/8.

**Australia**

38. The Delegation of Australia reported that Australia's system of food regulation had undergone dramatic change in the last few months.

39. Food standards used to be set by a system of hierarchical, expert and representative committees under the aegis of the National Health and Medical Research Council. Food standards were not always adopted uniformly by the States and Territories, which were responsible for their enforcement. In August 1991 the National Food Authority (NFA) was established to develop food standards within clearly defined objectives and in an open and accountable process for uniform adoption throughout Australia by the States and Territories, which remain responsible for enforcement.

40. In the first months of operation of the NFA a variety of issues and standards have begun to be addressed. These include:

- total revision of the meat standard;
- development of a standard for game meat;
- assessment of the artificial sweeteners, sucralose and alitame;
- the management of those products previously regarded as drugs but now considered foods;
- health messages on labels;
- approval of materials for food contact use;
- appropriate regulation of food produced by biotechnology; and
- the extent to which international requirements should influence the NFA's deliberations.

**Canada**

41. The Delegation of Canada stated that its country, like many other trading nations, was confronting the need to refocus its domestically oriented food

standards system in order to meet the demands of emerging globalization of trade. Within the North American region, Canada had entered into a bilateral free trade agreement with the United States and was a party to the current tri-lateral negotiations (Canada/USA/Mexico) aimed at bringing about a North American Free Trade Agreement.

42. Canadian consumers have made it very clear that they will not accept any compromise of health, safety and fraud protection for trade purposes. Thus, redirection of the food standards and food control system, while seeking the widest possible trading opportunities, must maintain controls which were acceptable to and meet the expectation of Canadian consumers.

43. The recent introduction of voluntary nutrition labelling and the programme of introducing HACCP based manufacturing practice requirements closely followed the concepts adopted by Codex. The food regulatory Departments in Canada were actively consulting stakeholders on the shape and format for umbrella Good Manufacturing Practice regulations which would ultimately be followed by industry specific guidelines. These requirements would apply to products of both domestic and import origin.

44. Canada was also developing a proposal on the regulation of novel foods which will encompass those products resulting from bio-engineering and bio-technology. An Information Letter outlining these proposals was to be distributed in the near future.

45. Amendments were also being proposed to Canadian food labelling regulations to better protect consumers with sensitivity to certain ingredients. In particular, the presence of sulphites, peanut oil and tartrazine would have to be declared in both first and second generation ingredient statements. Current regulations exempted alcoholic beverages from a declaration of ingredients (including sulphites) while the labels on other foods may declare peanut oil and tartrazine, respectively, by the collective terms "vegetable oil" and "colour".

46. In response to increasing consumer awareness and the recognition of the emerging linkage between the diet and certain disease conditions, Canada had revised its Nutrition Recommendations and would be releasing a new Food Guide in the near future. The translation of these dietary recommendations into label information had been made somewhat more complex by the November 1990 promulgation of the US Nutrition Labelling and Education Act (NLEA). The mandatory nature of this new legislation had the potential to impede the free flow of pre-packaged foods between Canada and the USA. Legislation such as the NLEA when used as a health education tool also raised very difficult cross-cultural issues for trading partners.

47. As a result of entering into the Canada/US Free Trade Agreement, two comprehensive electronic data bases had been developed to show side-by-side comparisons of regulatory requirements/recommendations relating to food additives and pesticide residues in Canada, the US, the European Community and Codex. Similar information on Mexican regulatory requirements would also be added when this data became available.

48. The Delegation noted that copies of these data bases were available to any interested party. In addition to the two existing bases, a similar compilation dealing with food standards was currently under development.

49. The Delegation also stated that the work of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products in revising the standards for these foods exemplified the manner in which standards should be revised to remove impediments to trade while retaining vital health and safety parameters.

#### **New Zealand**

50. The Delegation of New Zealand, in speaking to its written comments in document CX/NASWP91/8, explained recent restructuring changes in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. Essentially, that Ministry had been divided into policy and delivery segments and had a requirement for full recovery of the cost of inspection services. With regard to the meat industry, a Meat Industry Hygiene Council had been created, the main purpose of which was the development of export meat standards, in partnership with industry. New Zealand explained that it was in the process of a major revision of its agricultural law which was focusing on the separate but related areas of biosecurity, quality management in primary processing industries, agricultural compounds, and animal welfare. The proposed law on agricultural compounds would supersede current procedures for pesticides and animal remedies. In addition, the Department of Health proposed to review MRL's for food sold locally.

51. The New Zealand Department of Health was also undergoing restructuring with the proposed establishment early in 1993 of a Public Health Commission and a Public Health Agency. This would separate public health activities (including food administration) from personal health care services. A substantial fifth amendment to the Food Regulations, 1984, was expected to be gazetted shortly. The main areas where changes occur were food labelling (including food additive identification and nutrition labelling) and the revision of the flours and meals, alcoholic drinks and special purpose foods standards. The Food Hygiene Regulations, 1974, were also under review; a working party had been established and a discussion document was expected next year.

#### **United States of America**

52. The United States Delegation described the most comprehensive revision of food labels that had ever occurred in the US, The Nutrition Labelling and Education Act of 1990 provided the basis for these changes for foods regulated by FDA. To provide harmony with other foods, labels on meat and poultry products that are regulated by USDA would also be changed. Proposed regulations were published on November 27, 1991. The most important changes included the following:

- Mandatory nutrition labelling for most processed foods, including consistent serving sizes in easily understandable measurements for most food categories.
- Definitions for nine core descriptive terms to ensure consistent use for the consumers.
- Conditions for statements of health claims on foods that contain nutrients that have a scientifically documented relationship with the risk of a disease.
- Implementation of a voluntary nutrition labelling programme for raw fruits, vegetables and fish, as well as raw, single ingredient meat and poultry products.

Based on proposed regulations, final regulations would be issued by November 8, 1992 and the changes were expected to be fully implemented in 1993.

53. The acceptable levels for lead in foods were being further reduced in the United States. Levels of lead previously thought to be safe now were considered to exceed threshold levels established by the Centres for Disease Control. The World Health Organization standards were used in establishing new limits. An upper limit of 300 ppb was being used for all wines sold in the US. This level was expected to be substantially lowered through formal rule-making procedures in the future. Further, a proposal to prohibit lead foil wine capsules was currently being prepared. Action was being taken to lower significantly the acceptable levels for all types of ceramic ware. A proposal was being prepared to ban the use of lead solder in food cans. Other potential sources of lead to be addressed with regulations are bottled water, calcium supplements, and food additives that contain lead as an impurity. These actions were the most recent to protect the public from the hazards associated with excessive exposures to lead, a programme that was initiated in the US in the 1930s.

54. Several delegations expressed concern at the recent development in the United States in regard to food labelling. They noted that these developments were inconsistent with the concept of harmonization, both on the regional and the international level. Although it was recognized that the scientific basis for making nutrition labelling claims could be harmonized, the specific problems of differing requirements for label declarations created technical barriers to trade. These delegations noted that in the absence of proof about definite linkages between food components and disease, so-called "health declarations" would be prohibited under drug or therapeutic products legislation.

#### Consumer Participation

55. The Committee discussed national procedures for involving consumers in decision-making processes in regard to food standards, regulations and legislation in the reporting countries. Most delegations reported that comments on new proposals were sought during a formal comment period, during which comments from consumers and consumer organizations were provided. The delegations of Australia and Canada stated that direct contact was made with consumer organizations during this period to ensure input. It was noted, however, that the demand on these voluntary organizations often created severe pressures on them. The Delegation of the United States reported that direct contact was made with consumer groups during all stages of regulatory negotiation. The Delegation of Papua New Guinea indicated that consumer organizations were allowed to be represented on the Food Standards Committee of the National Standards Council during regulatory discussions. The representative of IOCU welcomed the clear trend in the region towards more consumer involvement in the preparation of food standards.

### **FOOD STANDARDS AND FOOD CONTROL ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE REGION (Agenda item 7)**

#### Activities of the South Pacific Commission

56. The representative of the South Pacific Commission (SPC) expressed his appreciation for having been invited to attend the meeting and advised that the SPC was established in 1947 as an agency to provide expert technical assistance and advice to twenty-two countries and territories of the South Pacific region.

57. The Observer informed the meeting that the Pacific Island countries, like the rest of the world, were increasingly concerned about being able to control the quality of foods both imported, and locally produced, that are marketed in their countries. The movement towards integration into the international food trade posed a number of issues for countries in the region, and especially for the small developing countries. One of the concerns was the cost of importing foods grown or manufactured overseas. As many Pacific Island countries have small populations, were remote and have high transportation costs, the cost and loss of foreign exchange to buy food from overseas was a significant burden on their economies. Most of the Island countries were only able to produce economically a limited range of food to trade on the world market. This dependency on a limited number of products made them vulnerable.

58. The Committee was informed that the Pacific Island countries had limited productive capacity, capital resources, and government infrastructure that greatly impeded their ability to design and enforce food standards and controls; the limited size of their markets, lack of internal standards and regulations, and infrastructure to enforce any legislation in place, resulted in a considerably lower standard and quality of food imported into some of the Island countries. Several examples of dumping of inferior food products were provided. These same constraints also impeded the export of their primary produce which were vital to their economy.

59. It was pointed out that the cost of understanding and complying with standards that had significant impact on their food exports was prohibitively high. Similarly, testing for imported and domestic food quality and the preparation of appropriate standards, regulations and control was beyond the financial and manpower resources of most Pacific Island countries. In many situations food handling, storage and manufacturing facilities were not good. This was related to shortage of foreign exchange, the high cost of providing and maintaining these facilities, the lack of appropriate standards and controls and resources for enforcement.

60. Several areas concerned with food safety and quality were identified for action which could have a positive effect in improving the current situation in the countries and included the need to: continue to promote the benefits of Pacific Island foods versus imported foods, improve local food production, increase training and education in food safety and food preservation, increase awareness of food standards, stress the benefits for and encourage participation in Codex and improve food quality through better consumer awareness.

61. In conclusion, the observer of the South Pacific Commission expressed gratitude for the attention given by the Committee to the particular problems of Pacific Island countries, congratulated FAO and WHO for their efforts to improve the food control activities of the Island countries and looked forward to future active cooperation on Codex related matters.

62. The Committee congratulated the SPC for the excellent report and recognized the assistance being provided to the Island countries by SPC. Several delegations indicated that rapid tests for various food contaminants such as pesticide residues were being developed which could prove most helpful to the Island countries in the future. The delegate from Papua New Guinea expressed the need for formal technical training in various aspects of food control. The observer from Tonga expressed the need for assistance in provision of certificates from exporting countries related to the quality and safety for foods imported. Several delegations expressed the

need for caution regarding the use of certificates for exported foods and the requirement to have a system of quality assurance regarding the certification process so as to have reliability of the certification system in use.

**INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION ISSUES (Agenda item 8)**

a) **Progress report on regional food export/import certification and information exchange**

63. The Committee had before it document CX/NASWP 91/10, prepared and introduced by the Delegation of Canada. The Delegation noted that the paper had been prepared as a follow-up to discussion at the Committee's previous session, and in light of discussions at the Codex Regional Coordinating Committees for Africa (9th Session) and Latin America and the Caribbean (7th Session). It noted that several of the issues under discussion would become the responsibility of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems, including the proposals that the Codex Alimentarius Commission provide certification services to member countries and establish a characteristic symbol or mark of conformity with Codex Standards.

64. In reviewing the recommendations contained in the paper, the Coordinating Committee agreed to the following:

- to exchange immediately replies to Codex Circular Letter 1991/13-GEN, which solicited information on the nature and extent of import controls, the names and addresses of responsible departments and/or agencies, and whether data were available on detentions or rejections and the reasons therefore (see paras 10-11 of CX/NASWP 91/10);
- to exchange information through Codex Contact Points on a regular basis on planned regulatory programmes and actions, using a common simplified format as outlined in Appendix 2 to this report (see paras 12-13 of CX/NASWP 91/10); and
- to exchange information, in simplified form, of the regulatory processes used by countries of the Region for effecting regulatory and legislative changes (see para 14 of CX/NASWP 91/10).

65. The Committee acknowledged the benefits of maintaining an inventory of manuals, procedures, guidelines, policy statements, etc., on food standards and regulations as proposed in para. 15 of CX/NASWP 91/10, but realised that the development and maintenance of such an inventory would require considerable resources not currently available to Codex Contact Points or the Secretariat.

66. Finally, the Committee supported the views expressed in paragraph 16 of CX/NASWP 91/10 that an exchange of information on the current usage of certification systems and audits by Member Countries as part of import control strategies would be useful. In this regard the Delegation of Australia reported on difficulties encountered in seeking to negotiate government agreements for the acceptance of food safety certification as an alternative to inspection and sampling of food at the point of import. The Committee agreed that such matters would be a major issue to be resolved by the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems. It noted that a high degree of consistency and equivalency would be needed for the mutual recognition of certificates.

67. In relation to the certification requirements, although it was noted that plant quarantine and zoosanitary certificates contained similar fields of information to food safety and quality certificates, the Committee recognized that discussion of such was beyond the terms of reference of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, and fell within the competence of other bodies. It was agreed, however, that the Commission should coordinate with IPPC and OIE to ensure the harmonization of certification.

68. The Chief of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme referred to the budgetary problems faced by FAO for the biennium 1992/93, which required that all new activities would be subject to review. The first session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems could not therefore be held in early 1992 as initially planned, and that a meeting in September 1992 was under consideration. The Coordinating Committee expressed the strong opinion that there was a need to commence work within Codex on import/export inspection and certification systems as quickly as possible. The Observer from Mexico stated that an early commencement of this work was particularly important for all developing countries.

**b) Progress Report on Electronic Information Exchange Systems**

69. The Committee examined a paper prepared by Australia providing a progress report on electronic information exchange systems (CX/NASWP 91/11). In introducing the item, the Delegation of Australia provided a detailed outline of AQIS' electronic export documentation arrangement (EXDOC). It noted that trials of an electronic documentation interchange (EDI) system for handling meat export certification in Australia were currently underway. The Delegation indicated that the system would allow exporters to submit, as single data entry via EDI, the data requirements of four separate Australian government agencies. As a result, export clearance and the generation of the appropriate importing country health certificates would be secured in 30 minutes, compared to the current cycle of 3 to 5 days. There would, however, be no change to the physical inspection procedures.

70. The Delegation of Australia indicated that under this system, nearly half a million export related documents were expected to be processed per annum, with substantial cost/time savings. The Committee noted that EXDOC had been nominated as a pilot project for consideration by the Telecommunications Working Group of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. In this regard, the Delegation of Australia indicated its willingness to demonstrate the system to APEC members. Although EXDOC would generate paper certificates electronically, the Delegation of Australia emphasised that it was looking to international EDI transmission as the vehicle both to simplify the data to be transmitted and to reduce the certificate requirements to a single document. In concert with the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Australia was to lodge for acceptance through the United Nations EDIFACT process a global sanitary/phytosanitary EDI certificate. Such a certificate would cover product certification and simplify the amount of data to be transferred between government agencies.

71. The Committee noted that the government of Australia had already discussed the issue of an electronic meat health certificate with officials in a range of countries including the Republic of Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Canada, USA and New Zealand. Indications are that there was a strong chance that these countries may embrace the concept. The Delegation of Australia indicated that AQIS and FSIS had

already signed an agreement to pilot test an electronic meat health certificate and that AQIS would use the proposed global certificate in such a test.

**Report of a Joint FAO/AQIS Workshop on the Control of Food Imports and Exports for Countries of the South-West Pacific**

72. Mr. W.C.K. Hammer, FAO Consultant, reported on the outcome of a Workshop jointly sponsored by FAO and the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) in Canberra, 29 November 1991. The Workshop had been attended by 22 participants from 8 countries of the Regions; Australia, Canada, Cook Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, USA and Western Samoa. The Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Prof. F.G. Winarno (Indonesia) and the immediate past Chairman, Ir. E. Mendez (Mexico) and several other observers were also in attendance. The objectives of the Workshop had been to create an awareness of the essentials of both national export and import food control programmes for those participants whose exposure to food control programmes had been limited. Its second was to consider food control problems of the region in the context of global developments.

73. Presentations at the Workshop covered the essential elements of both export and import food control systems. These were supported by presentations demonstrating how those elements had been adopted in existing systems. Examples used were the Australian export and import systems and the US import system operated by the US Food and Drug Administration.

74. Representatives of all participating countries reported on the current situation with regard to their export/import food control status and a number expressed the problems being encountered by their governments and the strengths and weaknesses of their existing systems. The reports reflected a clear conviction by all countries of the importance of and need for control in both the export and import areas.

75. The Workshop discussed in considerable depth the global situation regarding food export and import control, particularly in the context of the increasing demands of importing countries for assurances that food exports are in no way hazardous to consumers. The problem being created for exporting countries by the multiplicity of certification being imposed by importing countries was also discussed. In general, the workshop was of the view that as new hazards were identified and food examination methods became more sensitive and demands on exporting countries by importing countries for more stringent controls and certification would become greater.

76. The workshop also considered the question of what might be done to assist the developing countries of the South-west Pacific to establish food control systems or strengthen existing ones. Participants from the developing countries of the region identified their principal needs to be in the areas of information exchange. That is, the need to receive information about developments and changes in the requirements of importing countries, international developments in food technology and related developments. There was also a need for training. In some cases it was a need for technical training but in others for training in aspects of the administration of food control systems. Some countries indicated that there was a need to strengthen existing systems. One country indicated that it had no import control system and would welcome assistance with establishing one.

### **Import inspection in Australia**

77. The Delegation of Australia provided an outline of the system for assessment of foods imported into that country. It was explained that AQIS was the body responsible for administering the food inspection programme and that the level of testing was determined by risk categorization. Imported foods of a high risk were subjected to intense testing to ensure that proper standards of hygiene and food safety had been met. The Delegation of Australia further explained that AQIS accepts wherever possible certification provided by overseas government food inspection authorities about the fitness of foods for human consumption.

78. In this regard, the Delegation of Australia also advised that contact had been made with many of the food inspection authorities overseas to obtain details of the certification which could be provided with food consignments. Details of the support structure which guaranteed the certification had also been requested but responses to date had been slow. In the absence of certification agreement, foods would continue to be inspected and tested. A key feature of the programme was that it allows a reduction in the frequency of inspection for suppliers to the Australian market, thereby minimising disruption and inconvenience to importers.

### **PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTING THE CODE OF ETHICS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN FOODS, INCREASING REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP, AND ON THE PROMOTION OF CODEX ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION (Agenda item 9)**

79. The Secretariat introduced document CX/NASWP 91/12 which outlined the status of the Codex Code of Ethics (CAC/RCP 20-1979, Rev.1 (1985)). It was noted that the Code would be incorporated in Volume 1 of the Revised Codex Alimentarius so as to give it greater prominence than at present.

80. The delegations of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA expressed their fullest support for the Code of Ethics and stated that their national policies in regard to the entry of food into international trade were fully compatible and consistent with the Code. The Delegation of Papua New Guinea also expressed its full support for the principles contained in the Code. The Observer from the South Pacific Commission reiterated its support for the Code especially in the light of its usefulness to the small island countries of the Region in protecting themselves against the dumping of sub-standard food. He stated that the South Pacific Commission was actively encouraging the countries of the Region to use the Code and for more of them to become Members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

81. The Committee noted that since its last session the only new country from the Region to become a Member of the Commission was Kiribati. The Observer from Tonga stated that the possibility of that country joining the Commission would be taken up at Cabinet level in the near future. The Committee welcomed this development and expressed its appreciation to those countries and organizations which had worked to encourage increased participation in Codex work by countries of the Region.

### **UPDATE ON THE APPLICATION OF THE HAZARD ANALYSIS CRITICAL CONTROL POINT SYSTEM (HACCP) (Agenda item 10)**

82. The delegations of Australia and New Zealand introduced detailed papers on the application of the HACCP approach to food inspection systems in their

respective countries (CX/NASWP 91/13, Parts I and II), as well as providing an overview of the HACCP concept. The delegations of Canada and the USA also provided advice on how the HACCP system was being used in their countries.

83. In introducing the item, the Delegation of Australia indicated that HACCP was a simple and logical system for food protection. It could be used to control all points in the food production process where hazardous or critical situations can result.

84. During the discussion, the Delegation of Australia emphasised that although HACCP was originally developed to control food pathogens, and was later extended to cover food spoilage organisms, the technique should now be promoted as being the best way to control all hazards to product quality, be they microbiological or chemical. The concept of this broader approach to HACCP proposed by the Delegation of Australia was strongly supported by the delegations of Canada, New Zealand and the USA who emphasised that HACCP had potential applications and benefits far broader than simply the control of pathogens.

85. The Committee endorsed the HACCP concept for food production and agreed that HACCP was perfectly suited to controlling product quality in the broadest sense and that such a procedure would firmly establish a link between developing and implementing a quality system.

86. The Committee noted that the Committee on Food Hygiene had recently issued for comment at Step 3 the General Principles for HACCP and that the Committee on Meat Hygiene had considered HACCP as an important element in the revision of the four meat hygiene codes. In view of the fundamental importance of HACCP to quality assurance based approaches to inspection, the Committee requested the member countries to provide comment to the Committee on Food Hygiene. Additionally, the Committee considered that the Executive Committee and the Commission may wish to examine the implications for Codex of a broader application of HACCP and the various aspects to be considered by the Committee on Food Hygiene, the Committee on Meat Hygiene and the new Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems.

#### **REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED DRAFT GUIDELINES ON ORGANICALLY/ BIOLOGICALLY PRODUCED FOODS (Agenda item 11)**

87. The Committee had before it document CX/NASWP 91/14 which was introduced by the Delegation of Canada. It was noted that the draft Guidelines attached to the document had initially been prepared by Canada, with input from several countries, as ALINORM 91/37 for the consideration of the 19th Session of the Commission. They had subsequently been circulated to governments for comments under Circular Letter 1991/23-GEN, and the comments were to be considered by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling. The Committee also had before it, for information, copies of the relevant EC legislation.

88. The Committee noted that the Guidelines pertained to a production methodology related to sustainable agriculture and that no inference was to be drawn that products produced in this manner were of higher safety or nutritional status. It agreed that to support trade in such commodities and to ensure that labelling would be consistent with national legislation and prevent fraudulent claims, there was some urgency to establishing international recommendations in this area.

89. The Committee welcomed developments in this area and agreed that the principle problems in international trade in organic foods were primarily related to labelling and that it was entirely appropriate for the matter to be discussed by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL). Several delegations reported on the situation within their own countries in relation to the control of the production methods used for foods described as "organically" or "biologically" produced. Some delegations were of the opinion that voluntary regulation of production methods as provided for in the draft Code could admit fraudulent practices by producers not members of the voluntary scheme and could create confusion in the marketplace for consumers. Other delegations expressed concern that the large number of exceptions allowed for in the basic requirements for the use of the term "organically produced" would cause difficulties for enforcement of label claims and that the distinction between these and conventional products would be unclear.

90. The Committee suggested that the complexity of the subject, and the fact that the guidelines dealt with production methods in addition to labelling considerations, might require that the comments received be reviewed either by a specialized working group or by a consultant in order to facilitate their consideration by CCFL. The Committee encouraged the countries of the Region to provide full and comprehensive comments to CCFL in order to facilitate finalization of the Guidelines as soon as possible. It was also suggested that because of the possible impact which the guidelines might have on the certification process there was a need to recommend that this aspect be reviewed by the proposed new Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS).

#### **DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING FOOD IRRADIATION IN THE REGION (Agenda item 12)**

91. In introducing this item the Chairman advised the Committee that the International Consultative Group on Food Irradiation (ICGFI) had requested that it be informed concerning the status of food irradiation within the countries of the NASWP.

92. The Delegation of Australia advised the Committee that in 1989 the Australian Government placed a three year moratorium on the manufacture, sale and import of irradiated food because the Government considered that there were still unanswered questions about the safety and health implications of food irradiation. Following correspondence with WHO Australia was funding the appointment of a WHO Consultant to review the safety of the irradiation process, nutritional aspects of irradiated food, and techniques for detecting irradiated foods. The report of the review's finding was expected to be completed by late 1992.

93. The Delegation of Canada reported that food irradiation was being regulated by the Food and Drug Act; that since 1989 food irradiation was classified as a process; that currently no irradiated foods other than spices were knowingly being marketed in the country; and that no proposal for irradiation of other foods was currently under review.

94. The Delegation of United States of America reported that it was the policy of the Government to endorse the use, under existing regulatory authority, of the irradiation of foods as an alternative technology in ensuring a safe food supply. Three food irradiation plants were being built, two were demonstration and research facilities using linear accelerators. The first cobalt-60 irradiation plant specifically designed to handle food for the irradiation process was scheduled to open soon in Florida.

95. The Delegation of New Zealand presented a New Zealand Government policy statement. Food irradiation was currently banned in the country and therefore the sale of irradiated foods was not permitted.

96. The Observer from IOCU advised the Committee that it had strong concerns concerning food irradiation; and that like Australia IOCU believed that additional work needed to be carried out to ensure that irradiated food was safe; and that until such information was made available a ban on the marketing of irradiated food should be initiated.

**NOMINATION OF COORDINATOR (Agenda item 13)**

97. The Coordinating Committee noted that it had decided at its First Session that the post of Regional Coordinator should be rotated among the countries of the Region following each session of the Committee. It therefore unanimously nominated Mrs Katharine Gourlie (Canada) for appointment as Regional Coordinator by the 20th Session of the Commission. Mrs. Gourlie accepted the nomination subject to the confirmation of her Government.

**OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE WORK (Agenda item 14)**

98. The Committee noted that several of the items discussed at the present session would require follow-up at the Committee's Third Session.

**DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION (Agenda item 15)**

99. The Committee noted that its third Session would probably be held in September 1993 in Vancouver (Canada). In view of the importance of participation of developing countries of the Regions in the Committee's deliberations, the Committee expressed the view that all available options to facilitate the participation of these countries at the session should be explored. The delegations of Australia, and Canada expressed support, in principle, for providing extra-budgetary funds for this purpose, and the Delegation of the United States stated that it would give consideration to the proposal. The Delegation of Papua New Guinea expressed its strong support for the proposal.

**CODEX COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NORTH AMERICA  
AND THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC**

**Summary Status of Work**

Subject Matter	For Action By:	Document Reference
Status Report on GATT Uruguay Round Trade Negotiations on Agriculture	Secretariat 3rd CC/NASWP	ALINORM 93/32, paras. 26-29
Review of Acceptances of Codex Standards and MRLPs by Countries in the Region	Secretariat 3rd CC/NASWP	ALINORM 93/32, paras. 30-33
Regional Food Export/Import Certification and Inspection Information Exchange Systems	Governments 3rd CC/NASWP	ALINORM 93/32, paras. 63-68
Electronic Information Exchange Systems	Australia 3rd CC/NASWP	ALINORM 93/32, paras. 69-71
Progress Report on Implementing the Codex Code of Ethics in International Trade in Foods in the Region	Secretariat 3rd CC/NASWP	ALINORM 93/32, paras. 79-80
Progress Report on Increasing Regional Membership	Secretariat 3rd CC/NASWP	ALINORM 93/32, para. 81
Promotion of Acceptances of Codex Maximum Residue Limits for Pesticides	United States 3rd CC/NASWP	ALINORM 93/32, paras. 30-33

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**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED  
FOOD LEGISLATION AND REGULATORY INITIATIVES**

Country:

<u>Statute</u>	<u>Brief Outline of Proposal</u>	<u>Publication Date</u>	<u>Expected Date of Implementation</u>	<u>Department/Ag Contact</u>
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