

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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CL 2023/66-FICS
December 2023

TO: Codex Contact Points
Interested International Organisations

FROM: Secretariat, Codex Alimentarius Commission
Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme

SUBJECT: **REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON APPENDIX A AND PROPOSALS FOR NEW WORK ON EMERGING ISSUES**

DEADLINE: **19 April 2024**

COMMENTS: **To:**
Codex Contact Point
Department for Environment, Food and
Rural Affairs (Defra) – Food Policy Unit
United Kingdom
Email: codex@defra.gov.uk

Copy to:
Codex Secretariat
Codex Alimentarius Commission
Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards
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E-mail: codex@fao.org

BACKGROUND

1. The 26th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS26) considered a standing-item paper, [CX/FICS 23/26/9](#), prepared by Australia and Kenya. The paper consolidated and presented a list of emerging issues that might inform future CCFICS work, based on responses to [CL 2022/05-FICS](#).
2. It was noted that the purpose of this standing agenda item is to facilitate a strategic, outward looking discussion, based on a global scan identifying potential future issues and challenges that present opportunities for standardisation within the terms of reference of the Committee.
3. To date, the global scan supporting this agenda item has been developed solely via a CL process. It was noted at CCFICS26 that during the plenary there was often insufficient time for the Committee to discuss this agenda item fully. In this respect, the importance of holding an intersessional workshop was stressed. This workshop could provide CCFICS27 with a stronger basis upon which to consider any new work or revisions to CCFICS texts, and to prioritise future work.
4. In conclusion, CCFICS26:
 - a. Acknowledged the current list of emerging issues identified in **Appendix A**;
 - b. Agreed for the list of emerging issues to continue as a standing Agenda Item for future CCFICS meetings, and that custodianship would continue to be rotated through Members on a meeting-by-meeting basis;
 - c. Agreed to request the Codex Secretariat to issue a CL requesting inputs from members on emerging global issues to be included in **Appendix A**;
 - d. Noted that as a result of consultations with the CCFICS Chairperson, the UK had agreed to be the next custodian for Appendix A of the Emerging issues paper (for CCFICS27), and that Australia was prepared to support the next custodian;
 - e. Agreed that the responsibility of the Custodian would continue to be the preparation of an updated document that take account of discussions at CCFICS26, as well as the comments solicited through the CL; and submitting a report, including an updated and prioritised list of emerging issues, to CCFICS27 for consideration;
 - f. Agreed to hold an intersessional workshop ahead of CCFICS27 to further discuss the emerging issues under **Appendix A**; and

- g. Agreed to retain Appendix B (as amended) as an internal document for CCFICS that may be updated based on experience gained from its use.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

5. Members and Observers are invited to consider how emerging global trends may affect National Food Control Systems and international trade, and how this might influence CCFICS standards needed in the future. These considerations may inform proposals for new work and their prioritisation, including their consideration at an online intersessional workshop prior to CCFICS27.
6. In this respect, Members and Observers are invited to review and provide comments on **Appendix A**. Comments may be:
 - Additional proposals for inclusion on the list;
 - additional detail on currently listed proposals in the table, including better defining how they relate to CCFICS; and/or
 - striking out proposals that are no longer relevant to the work of CCFICS or are not within the terms of reference of CCFICS.
7. Members and Observers are encouraged to think broadly and critically about potential areas of work that might stem from global trends. This might include but not be limited to, the emergence of new foods and production systems; changing consumer expectations; technological advancements; cybersecurity risks; climate change; efforts to advance sustainability objectives; integration of One Health approaches in National Food Control Systems, increasing supply chain complexity etc. Publications of multinational organisations, including the FAO Food Safety Foresight Programme, highlight some of these trends and others.
8. Proposed additions to Appendix A must fall within the remit of the Committee. In identifying emerging issues and proposals for new work, members and observers should provide information in line with the criteria listed in the table in Appendix B.
9. Prior to CCFICS27, an online intersessional workshop will be held to discuss emerging issues. The purpose of the meeting will be to elaborate on the identified issues, build consensus on potential new work proposals and make recommendations regarding their prioritisation. Members and Observers are reminded that drafting of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 is underway, consultation is scheduled for 2024 and adoption is proposed at CAC47. The intersessional workshop may represent an opportunity to consider how CCFICS can have the most impact on protecting consumer health and promoting fair practices in the food trade in the period to 2031.
10. Comments are requested to the addressees indicated above by 19 April 2024.

APPENDIX A

POTENTIAL NEW WORK FOR CCFICS: LIST OF NEW EMERGING GLOBAL ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Introduction

1. The table below identifies significant emerging global issues that may impact the work of CCFICS and recognises any existing texts or new work proposals relevant to each issue. These items have been drawn from previous discussions at CCFICS sessions and other available material, including multilateral food safety and trade discussions.
2. It may be the case that existing texts touch on, but do not fully address, an identified global issue. In this case, additional or clarifying guidance may be warranted. This may present an opportunity for CCFICS to consider the appropriateness and priority of potential new work, using the proposed framework outlined in Appendix B. It may also present an opportunity to review existing text in light of new data, or new trading environments.

New emerging global issues for consideration

Issue No.	Potential Emerging Global Issue for consideration (not in priority order)	Related Impact on CCFICS / Codex	Related CCFICS text	Comment / Status / Reason for priority
1	Appeals mechanism in the context of rejections.	Develop guidance on an appeals mechanism in the context of rejections of imported foods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CXG 25-1997 	Chairperson Note: India presented a discussion paper at CCFICS26. There was general support from CCFICS Members to consider the need for guidance, however further information on the scope of the proposed guidance would need to be reviewed.
2	New and evolving food production, processing, transport and distributing systems and technologies.	<p>Impact on the Competent Authority with regard to national food control systems (e.g., effectiveness, traceability, recalls) related to new food sources and production systems.</p> <p>Impact on trade through equivalence and systems recognitions.</p> <p>Potential need to update existing Codex text to address</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CXG 19-1995 • CXG 20-1995 • CXG 25-1997 • CXG 26-1997 • CXG 34-1999 • CXG 38-2001 • CXG 47-2003 • CXG 53-2003 • CXG 60-2006 • CXG 82-2013 	Chairperson Note: CCFICS Members supported this issue however noted the ongoing discussions in the CCEXEC subcommittee on New Food Sources and Production Systems (NFPS). CCEXEC83 concluded that work on NFPS did not preclude Codex committees from undertaking new

Issue No.	Potential Emerging Global Issue for consideration (<i>not in priority order</i>)	Related Impact on CCFICS / Codex	Related CCFICS text	Comment / Status / Reason for priority
		production of new foods subject to new regulation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CXG 89-2016 • CXG 91-2017 • Proposed Guidance on Recognition and Maintenance of Equivalence of NFCS 	work on such emerging issues that fall within their respective mandates, that existing Codex procedures can adequately address new emerging issues under NFPS and that cross-committee coordination may be required by CCEXEC.
3	Improved analytics, testing technologies, and surveillance.	The tools and methods used to measure performance of food control systems and how and when they are applied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CXG 47-2003 • CXG 53-2003 • CXG 25-1997 • CXG 34-1999 • CXG 82-2013 • CXG 89-2016 • CXG 91-2017 	Chairperson Note: CCFICS Members recognised the importance of the issue, however sought further clarity on what is needed in addition to current CCFICS texts. It is suggested that more information be put forward on the issue.
4	New approaches to food safety, including preventative and outcomes-based systems.	Current and anticipated changes to the suite of tools used to provide assurances, and how and when they are applied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CXG 20-1995 • CXG 19-1995 • CXG 25-1997 • CXG 26-1997 • CXG 34-1999 • CXG 38-2001 • CXG 53-2003 • CXG 47-2003 • CXG 60-2006 • CXG 82-2013 • CXG 89-2016 • CXG 91-2017 • Proposed Guidance on Recognition and 	Chairperson Note: CCFICS Members recognised the importance of the issue, however sought further clarity on what is needed in addition to current CCFICS texts. It is suggested that more information be put forward on the issue.

Issue No.	Potential Emerging Global Issue for consideration (<i>not in priority order</i>)	Related Impact on CCFICS / Codex	Related CCFICS text	Comment / Status / Reason for priority
			Maintenance of Equivalence of NFCS	
5	Evolving role of competent authority and interactions between various government entities.	Interaction among various governmental entities involved in food trade, in particular between food control authorities and customs/border protection agencies, and the ability to better leverage information from these interactions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CXG19-1995 • CXG 34-1999 • CXG 47-2003 • CXG 82-2013 • CXG 89-2016 • CXG 91-2017 • Proposed Draft Guidance on Recognition and Maintenance of Equivalence of NFCS 	Chairperson Note: CCFICS Members recognized the importance of the issue, however sought further clarity on what is needed in addition to current CCFICS texts. It is suggested that more information be put forward on the issue.

APPENDIX B**FRAMEWORK FOR THE PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY AREAS FOR CCFICS – PRIORITISATION TOOL**

1. The following guidelines are established to assist the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) to prioritise its work.

Proposals for New Work

2. Proposals for new work will typically address issues associated with food safety and fair practices in the food trade, within the mandate of CCFICS, including to establish new Codex texts or revise existing Codex texts.

3. Appendix A containing a list of emerging global issues may be used as a basis for a new work proposal, however proposals can be brought forward to CCFICS at any time, regardless of whether it is on the list or not.

4. Proposals for new work to be undertaken should follow the process below, that includes requirements outlined in the Procedural Manual for Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities (criteria applicable to general subjects)¹, in addition to the criteria below.

5. Members proposing new work may also refer to the document prepared at Appendix C that may assist in development of the new work proposal.

Criteria for Evaluating and Prioritising New Work

6. In addition to the provisions applying to new work proposals in the Codex Procedural Manual, the following criteria and associated ratings will be used in evaluating and prioritising new work proposals undertaken by CCFICS:

- a. the justification for new work, including how the area of work may fill a gap in the current CCFICS suite of texts, or provide clarity to them;
- b. whether the work will amend existing CCFICS texts or develop a new CCFICS text; and
- c. the scope of the work and the extent to which the issue impacts on CCFICS Members and international trade.

7. To assist in quantifying (c) above, the criteria below should be used by the Member proposing new work as part of the self-assessment and include a rationale to justify the rating.

Criterion	Rating
Relevance to CCFICS mandate	Yes / No* * If no, work should not proceed through CCFICS.
Immediate Urgency	High Medium Low
Impact on Food Safety	High Medium Low
Impact on fair trade practices	High Medium Low

Process for considering Proposals for New Work

8. The Committee will, normally, employ the following process with regard to the revision of existing Codex texts or development of new Codex texts:

¹ Codex Procedural Manual, 27th Edition, Section II.

- a. As with normal procedure, new work proposals should be provided in the format of a project document and include requirements for the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities (criteria applicable to general subjects) outlined in the Procedural Manual;
- b. Additionally, the project document should include a self-assessment against the additional criteria specific to CCFICS, as found in this prioritisation tool. Appendix C, a template combining the project document and the proposed prioritisation criteria, can also be used to assist members drafting new work proposals;
- c. It may be appropriate for CCFICS to establish an ad hoc working group, particularly in cases where multiple proposals are under consideration, chaired by the custodian of Appendix A, that could be tasked to evaluate and prioritise new work proposals and make recommendations to CCFICS; and
- d. CCFICS will consider new work proposals and recommendations of the ad hoc working group, if established.

Identification of priority areas

- 9. The Committee may reassess the priority of each item where new data or other information is available relating to an item. Such data may be submitted for consideration and the priority for the new work proposal reconsidered.
- 10. CCFICS will continue to utilise all available resources, including the list of Emerging Global Issues relevant to CCFICS, to identify emerging or imminent issues of relevance to the Committee.

APPENDIX C

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION
AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

CCFICS Session

NEW WORK PROPOSAL – [insert subject]

ON CONSIDERATION OF EMERGING ISSUES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE WORK OF
THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION
SYSTEMS

Prepared by [insert member country or countries]

Purpose and Scope of the Standard

Relevance and Timeliness

Main aspects to be covered

An assessment against the *Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities*

Relevance to the Codex strategic objectives

Information on the relation between the proposal and other existing Codex documents as well as other ongoing work

Identification of any requirement for and availability of expert scientific advice

Identification of any need for technical input to the standard from external bodies so that this can be planned for

Proposed timeline for completion of the new work, including the start date, the proposed date for adoption at Step 5, and the proposed date for adoption by the Commission; *the time frame for developing a standard should not normally exceed five years.*

CCFICS criteria to assist the Committee prioritise the development of new work.

Justification for new work, including how the area of work may fill a gap in the current CCFICS suite of texts, or provide clarity to them.

Whether the work will amend existing CCFICS texts or develop new CCFICS text.

The scope of the work and the extent to which the issue impacts on CCFICS members and international trade.

The results, including rationale, from the self-assessment against the Criteria for Evaluating and Prioritising New Work in Appendix B.