CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

World Health Organization

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REP25/NASWP

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

48th Session

10 - 14 November 2025

REPORT OF THE 17TH SESSION OF THE FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NORTH AMERICA AND THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC

Nadi, Fiji

3 - 7 February 2025

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
AOAC	Association of Official Analytical Collaboration
AMR	Antimicrobial Resistance
CAC	Codex Alimentarius Commission
CL	Circular letter
CCEXEC	Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission
CCCF	Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods
CCFFV	Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
CCFH	Codex Committee on Food Hygiene
CCFICS	Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems
CCFL	Codex Committee on Food Labelling
CCGP	Codex Committee on General Principles
CCMAS	Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling
CCNASWP	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific
CCSCH	Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs
CRD	Conference Room Document
CTF	Codex Trust Fund
EWG	Electronic Working Group
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEMS	Global Environment Monitoring System
HPLC	High-Performance Liquid Chromatography
HPTLC	High-Performance Thin Layer Chromatography
IHR	International Health Regulations
IWG	In-session working group
JECFA	Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives
JEE	Joint External Evaluation
LC	Liquid chromatography
MS	Mass spectrometry
NASWP	North America and the South West Pacific
PICs	Pacific Island Countries
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
TCP	Technical cooperation programme
TLC	Thin Layer Chromatography
TOR	Terms of reference
UV	Ultraviolet
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

INTRODUCTION

1. The FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific (CCNASWP) held its 17th session in Nadi, Fiji, from 3 to 7 February 2025 at the kind invitation of the Government of Fiji. Dr Andrew Tukana, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways, Fiji, chaired the session, which was attended by delegates from ten Member countries in the NASWP region, one Member country from another region, one Member Organization from outside the region, and one Observer Organization. The list of participants is contained in Appendix I.

OPENING

2. Following a traditional opening ceremony, the Minister for Agriculture and Waterways of Fiji, Honourable Vatimi T.T.K. Rayalu officially opened the session. Recalling that food safety is a regional concern and a global priority that represents one of the most pressing challenges in trade, public health and consumer protection, he highlighted evolving threats such as climate change, global supply chain dynamics, shifting dietary trends, and emerging pathogens.

3. Mr Guangzhou Qu, Sub-regional Coordinator for the Pacific, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Ms Sophie Genay-Diliautas, Deputy World Health Organization (WHO) Representative to the South Pacific, delivered opening remarks. Mr Allan Azegele, Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), and Dr Sarah Cahill, Secretary, CAC, also addressed the committee.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (agenda item 1)[1]

4. CCNASWP17 adopted the provisional agenda as its agenda for the session and agreed to discuss the following topics under other business (agenda item 10) time permitting:

   - a discussion paper on development of a regional standard for galip nut (North America and the South West Pacific) (CRD02);
   - a discussion paper on development of a regional standard for breadfruit flour (North America and the South West Pacific) (CRD03); and
   - a discussion paper on traditional underground oven cooking in the South West Pacific: food safety considerations (CRD05).

5. CCNASWP17 agreed under agenda item 6, which would be discussed after agenda items 7 and 8:

   - to establish an in-session working group (IWG) chaired by Canada, and working in English, with the following terms of reference (TOR):
     - review the proposed work plan in the agenda item 6 document (CX/NASWP 25/17/7);
     - identify the Strategic Goals and outcomes in the new Codex strategic plan 2026–2031 that would be tackled by the region in the 2025–2026 biennium;
     - map the activities of the region to the Codex strategic plan 2026–2031; and
     - propose any new activity for the region.

6. CCNASWP17 further agreed to discuss under:

   - Agenda item 3: Update on the work related to methods of analysis of scopoletin in noni fruit juice (CRD06).
   - Agenda item 4.1: Discussion paper on the use of criteria for evaluation and prioritisation to resolve food safety and quality challenges, identified by the region (CRD07).
   - Agenda item 5: Adoption of regional positions by CCNASWP (CRD01).

[1] CX/NASWP 25/17/1; CRD01 (United States of America); CRD02 (Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, New Zealand); CRD03 (Samoa); CRD05 (Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and the International Union of Food Science Technology (IUFoST); CRD06 (Samoa, New Zealand, Australia and IUFoST); and CRD07 (New Zealand and IUFoST)

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: "INDIGENOUS FOODS – FOOD SAFETY AND ONE HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS" (Agenda Item 2)[2]

7. Dr Vincent Lal, Manager, Analytical and Laboratory Services, University of the South Pacific, Fiji, delivered the keynote address: "Indigenous foods – food safety and One Health considerations", which provided an insight into the history and evolution of indigenous foods, highlighting the influence of human intervention and the close link with traditional knowledge and practices. While Indigenous foods were facing challenges of industrialization and globalization of the food supply, they also held immense potential for sustainable food systems and cultural preservation.

8. Dr Lal underlined:

- the need for improved food safety regulations and control strategies for Indigenous foods, advocating for a "One Health approach" that considered human, animal, and environmental health;
- that the preservation of cultural heritage and sustainable food systems relied on a multi-sectoral approach involving governments, researchers, and the private sector; and
- that integrating Indigenous foods into formal markets sustainably would require updated food composition data, capacity building, and regional collaboration.

9. The keynote address was followed by a panel discussion moderated by Mr Dirk Schulz, Food Safety Officer, FAO Agrifood Systems and Food Safety Division, with the following panellists in addition to the keynote speaker: Dr Gina Kennedy, Principal Scientist, Alliance of Bioversity and International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT); Yasmina Sultanbawa, Professor, Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation, University of Queensland; and Jimaima Lako, Professor, Fiji National University; and Dr Lal.

10. Dr Kennedy noted the overreliance of the modern global food system on a few species and stressed the need to explore Indigenous alternatives for a more sustainable approach whereby edible biodiversity provided the foundation for healthy diets and good nutrition around the world as defined by the new FAO/WHO healthy diet model.

11. Dr Kennedy also highlighted the need for investments in safe post-harvest temperatures, storage, and handling along the aquatic food value chain, further emphasizing the need to create an enabling environment for local foods.

12. Professor Sultanbawa emphasized the cultural significance of Indigenous foods, pointing out that an authentic Indigenous food system was deeply connected to the people, their land, and the plants that grew there. She emphasized the importance of respecting this connection when integrating Indigenous foods into modern food systems and the need to ensure that the intellectual property was protected, and that access and benefit sharing went back to the original communities.

13. Professor Lako pointed out that Indigenous foods were generally high in fibre, micronutrients and antioxidants, often surpassing modern, processed alternatives in nutritional value.

14. Professor Lako also highlighted the connection of Indigenous foods to culture, heritage, spirituality, and the protection of the land. Indigenous food systems effectively connected humans, animals, plants and microbes aligning indigenous food systems with the One Health approach.

15. Dr Lal informed the meeting that a number of Indigenous foods were being mapped with biochemical analysis under the Periodic Table of Food Initiative.[3] However, the need for comprehensive, updated food composition and contaminant data for indigenous crops and products in the Pacific remained, which would be critical for policy and standardization.

16. The ensuing discussion noted that while historically populations thrived on indigenous foods, many Pacific Island Countries (PICs) now faced food security challenges and relied on imported processed foods.

17. A Member noted that to counteract the trend of overreliance of imported processed foods, there was a need to make traditional foods more affordable, accessible and appealing, particularly to younger populations. To address these issues, initiatives like the Slow Food movement and the *Pacific Island Food Revolution* were noted as avenues for increasing awareness and promoting collective action.

18. The discussion emphasized the importance of conducting research to better understand the nutritional content, processing techniques, and safety aspects of Indigenous foods, as a basis for the development of food standards that would allow their safe and effective use in modern food systems.

[2] CX/NASWP 25/17/2

[3] https://foodperiodictable.org/

19. The discussion recognized the need to preserve traditional knowledge related to food, and acknowledged the potential benefits of Indigenous foods for food security, improved nutrition, economic growth for local communities, and preservation of cultural practices.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND CODEX SUBSIDIARY BODIES (agenda item 3)[4]

20. The Codex Secretariat introduced this item, emphasizing the following matters for information:

- the agreement of the 16th session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF16) to retain scopoletin on the priority list and to call upon Codex Members concerned to generate and submit data to support the conduct of the safety evaluation by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA);
- the importance of engaging in opportunities to contribute to the discussions in the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC) and CAC, including by responding to circular letters (CLs) from Codex Committees;
- the current working mechanisms were adequate to address any new work proposals on new foods and production systems that Members might propose;
- the Codex Secretariat's plans to develop practical guidelines for Members on the development of new work proposals; and
- the publication of *The Codex electronic working groups handbook*,[5] and the encouragement of its use.

21. The Codex Secretariat highlighted the matter that was for action by CCNASWP17:

- The 42nd Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS42) had not endorsed the revised standard operating procedure (SOP) for the identification of kavalactones and flavokavains in fresh and dried kava products by high-performance thin layer chromatography (HPTLC) in the *Regional standard for kava products for use as a beverage when mixed with water* (North America and the South West Pacific) (CXS 336R-2020) due to the lack of description of how the final determination was to be made. Thus, CCMAS42 had requested CCNASWP to provide further edits to address the lack of instruction on the final determination steps and assessment against a specification.

Discussion

22. A Member informed CCNASWP17 that there was a need to ascertain that the method proposed served the objectives of verification of conformity with a key provision in the *Regional standard for kava products for use as a beverage when mixed with water* (North America and the South West Pacific) (CXS 336R-2020) related to the selection of kava varieties and the requirements to identify kava nobility. Leveraging the guidance from CCMAS42, the Member referred to the updated methodology described in the annex of CRD04. However, further discussion had identified that the draft SOP proposed lacked some key details that needed to be completed in line with the direction provided by CCMAS42.

23. CCNASWP17 realized that further work was therefore needed on specific sections such as the scope (section 2), precision and accuracy (section 7) and the procedure (section 11) of the draft SOP. This would entail further consultation with the analytical community and verification, which would require some time.

24. Considering that CCMAS44 would meet early May 2025, and CCNASWP18 in 2027, it was proposed to allow some further work after CCNASWP17 to finalize the SOP with a view to submit it in time to be considered by CCMAS44. Members were supportive of this approach that would ensure a more complete SOP for the identification of kava varieties and nobility.

25. A main issue for generating and submitting data on scopoletin for consideration by JECFA was the availability of validated quantitative methods targeting the substance in noni fruit juice.

26. A Member referring to CRD06, which provided an update on the methods of analysis for the identification of scopoletin in noni fruit juice, informed CCNASWP17 of the ongoing work in the region to develop and validate additional methods beyond the thin-layer chromatography (TLC) method, which had been endorsed by CCMAS42 and included in *Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling* (CXS 234-1999). Efforts were underway to validate a high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) method for scopoletin with ultraviolet (UV) detection as well as the possibility to use a liquid chromotography-mass spectrometry (LC-MS) based method for the identification and quantification of scopoletin.

[4] CX/NASWP 25/17/3; NASWP17/CRD04 (Fiji); NASWP17/CRD06 (New Zealand, Australia and IUFoST)
[5] https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/aee7614e-d630-4665-a98c-74adcc4d3040

27. An Observer added that the ongoing efforts will be supported by the newly created South West Pacific section of the association of official analytical collaboration (AOAC) international and would assist countries in generating and submitting data on scopoletin in noni fruit juice.

28. The Observer welcomed delegates to a side-event dedicated to reviewing efforts of enhancing collaboration in food laboratory method development and validation for scopoletin, which would support the goal of data collection related to scopoletin in noni fruit juice.

Conclusion

29. CCNASWP17:

i. noted the matters for information arising from CAC, CCEXEC, CCCF, the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP), CCMAS, the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH), the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS), and the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL);

ii. encouraged Members to: actively engage in opportunities to contribute to the discussions in CCEXEC and CAC including by responding to CLs from Codex Committees and the Codex Secretariat, and submit discussion papers or new work proposals on new foods and production systems using existing mechanisms available in Codex;

iii. agreed to task the coordinator to work with Members in the NASWP region to refine the draft SOP as contained in the Annex of CRD04 on the qualitative assessment of kava varieties for nobility, based on a UV colorimetric testing method using kava acetonic extract reading at 440 nmin fresh and dried kava products to support the *Regional standard for kava products for use as a beverage when mixed with water* (North America and the South West Pacific) (CXS 336R-2020) by March 31, 2025, so that the revised SOP could be forwarded to CCMAS44, scheduled in May 2025, for endorsement; and

iv. noted the ongoing efforts on additional methods for the identification and quantification of scopoletin in noni fruit juice, which would support data generation and submission to the Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS)/Food database as an enabler to the planned safety evaluation by JECFA.

FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY SITUATION IN THE REGION - UPDATES (Agenda Item 4)

FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY ISSUES IN THE REGION (agenda item 4.1)[6]

30. The Representative of FAO, speaking on behalf of FAO and WHO, introduced the item identifying the key food safety and quality issues affecting the region: foodborne illnesses caused by microbiological pathogens, particularly in raw or undercooked seafood and poultry products; food fraud and adulteration; contaminants in food from multiple sources; and food labelling and allergens. The vulnerability to the effects of climate change, and the effect on natural disasters on agriculture and the safety of food supplies were also reported as important issues.

31. The challenges specifically facing the PICs were identified as food imports non-compliant with national food safety regulations, ensuring seafood safety, and food regulatory gaps. Furthermore, there were some food safety concerns related to indigenous foods for which there might be limited regulation on traditional food preservation methods.

32. Emerging issues expected to have an impact on food safety in the region in the next five to ten years were identified as: limited capacity to manage food regulatory systems; climate change; new food production systems and innovative food technologies; increased foodborne disease transmission; and antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

33. To address these food safety and quality issues, priority areas were identified as: (i) strengthening various aspects of national food control systems including policy and legislation frameworks, food inspection, laboratory capacity, capacity building and education, awareness raising, and communication; (ii) preparedness and response capacities to food safety incidents, including food safety risk communication, recall systems, and emergency response plans; (iii) reinforcing the multisectoral approach and collaboration, particularly through the One Health approach; and (iv) improving food consumption data collection and data sharing through digital systems.

Discussion

34. Members highlighted several key areas related to food safety and quality in the region including:

- the impact of climate change;

[6] CX/NASWP 25/17/4; CRD08 (Papua New Guinea)

- international cooperation was key to addressing food fraud;
- the importance of strengthening food safety systems, including legal frameworks and food analysis capacities;
- an integrated approach for surveillance and food monitoring, incorporating environmental data, which was key for early detection of climate change impacts;
- that natural disasters could have a major impact on food security, requiring adjustments to emergency response protocols; and
- that plant health was part of the broader One Health approach.

35. The WHO Representative emphasized the importance of strengthening the work on preparedness and response actions for food safety incidents; and noted that multisectoral collaboration and the One Health approach showcased the link between public health systems and food safety, especially in regard to food safety incidents, foodborne disease responses, AMR and zoonotic diseases.

36. The FAO Representative noted the availability of WHO and FAO guidance documents related to food control, and encouraged Members to identify national priorities and communicate their specific needs through FAO and WHO.

37. A Member raised the issue of non-compliant foreign food labels and expressed support for local labelling requirements, as implemented by other Members in the region.

38. New Zealand introduced CRD07 that presented criteria for evaluating and prioritizing food safety issues in the region and aimed to initiate a discussion on how to address the challenges to ensure tangible outcomes with available resources. This was supported by Members as a way to move from identification of issues in the region to a more action-oriented discussion in future CCNASWP meetings.

39. An Observer suggested focusing on the development of standards for Indigenous foods and addressing challenges related to applying existing Codex standards and related texts, also noting the need for guidance tools for their application and to identify areas where there were gaps beyond commodity committees.

Conclusion

40. CCNASWP17:

i. thanked FAO and WHO for the information provided and the delegates for their feedback, including on standard-setting;

ii. noted that the emerging issues identified in the document were relevant for Members in the region;

iii. noted that to address the identified issues, it was important to continue efforts to strengthen the key building blocks of national food control systems, including with the support of FAO and WHO; and

iv. encouraged Members to identify priority food safety challenges in the region and propose actions to help ensure tangible outcomes to address such challenges to support discussions under agenda item 4 in future CCNASWP sessions.

FAO/WHO WORK IN THE REGION (agenda item 4.2) [7]

41. The Representative of WHO, speaking on behalf of FAO and WHO, introduced the item.

Discussion

42. Members acknowledged the relevance of the topics covered and expressed concern for the general decline in financial commitment from the donor community to the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund (CTF), in particular to those that had successfully applied for support from CTF and had been informed that the start of projects was on hold until sufficient resources became available.

43. Queries regarding the future and potential timelines related to the CTF were clarified by WHO and FAO Representatives, reassuring Members that the CTF Secretariat was doing all it could to mobilize resources. FAO and WHO Representatives reassured Members of their commitment to continue providing technical support to Members related to food safety.

44. Members noted that core capacities for the International Health Regulations (IHR) and the Joint External Evaluation (JEE) were relevant to assess food safety national capacities, and that PICs continued to engage in JEE preparations and relied on the sharing of experience of Members.

[7] CX/NASWP 25/17/5; CRD08 (Papua New Guinea)

Conclusion

45. CCNASWP17:

i. thanked FAO and WHO for the information provided and their ongoing support to Members;

ii. recalled the reliance of PICs on FAO and WHO technical assistance to strengthen food safety and public health systems;

iii. expressed concern over the funding situation of the CTF and encouraged the CTF Secretariat to continue pursuing donor engagement; and

iv. noted WHO's and FAO's commitment to continue supporting food safety actions in the region, despite financial constraints or the challenging political landscape.

CODEX WORK RELEVANT TO THE REGION (agenda item 5)[8]

46. Fiji, as the Coordinator, introduced this item highlighting the list of relevant work, including the new work proposal on fresh turmeric that Fiji had submitted for consideration by the 23rd session Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV23).

Discussion

47. Members welcomed the overview and added the following Codex work as being of special interest to the region:

- CCFH: New work on revising the *Guidelines on the application of general principles of food hygiene to the control of* Listeria monocytogenes *in foods* (CXG 61-2007).
- CCCF: Priority list of contaminants for evaluation by JECFA.

48. A Member encouraged the submission of comments to CLs such as on the topic of country of harvest labelling, to gather a wide range of views.

49. The importance of advocating for sustainable funding of the FAO and WHO scientific advice programme was underlined.

50. The United States of America presented CRD01, which explored the mechanisms, advantages, and challenges associated with the use of regional positions in Codex's decision-making processes, and underscored its importance in fostering inclusivity, balancing diverse interests, and achieving consensus-based outcomes in global food standard-setting. The presenter put forward a proposal to pilot the development and use of common positions for the NASWP region.

51. Members expressed support for piloting such a mechanism and suggested using the Codex online platform (forum) to facilitate coordination – in addition to the use of emails – to remind Members to access the forum to engage in the discussion of the issues for which common positions were sought.

Conclusion

52. CCNASWP17:

i. noted the list of relevant work to the NASWP region as presented as well as the additional issues raised by Members, and confirmed their relevance to the NASWP region;

ii. encouraged Codex Members in the NASWP region to support the proposal of Fiji to CCFFV23 on developing a worldwide standard for fresh turmeric; and

iii. agreed to seek to develop common positions for CCNASWP in advance of other Codex meetings, as appropriate, using the Codex online platform (forum).

CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2020–2025: IMPLEMENTATION IN THE REGION (agenda item 6)[9]

53. Fiji, as the Coordinator, introduced the item and recalled CCNASWP17's decision (agenda item 1) to establish an IWG to review the proposed regional work plan 2025–2026, which would support the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan.

54. The Codex Secretariat, on behalf of the Coordinator, presented the regional achievements for the biennium 2023–2024, the proposed activities for the regional work plan 2025–2026, and the proposed communications work plan for 2025–2026.

Discussion

[8] CX/NASWP 25/17/6; CRD01 (United States of America)
[9] CX/NASWP 25/17/7; CRD08 (Papua New Guinea)

55. The IWG:

- reviewed the proposed work plan and validated the proposed activities;
- mapped the activities of the region to the Strategic Goals and outcomes in the Codex Strategic Plan 2026–2031 that would be tackled by the region in the 2025–2026 biennium; and
- identified new activities to be included in the regional work plan 2025–2026.

56. Following a presentation by the Codex Secretariat on the results of the IWG, Members expressed appreciation for the work done and supported its outcome.

57. In response to Members' inquiries about how to obtain technical assistance from FAO and WHO, the FAO Representative explained that Members could request technical assistance to the FAO Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands, including through the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP).

58. In response to a request for clarification on the mechanism to monitor the implementation of the regional work plan, the Codex Secretariat explained that the Coordinator, being responsible for the overall implementation of the work plan, had the task to report to CCNASWP about the achievements of the planned activities, but that the work plan could be further elaborated in future iterations to add indicators to better monitor the progress on the planned activities.

Conclusion

59. CCNASWP17:

i. noted the activities conducted in the region during 2023–2024 to support the implementation of the Codex strategic plan 2020–2025;

ii. endorsed the regional work plan 2025–2026 (Appendix II); and

iii. adopted the regional communications work plan 2025–2026 (Appendix III).

CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2026–2031: STATUS AND NEXT STEPS (agenda item 7)[10]

60. The Codex Secretariat introduced the item highlighting the process leading to the adoption of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026–2031.

61. The opportunity would be given for CCNASWP to identify the strategic goals and outcomes that the regional work plan for 2025–2026 (agenda item 6) would contribute to.

Conclusion

62. CCNASWP17 noted the Codex Strategic Plan 2026–2031.

USE AND IMPACT OF CODEX TEXTS IN THE REGION (agenda item 8)[11]

63. The Codex Secretariat introduced the item and presented the preliminary results of the 2024 survey on the use and impact of Codex texts with a particular focus on the results concerning the NASWP region, including a comparison with the 2022 and 2023 results.

Discussion

64. Members appreciated the Codex Secretariat's presentation and made the following comments:

- consideration could be given to including regional standards in the next survey, such as the *Regional standard for kava products for use as a beverage when mixed with water* (North America and the South West Pacific) (CXS 336R-2020) and the *Regional standard for fermented noni fruit juice* (North America and the South West Pacific) (CXS 356R-2023);
- when exploring the use of Codex texts in improving commodity trade, a question could be added on barriers to trade;
- there was some "survey fatigue" that affected response rates, and measures to facilitate Members' participation in the region could include providing different means of answering to the survey and providing a longer response period; and
- the number of Codex texts surveyed each year could be increased.

65. The Codex Secretariat thanked Members for their comments and noted that:

[10] CX/NASWP 25/17/8: CRD08 (Papua New Guinea)
[11] CX/NASWP 25/17/9; CRD08 (Papua New Guinea)

- consideration was being given to extending the cycle of the survey to four years from the current three, and to also include regional standards;
- there was a trade-off between the number of Codex texts that could be included in the survey and the response rate;
- the Codex Secretariat had tried to keep the number of questions of the survey to a minimum (i.e. 20); and
- efforts were being made to facilitate responses through different means.

66. Responding to a specific question on collaboration with the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Codex Secretariat informed that collaboration was ongoing together with the other standard setting organizations recognized under the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Committee of WTO, including through the participation as Observers to a working group on transparency to be organized as part of the 6th review of the operation and implementation of the SPS Agreement.

Conclusion

67. CCNASWP17

i. thanked the Codex Secretariat for the important work; and

ii. noted the overall results of the 2022, 2023 and 2024 Codex surveys on the use and impact of Codex texts, in particular those relevant to the NASWP region.

NOMINATION OF THE COORDINATOR FOR NORTH AMERICA AND THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC (agenda item 9)[12]

68. The Codex Secretariat introduced the item and recalled that Fiji having served as Coordinator for NASWP for two terms, was not eligible for re-appointment. Thus, CCNASWP17 was invited to nominate a new Coordinator for appointment by CAC48 (2025).

69. CCNASWP17 on the proposal of Fiji, unanimously agreed to recommend to CAC48 that the Cook Islands be appointed for a first term as coordinator for NASWP.

70. The Cook Islands inquired about resources, technical assistance and capacity development support for the Member taking on the Coordinator role, and clarification was received from the Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO.

71. The Cook Islands thanked all delegations for their support and accepted the nomination.

OTHER BUSINESS (agenda item 10)

New work proposal on development of a regional standard for galip nut (North America and the South West Pacific) (prepared by Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands) (CRD02)[13]

72. Papua New Guinea introduced the item highlighting the growing industry of galip nut in the PICs and its trade potential that would benefit from having a regional standard.

73. Members welcomed and supported the proposal, and made the following comments:

- Galip nut had good nutritional qualities and played a role in food security.
- Galip nut represented an emerging industry of economic importance and was at a critical moment in its development.
- Galip nut was relevant for trade for the PICs.
- It was important to clarify the scope of the standard and whether it should include fresh, dried and/or roasted galip nut.
- Roasted galip nut was the form in which the commodity was mostly traded.
- In response to a remark by the Codex Secretariat that it would be useful to include additional trade data to better justify the need for a standard for galip nut, a Member referred to a project from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) which had just completed phase 2 on enhancing private sector-led development of the galip nut industry in Papua New Guinea.

[12] CX/NASWP 25/17/10
[13] CRD08 (Papua New Guinea)

- There were several other initiatives that inferred an interest for the standard from industry in the region and relevance in trade, which could be added to the project document.
- Regarding food safety issues, Members reported that like all nuts, galip nuts had been associated with aflatoxins and food allergens. It was intended that these food safety hazards would be addressed though the *Code of practice for the prevention and reduction of aflatoxin contamination in tree nuts* (CAC/RCP 59-2005), and the *General standard for the labelling of pre-packaged foods* (CXS 1-1985).
- There were no other known toxicological issues associated with galip nut.
- The *Standard for unshelled pistachio nuts* (CXS 131-1981) could serve as a reference to develop a standard for galip nut given the similarities between the two commodities. The Philippine national standard for pili nut could also be considered.

74. The discussion paper and new work proposal was updated in line with the comments made, and it was agreed to focus the scope on roasted galip nut.

75. There was consensus to proceed with forwarding the new work proposal to CAC48 for approval.

New work proposal on development of a regional standard for breadfruit flour (North America and South West Pacific) (prepared by Samoa) (CRD03)

76. Samoa introduced the item highlighting the importance of breadfruit as a staple food throughout the PICs and that breadfruit flour had an important role in ensuring food security, especially in light of climate change.

77. Members welcomed and supported the proposal, and made the following comments:

- PICs had high volumes of imports of wheat flour, and breadfruit flour would support the reduction of imports and enhance food security and resilience in these countries.
- As fresh breadfruit was highly perishable, its processing into flour would increase its preservation and reduce food waste.
- Breadfruit flour had a large market potential especially considering it was gluten-free.
- Breadfruit flour was used to support income generating activities, in particular for vulnerable groups, including women and youth.
- Breadfruit was also produced and traded in Caribbean countries and exported to the United States of America and the European Union, and such a standard could be of interest to other regions too.
- A standard on breadfruit flour would support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2) (Zero Hunger) and SDG12 (Sustainable consumption and production).

78. The discussion paper and new work proposal was updated in line with the comments made.

79. There was consensus to proceed with forwarding the new work proposal to CAC48 for approval.

Regional code of practice on traditional underground oven cooking in the South West Pacific (prepared by Vanuatu) (CRD05)

80. Vanuatu introduced the item highlighting that traditional underground oven cooking was commonly used throughout the PICs and was also used in other parts of the world.

81. Members welcomed and supported the proposal, and made the following comments:

- Underground cooking was widely used in PICs and was also a means to support the tourism industry.
- The same cooking method was used above the ground by a Member, and this should be taken into consideration if developing a code of practice.
- The food safety concerns were well-described in the discussion paper.
- A new work proposal on underground cooking would be of interest to other regions too.

82. There was consensus to proceed with developing a new work proposal on the development of a code of practice on traditional underground oven cooking for consideration by CCNASWP18.

83. The Codex Secretariat clarified that a proposal for new work on a commodity that was traded internationally could come from a coordinating committee and that it would be CAC, following a critical review by CCEXEC, who would approve and decide on the nature of the work and by whom it should be developed.

Conclusion

84. CCNASWP17 agreed to:

i. forward the new work proposal on development of a regional standard for galip nut (North America and the South West Pacific) to CAC48 for approval (Appendix IV); to establish a EWG chaired by Papua New Guinea and co-chaired by New Zealand and Vanuatu and open to all Members of the region and Observers, that subject to approval of the new work by CAC48, would prepare a draft regional standard for galip nut for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration by CCNASWP18; and request the EWG to make the EWG report available to the Codex Secretariat at least three months before CCNASWP18;

ii. forward the new work proposals on development of a regional standard for breadfruit flour (North America and South West Pacific) to CAC48 for approval (Appendix V); to establish a EWG chaired by Samoa and co-chaired by Australia and Fiji, open to all Members of the region and Observers, that subject to approval of the new work by CAC48, would prepare a draft regional standard for breadfruit flour for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration by CCNASWP18; and request the EWG to make the EWG report available to the Codex Secretariat at least three months before CCNASWP18;

iii. request Vanuatu to prepare a revised discussion paper with a project document on developing a regional Code of Practice on traditional underground ground oven cooking in the South West Pacific taking into account the discussion by CCNASWP17, for consideration by CCNASWP18.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION (agenda item 11)

85. CCNASWP17 was informed that CCNASWP18 would be held in approximately two years' time, and that more detailed arrangements would be communicated to Members following the appointment of the coordinator by CAC48 and subsequent discussions between the coordinator and the Codex Secretariat.

APPENDIX I

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LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS
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APPENDIX II

CCNASWP17 REGIONAL WORK PLAN 2025–2026

<table>
<tr><th>Strategic Goal (2020–2025)</th><th>Objective (2020–2025)</th><th>Regional Activity (2023–2024)</th><th>Major Achievements (2023–2024)</th><th>Planned Activities (2025–2026)</th><th>Strategic Goal (2026–2031)</th><th>Outcome 2026–2031</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">1. Address current, emerging and critical issues in a timely manner</td><td rowspan="2">1.2 Prioritize needs and emerging issues.</td><td>1.2.1 Improving the linkages with the Codex Secretariat through the Codex contact points (CCP) in Member countries</td><td>• Active participation of the region in all Codex meetings including subcommittees of CCEXEC.
• Mailing lists were updated.</td><td>• Continued active participation of the region in all Codex meetings.
• Pilot a mechanism to develop common/regional positions</td><td>2. Enhance Codex work management systems and practices</td><td>2.4 Codex Members are enabled to participate actively and sustainably throughout the standard-setting process</td></tr>
<tr><td>1.2.2 Pacific Islands countries establishing or participating in relevant discussion groups or EWGs</td><td>• The discussion group on the SOP related to the Regional standard for kava products for use as a beverage when mixed with water (North America and the South West Pacific) (CXS 336R-2020) completed the assessment of reviewing and amending the methods of analysis as proposed by CCMAS41 (report discussed at CCNASWP17).
• Members of the region participated actively in relevant discussions or established EWGs of Codex meetings: CAC, CCEXEC, Codex Committee of Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH7), and CCFICS27.
• Members in the region participated actively in CCEXEC's work on developing the Codex Strategic Plan 2026–2031.
• Two new work proposals for regional NASWP standards were prepared and submitted for discussion at CCNASWP17; 1) on galip nut (prepared by Papua New Guinea and Salomon Islands), and 2) on breadfruit flour (prepared by Samoa).</td><td>• Present the revised SOP related to CXS 336R-2020 to CCMAS44 in May 2025 for endorsement.
• Active participation of the Pacific Islands countries in Codex EWGs relevant to the region.
• Progress work on new work proposals.</td><td>1. Respond to Members' needs
2. Enhance Codex work management systems and practices
1. Respond to Members' needs</td><td>1.4 Codex standards and related texts are developed, reviewed and adopted
2.4 Codex Members are enabled to participate actively in the standard-setting process
1.4 Codex standards are developed, reviewed and adopted</td></tr>
</table>

Strategic Goal (2020–2025)	Objective (2020–2025)	Regional Activity (2023–2024)	Major Achievements (2023–2024)	Planned Activities (2025–2026)	Strategic Goal (2026–2031)	Outcome 2026–2031
2. Develop standards based on science and Codex risk based principles	2.1 Use scientific advice consistently in line with Codex risk analysis principles	2.1.1 Hosting a regional workshop with support from FAO and WHO on the use of expert scientific advice in the development of Codex standards	The second Codex colloquium for North America and the Southwest Pacific was held in Fiji from 26-28 February 2024, with participation from 35 contributors representing 12 Codex Members from the NASWP region. The second colloquium intended to gather representatives from all Members in the NASWP region to: • Discuss opportunities to enhance engagement in Codex standard setting procedures. • Better map roles and responsibilities of food competent authorities from the region. • Enhance efforts of regional coordination in preparation for Codex processes. • Deliver on select capacity building initiatives identified as a priority by food regulators in the region. • Chart a path forward for the Codex South West Pacific Initiative to be further leveraged in order to enhance the performance of food regulatory programs in the NASWP region.	• Follow-up on agreed activities at the second Codex colloquium. • Continue convening meetings (in-person or virtual) at regional level to discuss work plan implementation and next steps • Enhance efforts of regional coordination in preparation for Codex processes.	2. Enhance Codex work management systems and practices	2.4 Codex Members are enabled to participate actively in the standard-setting process 2.3 Chairpersons' capabilities are developed
	2.2 Promote the submission and use of globally representative data in developing and reviewing Codex standards	2.2.1 Developing and implementing a work plan to generate relevant data to elaborate Codex standards, specifically referring to scopoletin in the *Regional standard for fermented noni fruit juice* (CXS 356R-2023)	• Communication activities were promoted on scientific data to support the safety evaluation of scopoletin by JECFA.	• Continue promoting the submission of scientific data to support the safety evaluation of scopoletin by JECFA.	1. Respond to Members' needs	1.2 Scientific advice is provided, informed by globally representative data

Strategic Goal (2020–2025)	**Objective (2020–2025)**	**Regional Activity (2023–2024)**	**Major Achievements (2023–2024)**	**Planned Activities (2025–2026)**	**Strategic Goal (2026–2031)**	**Outcome 2026–2031**
	2.3 Promote sufficient and sustainable funding for expert bodies that deliver scientific advice.	2.3 Promote sufficient and sustainable funding for expert bodies that deliver scientific advice	• Sustainable funding for scientific advice for use by Codex actively promoted by NASWP Members.	• Promote sustainable funding for scientific advice for use by Codex.	1. Respond to Members' needs	1.2 Scientific advice is provided, informed by globally representative data
3. Increase impact through the recognition and use of Codex standards	3.1 Raise the awareness of Codex standards	3.1.1 Conduct targeted activities (e.g. virtual sessions) that increases understanding of Codex standards within governments and among national stakeholders	• The use of Codex standards in National Food Regulations was promoted. • A second NASWP Codex colloquium was held in Nadi, Fiji from 26–28 February 2024. The colloquium was organized to identify a series of recommendations for action, to support the strengthening of Codex capacities in the region and to leverage such efforts in order to enhance the performance of food control systems and food regulatory programs in the South West Pacific. • Coordination of nation-wide food safety events such as World Food Safety Day to raise awareness of Codex standards and its use and impact.	• Continued support for roundtable meetings to support Members in the region to effectively participate in future Codex meetings under the Codex capacity building initiative in the region. • Organize regional and national events to discuss collaborative approaches to improved food safety across sectors and the promotion of Codex standards.	2. Enhance Codex work management systems and practices 4. Maximize the impact of Codex by increasing the visibility and use of standards	2.4 Codex Members are enabled to participate actively in the standard-setting process 4.1 The profile and recognition of Codex as the international food standards setting body is enhanced

Strategic Goal (2020–2025)	Objective (2020–2025)	Regional Activity (2023–2024)	Major Achievements (2023–2024)	Planned Activities (2025–2026)	Strategic Goal (2026–2031)	Outcome 2026–2031
	3.2 Support initiatives to enable the understanding and implementation /application of Codex standards	3.2.1 Promote coordination among relevant authorities	• The *Regional standard for kava products for use as beverage when mixed with water* (North America and South West Pacific) (CXS 336R-2020), which was adopted by CAC43 in 2020 has significantly impacted the: (i) Commercial Kava Pilot Program which has progressed to Phase 2 allowing the commercial importation of kava into Australia for use as a food; (ii) Kava legalization in Germany; and (iii) Formulation of the Regional Kava Strategy. • The *Regional standard for fermented noni fruit juice* (North America and South-West Pacific) (CXS 356R-2023) was adopted by CAC46 in 2023, as proposed by CCNASWP16 (2023).	• Continue promoting coordination among relevant authorities to support initiatives that enable the understanding and implementation of Codex standards. • Continue the activities already initiated on kava and consider a case study on the use and impact of CXS 336R-2020 and/or CXS 356R-2023	4. Maximize the impact of Codex by increasing the visibility and use of standards 4. Maximize the impact of Codex by increasing the visibility and use of standards	4.1 The profile and recognition of Codex as the international food standards setting body is enhanced 4.3 Harmonization through the increased use of Codex texts in establishing national food control systems and regulations is advocated for.
4. Facilitate the participation of all Codex Members throughout the standard setting process	4.1 Enable sustainable national Codex structures in all Codex Member countries.	4.1.1 Strengthening the National Codex Committees (NCCs) through training sessions including virtual sessions that promote the use of the FAO/WHO Diagnostic Tool for Assessing Status of National Codex Programmes	• Training sessions were held to strengthen NCCs in all Member countries throughout the region.	• Continue promoting the strengthening of capacities of NCCs to ensure Codex work in the region remains successful.	2. Enhance Codex work management systems and practices	2.3 Chairpersons capabilities are developed

Strategic Goal (2020–2025)	Objective (2020–2025)	Regional Activity (2023–2024)	Major Achievements (2023–2024)	Planned Activities (2025–2026)	Strategic Goal (2026–2031)	Outcome 2026–2031
		4.1.2 Improving the performance of the CCPs by assigning qualified staff to that position; providing sufficient funding and resources	• Coordinating meetings for Members in the NASWP region were regularly held prior to each Codex committee meeting to go over key agenda items and share positions between Members in the region, and where possible, develop common positions if appropriate. • Successful applications for CTF support in Rounds 5 and 7, by Fiji, the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The five (5) pacific island countries had agreed to be part of a CTF group project, tailored to the specific challenges and needs of the region, taking into consideration the national priorities identified in the individual country applications and including joint activities at regional level that are aimed to strengthen the cohesion of Codex work in the region. This would include the strengthening and retaining of capacities at regional coordination level. Due to a sharp decline in financial commitments from the CTF donor community in 2024, the CTF Steering Committee decided that the inception of new projects is put on hold until further notice, i.e. until CTF2 project. additional funding has been secured. Once the current funding shortage has been overcome, the countries from the South-West Pacific that successfully applied for Round 7 support, will be first in line to start their CTF2 project. • CTF country projects have been ongoing in Samoa and Tonga. The CTF project in Samoa ended in October 2024 while the project in Tonga is expected to continue until February 2026.	• Active participation by all CCPs in the NASWP region in the virtual coordination meetings. • Support the call to donors to fund the CTF to accelerate disbursement of funds for the implementation of CTF projects in the region. • Engagement with regional partners to identify in-kind and other forms of support to address identified capacity strengthening needs.	2. Enhance Codex work management systems and practices	2.4 Codex Members are enabled to participate actively in the standard-setting process

Strategic Goal (2020–2025)	Objective (2020–2025)	Regional Activity (2023–2024)	Major Achievements (2023–2024)	Planned Activities (2025–2026)	Strategic Goal (2026–2031)	Outcome 2026–2031
		New proposed activities for the 2025–2026 work plan		• Support capacity development and mentoring of the Coordinator to improve understanding of their role in line with the TOR of the RCC • Conduct a refresher training on how to use the OCS • Members actively participate in identifying priority food safety challenges in the region and propose actions to help ensure tangible outcomes to address such challenges	2. Enhance Codex work management systems and practices 1. Respond to Members' needs	2.3 Chairpersons' capabilities are developed 2.4 Codex Members are enabled to participate actively in the standard-setting process 1.1 Foresight and horizon-scanning activities are used to support the identification of issues likely to impact food safety, quality and trade.

APPENDIX III

Regional communications work plan 2025–2026

Objectives	Activities	Targets	Indicators
1. Reinforce and expand existing communication channels and establish clear additional channels as needed e.g., for specific work streams	1.1 Consolidate and improve information flow and exchange between countries and the Codex Secretariat 1.2 Expand and strengthen existing simple and rapid communications methods (e.g. regional WhatsApp communications group)	• By CCNASWP18, 80% of Members / Observers surveyed indicate timeliness, accessibility and quality of Codex regional communications “excellent” or “good	Number of survey responses rating regional communications “excellent” or “good”
2. Communicate the value of Codex engagement and use of standards in the region	2.1. Provide the Codex Secretariat with monthly drafts of web stories capturing food safety, standards work or capacity building initiatives in the region 2.2. Promote regional success stories and initiatives in conjunction with the Codex Secretariat and FAO/WHO 2.3 Liaise with Codex Trust Fund beneficiary country in the region to communicate on every phase of CTF projects	• By CAC48, 10 news items from countries in the region published on the Codex website • By CCNASWP18, 20 news items from countries in the region • By CCNASWP18, 50% of countries in the region contributed to news on the Codex website	Number of CCNASWP news stories published on the Codex website Number of countries who have made a contribution to the Codex website

APPENDIX IV

DISCUSSION PAPER ON DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL STANDARD FOR GALIP NUT (NORTH AMERICA AND THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC)

1. Background

A proposal for a new standard for galip nut was first discussed at CCNASWP12 (2012). Delegations, noting that more work might be necessary, were of the view that it was premature to propose new work on Galip nut because the document did not include a project document; some essential data and information were missing, such as trade data, food safety issues or impediment to trade had not been identified; and the discussion paper was submitted too late for members to consult with stakeholders.

CCNASWP12 agreed that Papua New Guinea (PNG), as Coordinator (at that time), would collect information from members identifying the products and the related food safety or trade issues that would be addressed by a regional standard and develop mechanism to prioritize products of potential interest for the region, for consideration at CCNASWP13.

This topic was raised again at CCNASWP16 (2023) in a discussion around possible new work proposals for the region. Vanuatu and PNG's delegations proposed a regional standard for galip nut as a potential focus for standards development in the region. PNG emphasized the need to enhance food safety, food security, nutrition, and export trade for galip nuts, tapping into the regional crop. Galip nut can also help combat deforestation and contributes to carbon credits for the Pacific Island Countries.

The second North America South West Pacific Codex Colloquium, held in Fiji in February 2024, discussed development priorities for new regional standards. This resulted in the prioritization of several proposed regional standards including a standard for galip nut. It was agreed project documents and proposed drafts would be developed through an unofficial working group. The galip nut working group would be led by PNG with participation from Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Samoa.

2. Rationale for the development of a regional standard for galip nut.

Canarium indicum (galip nut) is a nut-producing tree species native to the lowlands of PNG, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu and parts of Indonesia where it has been important to the diet for many thousands of years. It has also been introduced in Fiji where it is cultivated, and to a lesser extent introduced in Samoa, Tonga and also in Australia, the United States and beyond the CCNASWP region.

The nut is known for its distinctive properties, particularly its soft texture, which distinguishes it from all the major internationally traded nuts, its nutritional qualities, being high in oil, protein, vitamins and minerals it is also known for being nonperishable after basic processing.

Despite the many advantages of galip nut, the production and export of galip nut in the region is hindered by inconsistent supply, high production costs, and the lack of standards for safe processing and labelling for export markets.

Galip nut is an emerging industry at a critical phase in PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

There have been a number of projects to support the industry over time including for example the ACIAR which has just completed a Phase 2 project on enhancing private sector-led development of the Galip nut industry in PNG.

Codex Members in the South West Pacific (SWP) subregion are therefore proposing a Codex regional standard to minimize health risks for consumers, harmonize production methods across the region, and to protect against counterfeit or substandard products. This standard would encompass requirements for hygienic practices, consistent product quality, and accurate labelling to ensure consumer protection and reduce trade barriers.

ANNEX

PROJECT DOCUMENT

PROPOSAL FOR NEW WORK ON A REGIONAL STANDARD FOR ROASTED GALIP NUT (NORTH AMERICA AND THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC)

(for approval at CAC48)

Introduction

Galip nut (*Canarium indicum*), an indigenous food for the Pacific Island Countries, belongs to the kingdom Plantae, phylum Magnoliophyta, class Magnoliopsida, order Sapindales, family Burseraceae, genus *Canarium*, and species *Canarium indicum*. Genus *Canarium* includes 75 species of tropical and subtropical trees.

The common name in the Pacific is canarium nut. In Papua New Guinea (PNG), it is known as galip nut and also referred to as lawele (New Britain) and biuei (New Ireland). In Solomon Islands, it is commonly known as Ngali nut (Kwara'ae language), angari (Santa Ana), ngari (Kausage/Simbo and Varisi), ngoeta (Marovo), nolepo (Garciosa Bay), nyia nyinge (Ayiwo), and other names in other parts of Solomon Islands. In Vanuatu, it is known as nangai in local Bislama, nanae (Santo Island) and nige karia (Epi Island).

1. Purpose and scope of the standard

The purpose of the proposed standard is to identify and quantify characteristics of galip nut, set out processes for handling and transporting, and labelling to protect consumer health and facilitate fair trade practices.

It has been reported that processing practices for galip nuts may pose a hygiene risk (Evans 1996a; Nevenimo *et al*. 2007 cited in Wallace *et. al*, 2012). Further (Özilgen and Özdemir 2001, cited in Wallace *et. al*. 2012) argue that better handling practices, proper drying and safety storage may reduce the risk of contamination of food products by toxins.

Wallace *et. al*. (2012) report that a lack of knowledge by the industry regarding post-harvest handling and process techniques may also contribute to poor kernal quality, and a high volume of otherwise marketable nuts do not make it to market due to poor handling and storage practice. Furthermore the resulting losses are a significant factor in ensuring a reliable supply that could facilitate the trade of galip nut.

A Codex regional standard is expected to assist the industry by providing a tool to guide development of its food processing systems and transportation infrastructure which will in turn help to support a consistent increase in supply, facilitating export.

It is intended that the galip nut standard would cover roasted galip nut (shelled and unshelled) if there is sufficient justification and stakeholder interest in providing for this range of products in the standard. The standard would encompass requirements for hygienic practices, consistent product quality, and accurate labelling to ensure consumer protection and reduce trade barriers.

2. Relevance and timeliness

The establishment of a Codex regional standard covering quality, hygiene and labelling would be an essential reference point to support both the growth of domestic markets in the South West Pacific and to move beyond domestic to bolstering the supply for export markets.

The export of galip nut has been a focus for the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) who have worked with PNG on various research projects since 2012. This included an initial pilot factory testing the range of technologies for processing. Since then, Professor Wallace who led that project noted that working in partnership with the government and private sector, supply had tripled and had a farm gate value of $100,000 AUD in just three years (Hutchins, 2021).

The emerging canarium industry is at a critical phase and it is expected a Codex standard would support and build on the momentum by the current and previous research undertaken by ACIAR and the industry efforts.

3. Main aspects to be covered

The main aspects to be covered in the standard are the minimum quality required to ensure consumer health and to promote fair practices in international trade. Hence, the standard will cover:

i. Product Definition - Defining the product as fresh or dry and including references to the genus and the species and/or varietal types if necessary.

ii. Styles - Listing/describing the different forms of presentation.

iii. Classes/Quality Criteria - Including provisions for moisture content, ash content, volatile oil content, extraneous matter and classification of defectives vis-à-vis lot acceptance based on the defects allowed.

iv. Quality Tolerances - Provisions for the labelling and date marking of the product in accordance with the *General standard for the labelling of pre-packaged foods* (CXS 1-1985).

v. Provisions on contaminants that refer to the *General standard for contaminants and toxins in Food and Feed* (CXS 193-1995).

vi. Hygiene provisions that refer to the *Code of practice –General principles of food hygiene* (CXC 1-1969).

vii. Provisions for pesticides residues, labelling and packaging with reference to pre-existing Codex documents.

viii. References to the *Recommended methods of analysis and sampling* (CXS 234-1999).

ix. Traceability.

4. Assessment against the criteria for the Establishment of work priorities

2.1 General criteria

Consumer protection from the point of view of health, food safety, ensuring fair practices in food trade and considering the identified needs of developing countries. The proposed new standard will meet this criterion by:

- Promotion of consumer protection and the prevention of fraudulent practices.
- Providing greater assurance of the product to meet consumer needs and the minimum requirements for food safety.
- Arriving at levels of standardization based on the properties of different countries to meet industrial and consumer needs with exactness and credibility.

Criteria applicable to commodities

(a) Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries.

Galip nut is an emerging industry at a critical phase in PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and relevant to other countries in the region. There have been a number of projects to support the galip nut industry over time including for example, the ACIAR which has just completed a Phase 2 project on enhancing private sector-led development of the galip nut industry in PNG.

ACIAR will shortly be conducting the end of project review on Phase 2 of the project "Enhancing private sector-led development of the canarium industry in PNG".

Correspondence with ACIAR advised that there are seven key private sector processors selling domestically and online business to business and business to consumer. One retailer distributes to businesses including duty free shops, sixty stores, food services and hotels, including the larger hotels in PNG. Key stakeholders include the National Agriculture Research institute in PNG, the

Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access (PHAMA) Plus programme, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Pacific Trade Invest, and the World Bank. There have been developments in setting up export contracts in Australia, United Kingdom, Europe and the United States.

In the interim Table 1 provides an example of export trends for one company in the Solomon Islands.

Table 1 – Example of a company that produces and export galip nut

Solomon Islands	Company A – fresh roast – $30,198 (year up until beginning Oct 2024)	Company A – fresh roast – $50,628 (2023)	Company A – fresh roast – $48, 855 (2022)

(b) Diversification of national legislations and apparent resultant or potential impediments to regional trade:

Food harvesting and processes practice for galip nut are inconsistent within Member countries and across the CCNASWP region which impacts on the potential to import and export of galip nut Members of the South West Pacific consider a Codex regional standard would assist in protecting the health of consumers and facilitate regional trade by accommodating importer's requirements.

(c) Regional market potential

Galip nut has not yet reached its potential as a viable nut industry in Pacific Island countries due to the need to develop appropriate processing methods to produce a high quality product. As noted above there are projects underway to support the expansion of domestic, regional and global markets.

(d) Amenability of commodity to standardization

The standard will include the characteristics of roasted galip nut (shelled and unshelled). including, composition, quality and packaging criteria.

The characteristics of galip nut cultivated to retail sale e.g. composition, quality characteristics, processing, packaging, etc., all lead to adequate parameters for the standardization of the product. Considering of technical information available and a certain degree of harmonization that has already been achieved at national level and international levels on certain aspects relevant to consumer's protection and trade facilitation as mentioned, it is therefore, timely to develop an international harmonized standard for galip nut.

(e) Coverage of the main consumer protection and trade issues by existing or proposed general standards

There is no Codex standard covering galip nut.

Like all nuts, galip nuts have been associated with aflatoxins and food allergens. It is intended that these food safety hazards are addressed by the *code of practice for the prevention and reduction of aflatoxin contamination in tree nuts* (CAC/RCP 59-2005), and existing food labelling provisions in Codex texts. There are no other known toxicological issues with galip nut. ACIAR has approached the region for suggestions on future research for phase 3 of the project which could be a possible avenue to undertake research in mycotoxins, in particular aflatoxins.

The new work will enhance consumer protection and facilitate trade by establishing an internationally agreed and recognized quality standard.

(f) Number of commodities which would need separate standards including whether raw, semi processed or processed.

It is intended one standard will cover the galip nut in its different styles fresh and roasted (shelled and unshelled).

(g) Work already undertaken by other organizations in this field

i. Australian Standard (tbc)

Document of ESA (Rev. 5 2018).

Approved by the EU; https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32023R0667.

In 2022 EFSA assessed galip nut and did not find any safety concerns, except on allergy, which is expected for nuts. https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2022.EN-7314

The EU has listed specifications on contaminants and microbiological criteria.

Aflatoxins (AFT) and other contaminants, like cadmium and lead are known to be potentially present in nuts, this issue is not specific to galip nuts. A Code of practice may be sufficient to cover.

Australia has described mitigation steps to reduce/prevent AFT contamination; page 107 https://www.aciar.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-07/Final-Report-for-FST-2006-048.pdf

5. Relevance to Codex strategic objectives

The proposal is consistent with the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025, in particular strategic objectives 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1 and 3.2. and aims at setting up internationally accepted minimum quality requirements of galip nut for human consumption.

6. Information on the relation between the proposal and other existing Codex documents

This proposal is a new Codex standard and is not related to or based on any pre-existing Codex document. This standard will include references to relevant pre - existing Codex texts developed by general subject committees, as follows:

- *Principles and guidelines for the establishment and application of microbiological criteria for foods* (CXG 21 – 1997).
- Code of practice, *General principles of food hygiene* (CXC 1-1969). Revised and renamed 2022.

- Data bases related to the maximum limits for pesticides residues issued by Codex Committee on Pesticides Residues in Food (CCPR**).**
- *General standard for contaminants and toxins in food and feed* (CXS 193-1995)
- *Code of hygienic practice for low-moisture foods* (CXC 75-2015)
- *General standard for the labelling of pre-packaged foods* (CXS 1-1985)
- *General standard for the labelling of non-retail containers of foods* (CXS 346-2021)
- *Recommended methods of analysis and sampling* (CXS 234-1999)
- *General standard for food additives* (CXS 192-1995)

7. Identification of any requirement for and availability of expert scientific advice

No need for expert scientific advice is foreseen at this stage.

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

Technical inputs from external bodies may be sought when developing this standard.

9. Proposed time schedule

The following is the proposed timetable for the completion of the standard.

It is expected that the development of this standard would be conducted in three CCNASWP sessions or less, depending on the agreement reached by the Committee.

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- Extracted from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) website https://www.aciar.gov.au/project/fst-2017-038 Accessed: 5 February 2025

APPENDIX V

DISCUSSION PAPER ON DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL STANDARD FOR BREADFRUIT FLOUR (NORTH AMERICA AND SOUTH WEST PACIFIC)

3. Background

At the 16th session, the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and South West Pacific (CCNASWP) deliberated on new work proposals. Samoa's delegation suggested a regional standard for breadfruit flour as a potential focus for standards development in the region. They emphasized the necessity of establishing a regional standard for breadfruit flour (North America and South West Pacific) to enhance food security, nutrition, and export trade for processed breadfruit products, tapping into the abundant regional crop resources.

Moreover, the delegation highlighted the increasing demand for gluten-free flour in export markets which can be met with breadfruit flour. They shared details on on-going research studies regarding the nutritional properties and potential health advantages of breadfruit flour emphasizing that this initiative would help safeguard consumer health and promote equitable food trade practices.

Samoa offered to take the lead in preparing a discussion paper and project document for the suggested regional standard, with support from other regional member countries.

4. Rationale for the development of a standard for Breadfruit flour

Breadfruit (*Artocarpus altilis*) is a traditional food, extensively grown in the Pacific Island Countries, where it plays a significant role in traditional agroforestry systems. This fruit is edible at all stages of development and is a primary food source throughout the Pacific Island Countries.

Breadfruit flour is starchy and gluten-free rich in fiber, vitamins, and minerals. It has beneficial properties like water retention and high viscosity when heated, which make it a promising ingredient for baking, thickener in processed foods and paste. Very importantly for the region it is a healthy alternative to imported wheat flour enhancing food security and nutrition in the region and can cater to the gluten-free export market.

Despite its advantages, the production and trade of breadfruit flour in the region are hindered by the lack of a standard that sets the quality parameters consumer safety and trade. To address this, there is a consensus in the region on the necessity of establishing a regional standard to harmonize standards, protect against counterfeit or substandard products, and minimize health risks for consumers. This standard will encompass requirements for hygienic practices, consistent product quality, and accurate labelling to ensure consumer protection and reduce trade barriers.

ANNEX

PROJECT DOCUMENT

PROPOSAL FOR NEW WORK ON A REGIONAL STANDARD FOR BREADFRUITFLOUR (NORTH AMERICA AND THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC)

(for approval at CAC48)

1. The purpose and the scope of the standard

The scope of the work applies to breadfruit flour intended for direct human consumption which is obtained from the processing of edible breadfruit (*Artocarpus altilis*). This proposed regional standard applies to relevant products that are distributed commercially.

The purpose of the proposal is to establish a regional standard for breadfruit flour which is aimed at improving the safety and high quality of products and promoting international market potential consistent with Codex Alimentarius Commission's objectives of protecting consumer health and facilitating fair trade practices in the food trade. Specifically, the development of the proposed regional standard can facilitate trade for breadfruit flour through the harmonization of standards and regulations, increase market access and trade efficiency for breadfruit flour, and enhance competitiveness on the global market.

The proposed standard will promote food safety and compliance with good manufacturing practices, good hygiene practices, appropriate product labeling and packaging, and laboratory testing including relevant Codex texts. There are no known specific food safety microbiological and chemical hazards associated with breadfruit and breadfruit flour.

2. Its relevance and timeliness

Breadfruit in all forms is a staple food throughout the region and consumed in a variety of cooked methods and dishes. It is thought to be one of the most productive trees in the world, providing anywhere from 50 to 200 fruits per year. Fresh breadfruit is highly perishable as it has poor storage properties prone to chilling injury and is rapidly ripen at normal weather conditions and when taken out of cold storage. Therefore, in flour form it will contribute to year-round availability and regional food security, enhance trade, and address consumer safety concerns, promote consumption of indigenous, and sustainable food sources, including by improving resilience to the impacts of climate change (by providing a way to store and preserve the fruit that is subject to spoilage due to flooding etc), reduce food waste (90% of fresh fruit discarded due to the ripening characteristics) and support the achievement of SDG 2 (zero hunger) and 12 (responsible consumption and production).

The proposed standard will facilitate trade regionally of this gluten-free product.

Given the increasing demand for gluten-free products, it is timely to develop a regional standard for breadfruit flour to capitalize on this new growing market opportunity for gluten-free products, while simultaneously enhancing trade facilitation by focusing on improving production and storage practices to help reduce waste and ensure consistent supply, thus contributing to the reduction of food loss and advancing overall food security in our region.

The lack of a harmonized standard can lead to impediments in international fair trade with the production and distribution of low-quality products. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a regional standard for breadfruit flour to protect consumer health and ensure international fair trade.

3. Main aspects to be covered

The main aspects of the products addressed in the proposed regional standard are quality and safety requirements aimed at protecting consumer health and facilitating fair trade practices. Therefore, the proposed standard aims to cover aspects such as product definition, main ingredients and quality factors, food additives, impurities, hygiene, weights and measures and labelling, as well as methods of analysis and sampling.

4. Assessment against the criteria for the establishment of work priorities

General Criterion

Consumer protection from the point of view of health, food safety, ensuring fair practices in the food trade and taking into account the identified needs of developing countries.

Criteria applied to the commodities

(a) Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries

FAO reported the indicative current export demand for Fiji's breadfruit and breadfruit products estimated to be some 1,500 tonnes per annum, with free on board (fob) value of approximately FJD 6.5 million. This export market is shared with Samoa and Tonga. In the medium term this demand is expected to increase to some 2,500 tonnes doubling in value to approximately FJD 12.5 million". (Andrew McGregor & Kyle Stice-Feb 2018 Breadfruit market and marketing of Pacific Island Breadfruit with a focus on Fiji & Samoa)

The combined efforts of the Pacific Islands will see a further increase of breadfruit and breadfruit flour production and increased export markets.

In Samoa, the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa (SROS) has led recent applied breadfruit processing research, focusing on the commercialisation of breadfruit flour and other breadfruit processed products. While awaiting the start of commercial operations, SROS continues to produce breadfruit flour to meet orders from New Zealand customers; according to data from the 2021-2022 SROS Annual Report

SROS Sales from Breadfruit Flour

2017-2018	2018-2019
$1,200SAT	$19,133 SAT

(b) Diversification of national legislation and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade

There is no existing national legislation in the NASWP region covering breadfruit flour.

(c) Regional market potential

The potential market for breadfruit flour is the gluten-free market in New Zealand and Australia. There has been much talk about the huge gluten-free market – estimates put the current global annual market at between $3 billion and $15 billion, and expected to grow to $50 billion (Kirton 2016, Avegalio 2016). However, breadfruit flour is unlikely to capture a share of this vast gluten-free market, at least in the medium term. Not only is the supply of breadfruit negligible compared to demand, but there are also a large number of much cheaper alternatives on the market, such as rice, corn, cassava, etc. Over the next decade, as the effects of climate change on food crops become more apparent, the price ratio of breadfruit flour is likely to change.

In the foreseeable future, the prospects for exporting processed breadfruit products, excluding frozen and cooked varieties, appear to be promising, particularly within high-value niche markets. This is attributed to the potential for breadfruit to stand out based on factors other than price such as its overall improved nutrition, product origin, product image, and superior processing characteristics (Mcgregor & Stice, 2018).

(d) Amenability of the commodity to standardization

Breadfruit is characterized by its high content of complex carbohydrates, substantial fiber levels, minimal fat and cholesterol, and its gluten-free nature. It possesses a moderate glycaemic index, which is lower than that of white potatoes, white rice, white bread, and cassava. Nonetheless, the composition of protein, fat, and crude fiber varies considerably among different varieties and stages of maturity, as evidenced by pioneering research on breadfruit processing conducted in Samoa during the early 1980s by Wooten and Tumaalii (1984). Notably, the popular Samoan variety Ma'afala, along with its equivalent Fijian variety Bale kana ni Samoa, demonstrates particularly favourable nutritional profiles in this regard. (Mcgregor & Stice, 2018).

The three (3) key positive nutritional features of breadfruit food products in contributing to an overall reduction in NCDs:

1) *gluten free and low in FODMAP elements;*
2) *a moderate glycaemic index; and,*
3) *a high non-digestible carbohydrate content (high amylose content).*

(e) Coverage of the main consumer protection and trade issues by existing or proposed general standards

There are no existing standards for Breadfruit Flour products. This new work will reinforce consumer protection and promote regional trade through the establishment of regionally approved quality standard.

(f) Number of commodities which would need separate standards indicating whether raw, semi-processed or processed

Currently there is no need of any other separate standard other than that proposed, since the proposed standard breadfruit flour is a singular processed food.

(g) Work already undertaken by other international organizations in this field and/or suggested by the relevant international intergovernmental body(ies)

There is no work suggested or undertaken by other international organizations in this field. Meanwhile there are many studies on uses, dietary benefits and economic opportunities of breadfruit flour.

5. Relevance to the Codex strategic objectives

This proposal meets objective 1.1 (Identify needs and emerging issues) of Strategic Goal 1 (Address current, emerging and critical issues in a timely manner) under the Strategic Plan of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for 2020-2025.

6. Information on the relation between the proposal and other existing Codex documents

This proposal is an initiative of the Samoa National Codex Committee (SNCC) to promote safe production of Breadfruit flour as a regional standard, as there is currently no such existing standard within Codex. It will refer as much as possible to other general Codex standards (e.g. hygiene, labelling, food additive and contaminants, etc.).

7. Identification of any requirement for and availability of expert scientific advice

Provision of scientific advice from experts is not foreseen.

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

Technical assistance by WHO and/or FAO to substantiate the scientific advice in Section 7 above if required

9. Proposed timeline for completion of the new work

It is expected that the development of the proposed standard would be conducted in two CCNASWP sessions or less, depending on the agreement reached by CCNASWP.