



## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

#### Forty-ninth Session

*CICG, Geneva, Switzerland*

6-10 July 2026

### FAO/WHO SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT TO CODEX: REPORT ON ACTIVITIES, BUDGETARY AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

(Prepared by FAO and WHO)

## PART 1: RECENT FAO/WHO EXPERT MEETINGS AND OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

**The delivery of scientific advice continues at an accelerated level.** FAO and WHO have continued to develop the requested scientific advice. This strong activity has been made possible through the contributions of Australia, Canada, the European Union, France, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States of America (USA), which have been greatly appreciated. In addition, these activities result from the high priority that FAO and WHO assign to the scientific advice programme, recognizing the importance of a strong scientific foundation for all Codex standards. The CAC remains the primary beneficiary of the joint FAO/WHO scientific advice programme, as the results are used extensively in the development of Codex texts and standards. However, other UN agencies (for example, the World Food Programme) are requesting scientific advice from FAO/WHO. Furthermore, the outputs of this joint programme are also used by member countries of FAO and WHO to strengthen the science-based decision-making on food safety and nutrition issues at national and regional levels. The following summarises the scientific advice provided in the September 2025 – April 2026 period since FAO and WHO's previous report to the Commission (CAC48 INF/2).

### Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA)

#### **101st JECFA meeting, 15-21 October 2025, Geneva, Switzerland**

The meeting was held to assess the safety and/or exposure of certain food contaminants, specifically inorganic and organic arsenic species. Arsenic is on the JECFA Priority list of contaminants for evaluation, last amended at the 18th Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF). As requested by CCCF, the Committee conducted a re-evaluation of arsenic species, including updated toxicological, occurrence, and dietary exposure data that have become available since the last review. The Committee's assessments, recommendations, and comments will be discussed by CCCF to inform national authorities' recommendations on risk-management and risk-mitigation measures to reduce human exposure. WHO will publish detailed monographs in the WHO Food Additives Series with the toxicological and other related information on which the safety assessments of the compounds were based<sup>1</sup>. The summary and conclusions of the meeting are available online<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Safety evaluation of certain food additives. WHO Food Additives Series, No. 92. Toxicological monographs of the one-hundredth and one meeting (in preparation).

<sup>2</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd7267en> and [https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/one-hundred-and-first-meeting-joint-fao-who-expert-committee-on-food-additives-\(jecfa\)](https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/one-hundred-and-first-meeting-joint-fao-who-expert-committee-on-food-additives-(jecfa))

**102nd JECFA meeting, 9-18 June 2026 (planned), Nanjing, China**

This meeting is part of the ongoing programme dedicated to the risk assessment of food additives and other chemicals. A call for data on the substances scheduled for evaluation has been published on the FAO/WHO websites<sup>3</sup>.

**Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR)*****Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) 2025, 20-22 January 2026, Geneva, Switzerland***

Following the WHO Core Assessment Group Meeting (16 to 25 September 2025, Bangkok, Thailand) and the FAO Panel Members Group Meeting (24 November to 3 December 2025, Rome, Italy), the plenary session of JMPR 2025 was held to consolidate the draft materials from both organizations and adopt the final report. Within the framework of the ongoing programme on the risk assessment of pesticide residues in foods, the meeting evaluated 38 pesticides, including seven new compounds and three re-evaluated within the periodic review programme of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR), for toxicity, residues, or both. In addition, the meeting addressed one concern form and considered a number of current issues related to the risk assessment of chemicals, the evaluation of pesticide residues, and procedures for recommending maximum residue limits. The summary report of the meeting is available on both the FAO and WHO websites<sup>4</sup>. The full meeting report and the monographs will be published on the same FAO and WHO websites in due course.

**Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA)*****Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment on the use of omics-based technologies in microbiological risk assessment, 2-6 March 2026, Rome, Italy***

The objective of this meeting was to assess whether and to what extent the current microbiological risk assessment (MRA) guidance could be updated to incorporate omics methodologies and omics-derived data. Specifically, the experts were tasked with: (i) compiling an overview of omics-based technologies currently available and applicable to microbiological food safety; (ii) for those currently applied in MRA, reviewing their benefits, limitations, and practical challenges; (iii) evaluating how omics-derived data can inform different steps of the MRA process as defined by Codex Alimentarius and (iv) identifying considerations for practical implementation. The meeting report is under development, and the executive summary is available on the FAO/WHO websites.

The meeting reports of the JEMRA meetings on *Prevention and Interventions of viruses in foods (Part 2)*<sup>5</sup> and *Risk assessment of Listeria monocytogenes in foods (Part 2)*<sup>6</sup> have been published.

JEMRA also published the two calls for future work: (i) Call for experts and data on microbiological risk assessment on powdered formulae for infants and young children<sup>7</sup> and (ii) Call for data on the impact of freezing temperatures on the microbiological safety of foods<sup>8</sup> to deal with the requests from the 55th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene.

**Ad hoc Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meetings and other joint FAO/WHO work*****Ad hoc FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on water quality in agrifood systems and food safety implications – focus on chemical contaminants***

FAO and WHO jointly convened an *Ad hoc FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on water quality in agrifood systems and food safety implications – focus on chemical contaminants*<sup>9</sup>, which took place on 20–23 May 2025 at FAO headquarters in Rome to support the finalization of the report, *Prioritizing food safety issues related to chemical water quality in agrifood systems*, available on the FAO/WHO websites<sup>10</sup>. The publication outlines approaches

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.fao.org/food-safety/scientific-advice/calls-for-data-and-experts/en> and <https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/food-additives-one-hundred-and-second-meeting-joint-fao-who-expert-committee-on-food-additives-jecfa>

<sup>4</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd8513en> and <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/summary-report-of-the-2025-joint-fao-who-meeting-on-pesticide-residues-jmpr>

<sup>5</sup> <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd7637en>

<sup>6</sup> <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd6702en>

<sup>7</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/175078de-1362-482d-a1e0-4d5513391451> and <https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/call-for-experts-and-data-on-microbiological-risk-assessment-on-powdered-formulae-for-infants-and-young-children>

<sup>8</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/e5bba2d9-b2cf-4ab7-a844-e4fce3f9aca9> and <https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/call-for-data-on-the-impact-of-freezing-temperatures-on-the-microbiological-safety-of-foods>

<sup>9</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/7f015be1-d3a0-4018-b234-f68fe7000e35>

<sup>10</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd7058en> and <https://www.who.int/publications/b/81513>

for identifying and prioritizing potential food safety risks arising from waterborne chemical hazards, underscores the role of foresight in recognizing emerging food safety issues and highlights the role of a One Health approach in chemical risk management related to water used in agrifood production. The report's findings were further presented at a follow-up webinar held on 10 February 2026<sup>11</sup>.

### ***Ad hoc Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Risk Assessment of Food Allergens***

An *ad hoc* joint FAO/WHO expert consultation was held in November 2025 in Rome, Italy, to discuss reference doses (RfDs) for cereals containing gluten. The meeting addressed coeliac disease, reference doses for gluten and gluten-containing cereals, analytical considerations, and risk assessment and communication for the unintended presence of gluten. The experts recommended that a 4 mg gluten RfD in a risk-based precautionary allergen labelling (PAL) framework will enhance safety and labelling clarity, reduce unnecessary PAL statements, and expand safe food options for people with coeliac disease and IgE-mediated wheat allergy. The summary report is available on the FAO/WHO websites<sup>12</sup>.

### ***Joint FAO/WHO update of nutrient requirements for infants and young children aged from birth through 3 years of age***

FAO and WHO have conducted the updating of nutrient intake values for infants and young children from birth through 3 years of age, which include requirements (e.g., average nutrient requirement [ANR], adequate intake [AI], individual nutrient level [INLx]) and safe upper levels of intake (ULs). Using data from preparatory work by WHO and FAO, WHO identified calcium, vitamin D, and zinc as the first three priority nutrients to be updated. The work of updating the FAO/WHO nutrient requirements for calcium, vitamin D and zinc for children 0–3 years of age has been completed. Nine virtual expert meetings were held, and more than 15 systematic reviews and reports were generated, many of which have been published in peer-reviewed journals. The guidance document is planned for release in 2026.

### **Other activities**

#### ***FAO- Biotechnology, genetically modified organisms and information resources***

FAO maintained and updated global biotechnology and food safety knowledge platforms and databases compiling scientific references, regulatory approaches and risk assessment considerations for foods derived from modern biotechnology, including genetically modified organisms<sup>13</sup>. These resources support transparent information sharing and science based regulatory decision making consistent with Codex principles. In addition, the technical document entitled *Gene editing and food safety – Technical considerations and potential relevance to the work of Codex Alimentarius*<sup>14</sup> continues to serve as a global reference material to explain how existing Codex guidelines can be applied to assess and ensure safety of gene-edited products.

#### ***FAO- Evolving food production systems and food safety***

FAO continued to support Members in addressing food safety considerations associated with emerging food production technologies through technical publications, stakeholder consultations and international dialogue.

- *Cell-based food*: FAO consolidated scientific and regulatory knowledge on foods produced through animal cell culture technologies and published a report outlining production steps, input materials, hazard identification and safety assessment considerations. The latest report of the stakeholder meeting *Global dialogue on food technologies: Food safety aspects of cell-based food and precision fermentation – Stakeholder roundtable meeting report, Toronto, Canada, 10 October 2024* was published in January 2026<sup>15</sup>.
- *Precision fermentation and biomass fermentation*: FAO published the technical report *Precision fermentation – With a focus on food safety*<sup>16</sup>, providing step-by-step analysis of production workflows, potential hazards, preventive controls and a regulatory snapshot across multiple jurisdictions. Complementary knowledge products and dialogues supported safety by design and risk analysis approaches. The relevant factsheet has been also made available<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/CD8420EN>

<sup>12</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd7703en> and [https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/ad-hoc-joint-fao-who-expert-consultation-on-risk-assessment-of-food-allergens-reference-dose\(s\)-for-cereals-containing-gluten-or-gluten](https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/ad-hoc-joint-fao-who-expert-consultation-on-risk-assessment-of-food-allergens-reference-dose(s)-for-cereals-containing-gluten-or-gluten)

<sup>13</sup> FAO GM Foods Platform <https://www.fao.org/gm-platform>

<sup>14</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc5136en>

<sup>15</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd7836en>

<sup>16</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd4448en>

<sup>17</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd5598en>

**FAO- Alternative animal source foods: A comprehensive review of the evidence on their benefits and risks for nutrition, environment, livelihoods, and food safety**

FAO will produce a comprehensive review with related recommendations for the current state of evidence on this topic. To do so, FAO has commissioned a series of robust scoping/narrative reviews of the current state of evidence on the benefits and risks of alternative animal source foods (A-ASFs) for nutrition, environment, socio-economic considerations, and food safety. FAO work will include defining A-ASFs and their sub-categories and developing a glossary of relevant terminology and synonyms. In addition to the FAO document, the reviews are being published in a *Special Issue in Lancet Planetary Health*<sup>18</sup> and key findings were presented at key scientific events including at the International Congress of Nutrition in August 2025.

**FAO- Regulating new food sources and production systems**

In 2025, FAO developed the legal paper *Regulating new food sources and production systems*<sup>19</sup>, responding to the rapid diversification of food sources and production methods driven by technological innovation and evolving consumer demand. The paper provides a comparative overview of how countries and regions are regulating new food sources and production systems, mapping current legislative approaches, emerging regulatory trends, and key elements such as legal definitions, regulatory oversight, authorization procedures, labelling requirements, and post market controls. Drawing on examples from jurisdictions with varying levels of regulatory maturity, the publication highlights both leading practices and existing gaps, illustrating the diversity of regulatory responses and the need for adaptive frameworks that safeguard food safety and consumer protection while enabling innovation.

**FAO- Regulatory frameworks for cell-based food and precision fermentation derived products**

In 2025, FAO developed the legal paper *Regulatory frameworks for cell-based food and precision fermentation derived products*<sup>20</sup> to address the legal uncertainties as these novel products enter global markets. Drawing on international instruments such as the Codex Alimentarius and the World Trade Organization agreements, the publication examines how existing legal frameworks apply to new food production technologies. It identifies regulatory gaps and areas of ambiguity in safety assessment, authorization, labelling and the use of additives, while also considering broader implications for sustainability, human rights and trade. Recognizing that the international regulatory framework remains at an early stage, the paper proposes actions to support regulatory clarity, promote international harmonization and guide policymakers in ensuring consumer protection while enabling innovation and equitable trade.

**FAO-14th International Food Data Conference**

The 14th International Food Data Conference (IFDC) was hosted by FAO from 1 to 3 September 2025. The IFDC serves as a platform for sharing innovations in data generation, analytical methods, and database management. It fosters collaboration among scientists, analysts, and data users to enhance the development and uses of food composition data. The 2025 conference theme, *Food composition databases: application for healthy diets and sustainable agrifood systems transformation*, emphasizes the critical role of food composition data in fostering global health and sustainability.

**Ad hoc FAO work on the Nutritional Composition of Foods and Beverages made from Plant-based and other Alternative Protein Sources**

Following a request submitted at the 43rd session of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU), FAO has prepared a literature review to guide the future development of *Guidelines including General principles for the nutritional composition of foods and beverages made from plant-based and other alternative protein sources*. The review, which is expected to be published by the end of 2026, identified literature with data on the nutrient profiles of foods and beverages made from plant-based and other alternative protein sources, which are intended to replace animal-based products, currently in the marketplace, and comparison with their animal-based counterparts. Key outcomes were presented at the 14th International Food Data Conference in September 2025.

<sup>18</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lanplh.2025.101423> and <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lanplh.2025.101424>

<sup>19</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd7764en>

<sup>20</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd8165en>



### **FAO- Food safety in modern indoor and controlled environment farming systems**

FAO has conducted literature synthesis to advance technical analysis and stakeholder dialogue on food safety considerations in indoor and controlled environment farming systems, including vertical farming and hydroponics. Work focused on identifying potential microbiological and chemical hazards and corresponding preventive measures related to water quality, inputs, worker hygiene and facility design to enable safe innovation. The technical document *Modern indoor farming and food safety - A review of hazards, controls and regulatory consideration* was published in 2025<sup>21</sup>.

### **FAO- Integrating food safety for food loss and waste reduction**

FAO has initiated a collaborative technical work with Wageningen University and Research to examine food safety measures to effectively reduce food loss and waste. This work responds to increasing recognition that food safety interventions, when appropriately designed and implemented, protect public health and prevent unnecessary product rejection, premature disposal and avoidable losses across the food chain. The forthcoming FAO technical publication, planned for release in 2027, will include a comprehensive literature synthesis, case studies including perspectives from low- and middle-income countries, a regulatory landscape snapshot, and practical considerations for competent authorities. A series of technical webinars will be organized throughout 2026 to facilitate knowledge exchange and dialogue.

### **FAO- Food safety risk assessment of environmental inhibitors used in agrifood systems**

In December 2025, FAO has published a report titled *Environmental inhibitors in agrifood systems – Considerations for food safety risk assessment*<sup>22</sup>, which highlights key food safety aspects and steps in risk assessment process for environmental inhibitors used in agrifood production, with particular attention to the potential uptake and transfer of residues into crops intended for human consumption and animal-derived foods. A complementary technical brief<sup>23</sup> has also been prepared to share the main messages with a wider audience. This work builds on the earlier publication titled *Food safety implications from the use of environmental inhibitors in agrifood systems*<sup>24</sup> and was followed by a webinar held on 20 January 2026 to discuss key findings and recommendations from the report<sup>25</sup>.

### **FAO- Microplastics and food safety**

The FAO work on microplastics and food safety include the publication of report *Microplastics in food commodities – A food safety review on human exposure through dietary sources*<sup>26</sup> was presented at the 19th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (COFI:FT)<sup>27</sup>, More details on this work are provided in the in the document on *Matters arising from FAO and WHO*.

### **FAO- Food safety implications of recycled plastics and alternative food contact materials (FCMs)**

FAO is currently preparing a report addressing possible food safety implications of food contact materials (FCMs) produced from recycled plastics, alternative bio-based materials and associated technologies, in the context of existing regulatory structures for review of FCMs. The official release of the document is planned for the second quarter of 2026, followed by a related webinar. This publication aligns with the Codex work in this area and with the interest of Member Countries in developing guidance related to food safety aspects of recycled plastics in food packaging<sup>28</sup>.

### **FAO expert meeting on microbiological risk assessment of helminths parasites in foods**

An FAO expert meeting on microbiological risk assessment of helminths parasites in foods was convened in Rome, Italy from 6 to 10 October 2025. The expert committee reviewed recent scientific developments, data, and evidence associated with foodborne helminths parasites, specifically including information on the disease burden, attribution to food commodities of highest public health concern, analytical methods in food commodities and control measures. The full report is under development, and the summary report has been

<sup>21</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd6554en>

<sup>22</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd7224en><https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd7658en>

<sup>23</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd7658en>

<sup>24</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc8647en>

<sup>25</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd1278en>

<sup>26</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc2392en>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/meeting/41402>

<sup>28</sup> [https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/sh-proxy/en/?lnk=1&url=https%253A%252F%252Fworkspace.fao.org%252Fsites%252Fcodex%252FMeetings%252FCX-735-18%252FREPORT%252FFINAL%252520REPORT%252FREPT5\\_CF18e.pdf](https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/sh-proxy/en/?lnk=1&url=https%253A%252F%252Fworkspace.fao.org%252Fsites%252Fcodex%252FMeetings%252FCX-735-18%252FREPORT%252FFINAL%252520REPORT%252FREPT5_CF18e.pdf)

published<sup>29</sup>.

### ***FAO workshop on antimicrobial co-selection at the food:environmental interface***

The workshop on antimicrobial co-selection at the food:environmental interface, was organized jointly by FAO and China Academy of Sciences (CAS) and took place from 10 to 13 November 2025 in Hangzhou, China. The main objective of the meeting was to catalogue contaminants that may play an important role in the co-selection of antimicrobial resistance in food and the food production environment; summarize the risks associated with deliberate or unintended exposure of feed crops, food crops, and animals to important co-selective agents for antimicrobial resistance; identify critical gaps in knowledge and research priorities related to food safety in the context of these potential hazards. The summary report has been published on the FAO website<sup>30</sup>.

### ***Joint FAO/IAEA Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture' activities relevant to Food Safety and Control***

The Joint FAO/IAEA Centre have advanced contaminant detection and quantification in foods and water, including microplastics and toxic chemical species, using both rapid screening and conventional methods. In to strengthen food authenticity and traceability systems, recent research conducted at the Centre has shown that Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy with Attenuated Total Reflectance (FTIR-ATR) as a rapid and cost-effective tool for tracing the geographical origin of Chilean blue mussels, complementary to established isotopic and elemental techniques. Furthermore, the Centre has convened the following consultancy meetings: *Radioisotope Production, Radiolabelling of Chemicals and Their Use in Food Animal Depletion Research, conducted for a new Coordinated Research Project (CRP); Investigating the Safety of Edible Insects, Other 'Novel' Foods and Hazards Associated with Their Production and Processing Practices; Antimicrobial Residues, Antimicrobial Resistance and Aquaculture Products Safety, with Focus on the Indo-Pacific Region; Advances and Challenges in Monitoring and Controlling Microplastics in Food and Agriculture.*

### ***Joint FAO-IAEA Protein Quality Database***

Defining accurately the amount and quality required to meet human nutritional needs and describing appropriately the protein supplied by foods and diets is critical in meeting global nutrition targets. Standardized protein quality of foods data in humans has a potential to inform dialogue on recommendations for protein requirements for all age groups, especially in first 3 years of life. Two expert consultations held in 2022<sup>31</sup> and 2024<sup>32</sup> agreed to develop a Joint FAO/IAEA database on ileal digestibility of protein and amino acids in foods consumed by humans. Data are being systematically compiled focusing on in-vivo data completion and aiming to publish the database in early 2026. The database was presented at the 14th International Food Data Conference in September 2025.

### ***Joint IAEA/FAO/WHO meetings to review Human Energy Requirements***

Twenty years on since the publication of the Joint FAO/WHO/United Nations University (UNU) Expert Consultation *Report on Human Energy Requirements* in 2004, FAO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are updating global human energy requirements. This revision uses ne global literature and energy expenditure data from the IAEA Doubly Labelled Water (DLW) Database to create updated prediction equations for various age and sex groups. Two recent consultancy meetings in 2024 and 2025 gathered experts to review scientific evidence, address data gaps, especially among under-represented population groups and environmental contexts, and agreed to proceed with updating the existing energy requirements.

### ***Joint FAO-IOC-IAEA work on harmful algal blooms and biotoxins***

Harmful algal blooms (HABs) substantially affect food safety and food security by causing contamination or mass mortalities among aquatic organisms. FAO, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) and IAEA agreed to develop the Joint FAO-IOC-IAEA technical guidance for the implementation of early warning systems for harmful algal blooms to assist competent authorities and pertinent institutions in establishing early warning systems for HABs in marine and brackish waters<sup>33</sup>. Complementing this effort, an Expert Meeting on Marine Biotoxins and Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring was held on 6–9 October 2025 in Rome, Italy, resulting in the development of the *Joint FAO/IOC-UNESCO/IAEA guidance on monitoring of algal toxins in bivalve molluscs – Including monitoring of harmful algae and management of*

<sup>29</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd7348en>

<sup>30</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd8329en>

<sup>31</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd1021en>

<sup>32</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd7053en>

<sup>33</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc4794en>

harvesting and production areas<sup>34</sup>. This work builds on recent initiatives on ciguatera poisoning<sup>35, 36</sup> and bivalve mollusc sanitation. The Expert meeting recommended that FAO and WHO conduct a risk assessment for tetrodotoxins in bivalve molluscs. More details are provided in the document on *Matters arising from FAO and WHO*.

### **WHO- Integration of data from New Approaches Methodologies into food chemical safety assessments**

Advances in science are rapidly expanding the application of New Approach Methodologies (NAMs), including in vitro, in silico and other non-animal testing methods. However, a clear definition of NAMs is still needed, and their use in food chemical safety evaluation remains limited. WHO and Nanyang Technological University Singapore (NTU) convened a workshop in June 2025 to advance global dialogue on the adoption and practical implementation of NAMs. Key topics included the current state of NAMs, regulatory and technical challenges, capacity building for low- and middle-income countries, implementation strategies and future directions.

Following the workshop, an update to *Environmental Health Criteria (EHC) 240: Principles and Methods for the Risk Assessment of Chemicals in Food* was proposed to incorporate NAMs. The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meetings on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) and Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) subsequently discussed the feasibility of expanding NAMs' use in safety evaluation and recognized the need for clearer, harmonized guidance, despite some NAMs already being in use. In conclusion, JMPR and JECFA agreed to update EHC 240 to provide guidance on general principles for the use of NAMs in the safety assessment of chemicals in food, while remaining adaptable to future scientific and technological developments. A dedicated joint working group is expected to undertake this revision.

### **WHO Healthy Diet Fact Sheet 2026**

In January 2026, WHO updated its healthy diet factsheet with the latest evidence-based advice and guidance<sup>37</sup>. It is available in all UN languages. The fact sheet outlines key points such as why a healthy diet matters, an overview of global dietary patterns and challenges, and core principles of a healthy diet. It also covers WHO's guidance on different nutrients (e.g., carbohydrates, sugars, fats, proteins, micronutrients, salt/sodium and potassium) and considerations for infants and young children, followed by sections on how to promote healthy diets at the policy and population level.

### **WHO Guideline Development on Diet and Health**

In 2023, WHO released a series of guidelines related to healthy diets, including the guideline on saturated fatty acid and *trans*-fatty acid intake for adults and children<sup>38</sup>, the guideline on total fat intake for the prevention of unhealthy weight gain in adults and children<sup>39</sup>, the guideline on carbohydrate intake for adults and children<sup>40</sup>, and the guideline on the use of non-sugar sweeteners<sup>41</sup>. Additionally, the WHO guideline on the use of lower-sodium salt substitutes was published in January 2025<sup>42</sup>.

WHO has initiated work to develop guidelines on the optimal intake of animal-source foods, including guidance on commonly consumed animal-source foods and plant alternatives. In addition to the health effects of consuming these foods, this work will address food safety considerations as well as socioeconomic factors and environmental impacts, enabling a comprehensive assessment of the risks and benefits associated with different consumption and substitution patterns. The first expert meeting was held in 2024 at which the scopes of the guideline and the framework of the risk-benefit assessment were established<sup>43, 44</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd8990en>

<sup>35</sup> <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/ca8817en>

<sup>36</sup> *Monitoring and preventing ciguatera poisoning* – online course <https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=648>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/healthy-diet>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240073630>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240073654>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240073593>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240073616>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240105591>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.who.int/groups/guideline-development-group-on-optimal-intake-of-animal-source-foods>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.who.int/groups/technical-advisory-group-on-risk-benefit-assessment-of-optimal-intake-of-animal-source-foods>