



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEx ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION
Eighty-ninth Session
FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy
3–7 November 2025

CRITICAL REVIEW - PART III¹

Note: For general information about the critical review and the critical review for CCCF18, please see CX/EXEC 25/89/3. For the critical review for CCPR56 and CCASIA23, please see CX/EXEC 25/89/3-Add.1.

Structure of appendices

1. The work of the different committees is addressed in separate appendices.
2. The current structure of the appendices for each committee is as follows:
 - A. General information on the committee and session
 - B. Status of work items (Overview) with explanatory notes as relevant from the Codex Secretariat and Chairperson's comments on specific work items
 - C. Chairperson's comments on the overall work of the committee in light of the purpose of the critical review)

List of appendices

Appendix 1: FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Near East, 12th session (CCNE12)

¹ This document addresses the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Near East (CCNE)

Appendix 1

A. General information on the committee and session

Committee	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Near East (CCNE)		
Host	Oman	Chairperson	Dr Intisar Al-Gharibi
Session reported on	CCNE12	28 September 2025 – 2 October 2025	
Next session	CCNE13	2027, dates TBC	
Report	<u>REP25/NE</u>		

B. Status of work items (Overview)

Existing work item(s) for decision by the Commission (adoption, revocation, discontinuation)							
Topic	Job number	Target year	Recommendation of the committee	Status of endorsement (where applicable)	Scientific advice	Reference	Explanatory notes (if any)
1. Draft regional standard for maamoul (Near East)	N06-2020	2024	Adoption at Step 8	Food additive and food labelling provisions are pending endorsement of CCFA and CCFL respectively.	-	REP25/NE, Paragraph 48 and Appendix IV	While CCNE has completed its work on the regional standard, the food additive and food labelling provisions still need to be endorsed by CCFA and CCFL, respectively. The methods of analysis will be forwarded separately to CCMAS for endorsement and inclusion in the <i>Recommended methods of analysis and sampling</i> (CXS 234-1999).
2. Inclusion of the nitrogen to protein conversion factor (Nx) value of 5.71 for tehena in the Annex to CXS 234-1999	-	-	Adoption	-	-	REP25/NE, Paragraph 24(ii)	This responds to a recommendation of CCMAS who noted that such a factor has not been included in association with the protein provision. As this is in line with the recommendation of CCMAS, it has been referred directly to CAC for adoption and

							also inclusion in the Annex on Nx factors in CXS 234-1999.
3. Consequential amendments to the <i>Regional standards for tehena</i> (Near East) (CXS 259R-2007) and <i>doogh</i> (Near East) (CXS 332R-2018) to include a cross reference to the Annex on Nx factors in CXS 234-1999	-	-	Adoption	-	-	REP25/NE, Paragraph 24(ii-iii)	These amendments would be made consequential to the adoption of the Annex on Nx factors in CXS 234-1999, to ensure alignment between Codex texts. The existing Nx value in CXS 332R-2018 would be removed to avoid duplication of information between this standard and CXS 234-1999.
4. Food additive provisions in CXS 332R-2018	-	-	Adoption	Pending endorsement by CCFA	-	REP25/NE, Paragraph 31 and Appendix II	These provisions were pending the completion of the alignment work in CCFA and will be considered by a subsequent session of CAC after the endorsement of CCFA has been fulfilled.
5. Amendment of the labelling provisions for non-retail containers in CXS 332-2018 and the <i>Regional standards for mixed zaatar</i> (Near East) (CXS 341R-2020) and <i>doogh</i> (Near East) (CXS 332R-2018)	-	-	Alignment	-	-	REP25/NE, Paragraph 35(i) and Appendix III (Part A)	The amendments and inclusions are to align with the <i>General standard for the labelling of non-retail containers of foods</i> (CXS 346-2021).
6. Inclusion of labelling provisions for non-retail containers in the <i>Regional standards for canned humus with tehena</i> (Near East) (CXS 257R-2007); <i>canned foul medames</i> (Near East) (CXS 258R-2007); <i>tehena</i> (Near East) (CXS 259R-2007); <i>harissa</i> (red	-	-	Adoption	-	-	REP25/NE, Paragraph 35(ii) and Appendix III (Part B)	

<i>hot pepper paste</i>) (Near East) (CXS 308R-2011); <i>halwa tehenia</i> (Near East) (CXS 309R-2011); and <i>date paste</i> (Near East) (CXS 314R-2013)							
Chairperson's comments on specific work items(s) from the above in light of the purpose of the critical review CCNE12 completed the elaboration of the regional standard for maamoul, which was forwarded for adoption by CAC, with the additives and labelling provisions, and methods of analysis proposed for this standard forwarded to CCFA, CCFL and CCMAS, respectively, for endorsement. Provisions related to labelling of non-retail containers were included in relevant regional standards as per the matter referred, and consequential amendments were agreed for nitrogen to protein (Nx) conversion factors, which were removed from regional standards, avoiding duplication with the horizontal standard on <i>Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling</i> (CXS234-1999). These measures enabled better alignment between CCNE standards and horizontal standards. All provisions were agreed to through consensus with no reservation recorded. CCNE was made aware and took note of the clarification provided by the Islamic Republic of Iran, which indicated that it had not had the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed list of food additives for doogh, which were discussed at CCNE12 under the corresponding agenda item. The delegation of Iran expressed its intention to submit proposals for possible amendments to that list. To address this issue, which was raised after the adoption of decisions reached at CCNE12, in line with Codex procedures, the Chairperson of CCNE recommended to: 1. Proceed with the recommendation of CCNE12 (REP25/NE, Paragraph 31), and forward the additive provisions associated with the <i>Standard for doogh</i> (CXS 332R-2018) to CCFA for consideration at its next session. 2. Avail the Islamic Republic of Iran with the opportunity to submit its comments or proposed amendments to the list of additives prior to or during the CCFA session. 3. And, as required, the matter could be further discussed during CCNE13, and resubmitted to the consideration of CAC, as may be relevant. This approach was further discussed and received consensus from Members and Observers who attended an informal coordination meeting of CCNE convened for this purpose prior to CCEXEC89.							
For information							
Topic	Reference		Explanatory notes (if any)				
7. Review the completeness of the section on methods of analysis in regional commodity standards, consider the need for methods of analysis and sampling, and propose methods of analysis and/or sampling plans as appropriate in light of the revised <i>General guidelines on sampling</i> (CXG 50-2004)	REP25/NE, Paragraph 24(i)(a-b)		CCNE12 acknowledged the presence of inconsistencies and omissions in regional/Near East Codex standards concerning methods of analysis and sampling, and agreed on the necessity of developing harmonized approaches to address these gaps. This is part of a broader request by CCMAS to all commodity committees following the revision of CXG 50-2004. In the case of CCNE, regional commodity standards currently lack sampling plans, and six of them have incomplete methods of analysis sections, which must be addressed first. Due to these differences in terms of				

		completeness, CCNE12 established an electronic working group (EWG), chaired by Oman and co-chaired by Qatar, which will apply a stepwise approach and present a comprehensive analysis at CCNE13.
8. Determine the need to review the <i>Regional code of practice for street-vended foods</i> (Near East) (CXC 71R-2013) and provide suggested changes as appropriate, to ensure consistency with the <i>General principles for food hygiene</i> (CXC 1-1969) and the <i>Guidelines for food hygiene control measures in traditional markets for food</i> (CXG 103-2024)	REP25/NE, Paragraph 27	This work follows the request of CCFH to relevant FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees to review their respective texts on street vended foods to ensure consistency with CXC 1-1969 and CXG 103-2024. For CCNE, Lebanon, with the support of Libya and Algeria, will prepare a discussion paper to address whether a review of CXC 71R-2013 is necessary, and if so, will provide suggestions and recommendations for next steps and/or consequential changes.
9. Review and revise the proposal for the development of a standard for rose water (Golab) to clarify the scope and nature of work and to reflect the needs and challenges faced in the region	REP25/NE, Paragraph 102(ii)	While CCNE Members noted the importance of rose water as food ingredient for the region, they also noted that there was a necessity for clarification on the scope and nature of the proposal. Iran, as originator of the document, will prepare a new discussion paper, based on the comments received, to be discussed at CCNE13. In the same context, the Codex Secretariat recalled the recommendations by CCEXEC to use a more horizontal or group approach to commodity standards, to review existing Codex standards to consider their applicability to the commodity and if any, identify gaps.

Chairperson's comments on specific issues for monitoring and information in light of the purpose of the critical review

The establishment of an EWG to systematically review the sections on methods of analysis and sampling, and to address inconsistencies identified across several regional / CCNE standards, reflects CCNE's proactive engagement with CCMAS recommendations. CCNE12 also responded positively to CCFH's request to review the *Regional code of practice for street-vended foods* (Near East) (CXC 71R-2013), demonstrating continued responsiveness to cross-cutting issues across Codex committees. In this regard, CCNE12 agreed on specific follow-up actions and timelines to ensure continuity of work leading up to CCNE13.

CCNE12 noted the proposed new work on rose water, as emphasized by producing countries such as Iran, Lebanon and Syria. However, Members agreed that further clarification on the scope and nature of the proposal is needed. Iran will revise and resubmit the discussion paper for consideration at CCNE13.

C. Chairperson's comments on the overall work of the committee in light of the purpose of the critical review

During CCNE12, Members and Observers demonstrated active engagement in the deliberation of the agenda items. Enhanced coordination was evident through the effective use of informal and in-session working groups established to address pending matters and advance discussions.

In addition to completing the outstanding new work on the Regional standard for *maamoul*, CCNE12 developed an ambitious Regional Work Plan for 2026–2027, reflecting the region's commitment to contribute to the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026–2031. This work will be coordinated through an electronic working group (EWG) chaired by Lebanon and co-chaired by Libya, mandated to monitor implementation, prioritize activities, and report progress to the Codex

Secretariat in preparation for CCNE13. These actions demonstrate CCNE's commitment to a structured, forward-looking approach to regional coordination and planning.

CCNE12 also witnessed stronger participation from intergovernmental organizations involved in standardization, notably the Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization (AIDSMO) and the GCC Standardization Organization (GSO). Their active engagement will help strengthen the alignment of Codex standards with regional standardization activities and reinforce their impact on food regulatory practices within the region.

While no new regional standard was formally proposed, CCNE12 considered a potential new work item and carefully applied the Codex criteria for the establishment of work priorities in reviewing and refining its scope. The Regional Work Plan, referred to above, will serve as a framework to guide the development of future regional standards in alignment with the strategic directions of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026–2031.