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Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

Original: English

### CODEX UPDATE TO THE TBT COMMITTEE

#### INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (CODEX)

This document contains information provided by CODEX at the TBT Committee meeting of 16-18 November 2022 under Agenda Item 4 (Update by Observers).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In original language only.

**TBT COMMITTEE (16-18 November 2022)****INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION****Codex meetings held since the last session of the TBT Committee (13-15 July 2022)****82<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC82, Virtual, 20 - 30 June 2022)**

*Application of the Statements of Principle Concerning the Role of Science in the Codex Decision-Making Process and the extent to which other factors are taken into account (SoP)*

CCEXEC continues its efforts to develop practical guidance to support the operationalization of the SoP. Following substantial work in 2022 CCEXEC83 will consider the latest version of the guidance and a related flowchart which aims to provide clarity around some key terms such as 'Other legitimate factors', 'Other considerations' and 'Abstain from acceptance'; a description of the sequence of considerations that a committee or the Commission applies when faced with a proposal to advance or adopt a standard or related text, possible scenarios they might face during this phase and the options available to Chairpersons in different situations

*60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission*

The central theme of World Food Safety Day (WFSD) 2023 will be around standards and Codex together with FAO and WHO will hold an event around June 7 to celebrate Codex@60. Another event will take place in conjunction with the Commission in November 2023.

A special anniversary edition of the CODEX Magazine in 2023 will include articles on, for example, the history of the committees, some of the key standards that Codex has developed over the past 60 years and a look at both Codex past achievements the future. Given the close relationship with the SPS agreement, the Codex Secretariat welcomes input from the SPS Committee on engagement to celebrate Codex@60.

An update of the design of the Codex Alimentarius texts, is ongoing not only in terms of visual design but the way in which they are cited and referenced to ensure they are fit for purpose and digitally robust for the next 60 years. Discussion and idea sharing on how to mark Codex@60 have been ongoing in recent Coordinating Committee meetings and CCEXEC82 encouraged Members and Observers to fully engage in early planning to identify their own contributions to this event.

*New food sources and production systems: need for Codex attention and guidance*

CCEXEC82 considered the issue based on inputs from members and observers, noted the breadth of the subject and as a result there would likely be different approaches to addressing such issues in Codex.

Some Codex Texts such as those related to food hygiene and food labelling would already cover a number of issues related to new food, as they currently do for other foods. CCEXEC recognized that ongoing work on this matter in CCEXEC did not preclude committees from undertaking new work falling within their respective mandates. This issue will be further discussed at CCEXEC83 and CAC45 in November 2022.

*The Future of Codex*

Leading up to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary and following the experience during the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to be flexible and resilient for the future, Codex is considering what its future should look like both in terms of working modalities and the type of work it undertakes (e.g., new food sources). Following consultations with Members, a blueprint for the future will be prepared for consideration by CAC 46 in 2023.

*Monitoring the use and impact of Codex standards*

The Codex Secretariat, in collaboration with FAO and WHO evaluation offices, are working on a mechanism to measure the use and impact of Codex standards which will progress in three directions:

- A survey on the use of selected Codex texts and their impact to all Codex members be developed and issued annually
- Work with the WTO Secretariat to explore a collaborative monitoring and reporting framework in which Codex Texts have been highlighted in trade negotiations, SPS, TBT notifications, specific trade concerns, and disputes, but also for disputes that were prevented thanks to Codex texts. The Codex Secretariat approached the SPS Secretary for preliminary talks on potential collaboration. These will continue, also in collaboration with the other standard-setting organizations.
- Tailored case studies to assess the use and impact of specific Codex texts within the context of a Member Country or observer.

CCEXEC82 recognized the benefits and challenges in monitoring the use and impact of Codex texts, and the importance of engagement as the process evolved and of periodic review and endorsed the approach for building the Codex monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, with piloting in 2022 and consideration of preliminary results by CCEXEC83 and CAC45.

Working documents, including the report, of CCEXEC sessions are available on the Codex website:  
<https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/executive-committee/meetings/en/>

Additional information on the monitoring the use and impact of Codex standards:  
<https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/monitoring/tr/>

**Meetings of worldwide commodity committees and regional coordinating committees**

Commodity standards generally refer to product description and essential composition and quality factors to ensure fair practices in trade while protecting consumers against misleading practices. Revisions to labelling provisions for non-retail containers will ensure consistency in the application of these provisions across commodity standards while considering the general guidance provided in the General Standard for the labelling of non-retail containers of foods (CXS 346-2021).

**6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH6, Virtual, 26 September – 3 October 2022)*****International commodity standards***

CCSCH agreed to forward the *Standard for Dried Floral Parts – Saffron*, the *Standard for Dried Seeds – Nutmeg* and the *Standard for Dried Chilli Peppers and Paprika* for final adoption by CAC45.

***Revisions to labelling provisions for non-retail containers in standards for spices and culinary herbs***

CCSCH agreed to forward revised labelling provisions for non-retail containers in the *Standards for black,*

*white, and green peppers* (CXS 326-2017), *cumin* (CXS 327-2017), *Dried Thyme* (CXS 328-2017), *Dried Oregano* (CXS 342-2021), *Dried Roots, Rhizomes and Bulbs: Dried or Dehydrated Ginger* (CXS 343-2021), *Dried Floral Parts: Cloves* (CXS 344-2021), *Dried Basil* (CXS 345-2021) and *Dried or Dehydrated Garlic* (CXS 347-2019) to CAC45 for adoption.

Working documents, including the report, of CCSCH sessions are available on the Codex website:

<https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/committee/related-meetings/en/?committee=CCSCH>

**24<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CAAFRICA24, Virtual, 5 - 9 September 2022)*****Regional Standard for Dried Meat***

CAAFRICA agreed to forward the regional commodity to CAC45 for final adoption.

***Guidelines for developing harmonised food safety legislation for the CCAFRICA region***

CAAFRICA agreed to forward the Guidelines to CAC45 for final adoption and noted the importance of this document for the region.

The Guidelines serve as a basis for development of national or regional food safety legislation and as such provide guidance on the development and/or update of food safety legislation to enable countries of the

region to strengthen their food safety legislation and food control systems as well as develop harmonized policies, standards, and legal frameworks.

***Revisions to labelling provisions for non-retail containers in regional commodity standards developed by CCAFRICA***

CAAFRICA agreed to forward the revised labelling provisions for non-retail containers in the *Regional Standards for Unrefined Shea Butter* (CXS 325R-2017), *Fermented Cooked Cassava Based Products* (CXS 334R-2020) and *Fresh Leaves of Gnetum spp.* (CXS 335R-2020) to CAC45 for adoption.

Working documents, including the report, of CCAFRICA sessions are available on the Codex website:

<https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/codex-regions/africa/about/en/>

**22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia (CCASIA22, Virtual, 12 - 18 October 2022)****Matters for adoption by CAC*****Regional commodity standards***

CCASIA agreed to forward the *regional standard for soybean products fermented with Bacillus species* and the *Regional Standard for Cooked Rice Wrapped in Plant Leaves* for final adoption to CAC45.

***Revisions to labelling provisions for non-retail containers in regional commodity standards developed by CCASIA***

CCASIA agreed to forward the revised labelling provisions for non-retail containers in the *Regional Standards for Gochujang* (CXS 294R-2009), *Fermented Soybean Paste (Asia)* (CXS 298R-2009), *Edible Sago Flour (Asia)* (CXS 301R-2011), *Chilli Sauce* (CXS 306R-2011) and *Laver Products* (CXS 323R-2017) to CAC45 for adoption.

Working documents, including the report, of CCASIA sessions are available on the Codex website:

<https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/codex-regions/ccasia/about/en/>

**FORTHCOMING CODEX MEETINGS OF SPS RELEVANCE (As of October 2022. See the Codex website for the full meeting calendar)**

**CCEXEC and CAC**

- 83<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC83, Virtual, 14 - 18 November 2022)
- 45<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC45, Rome, Italy, 21 November – 13 December 2022 (remote participation will also be possible))

**International committee meetings**

- 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU43, Duesseldorf, Germany, 7 – 10 and 15 March 2023)

**Regional committee meetings**

- 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC22, Virtual, 24 – 28 October 2022)
- 16<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and Southwest Pacific (CCNASWP16, 30 January – 3 February 2023)

*CCLAC and CCNASWP will discuss issues related to the use of Codex standards in the region and other issues important to the region in all Codex committees which may also include TBT related matters.*

Regular updates on the status of work of these Committees are published on their dedicated webpages: [CCLAC22](#), [CCEXEC83](#), [CAC45](#) and [CCNFSDU43](#).

For specific questions on the status of work in Codex committees of interest to SPS delegates please check the dedicated webpages or send an email to [codex@fao.org](mailto:codex@fao.org).

**GENERAL**

The Codex Secretariat in collaboration with Host Country Secretariats are continuing to convene working group meetings and webinars in advance of Codex subsidiary sessions to support delegations' preparations and facilitate discussions and consensus-building. Further information is available on the Committee webpages and the [Codex calendar](#).

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