



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

2 0 1 9

C O D E X

PROTECTING HEALTH, FACILITATING TRADE

The year of food safety

**SETTING STANDARDS
ALL YEAR**

*Speaking the
language of Codex*

**FOOD HYGIENE
THE NEXT 50 YEARS**

Establishing a UN Day

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This publication is now in its third year. It is the Annual Report of the activities of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, Codex Alimentarius.

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Editorial team: *David Massey and Mia Rowan*
Visual Communication: *Cristiana Giovannini*

The year of food safety



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What is Codex Alimentarius?



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he Codex Alimentarius, or “Food Code”, is a collection of standards, guidelines and codes of practice that governments may opt to use to ensure food safety, quality and fair trade. When the standards are followed, consumers can trust the safety and quality of the products they buy and importers can trust that the food they ordered will meet their specifications.

The standards are adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which currently comprises 188 Member Countries and 1 Member Organization (EU) and 229 Observers of which 57 are intergovernmental organizations, 156 non-governmental organizations and 16 United Nations agencies. The Commission, also known as CAC, was established in 1963 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to protect consumer health and promote fair practices in the food trade.



Codex mandate



PROTECT
the health
of consumers



ENSURE
fair practices
in the food
trade

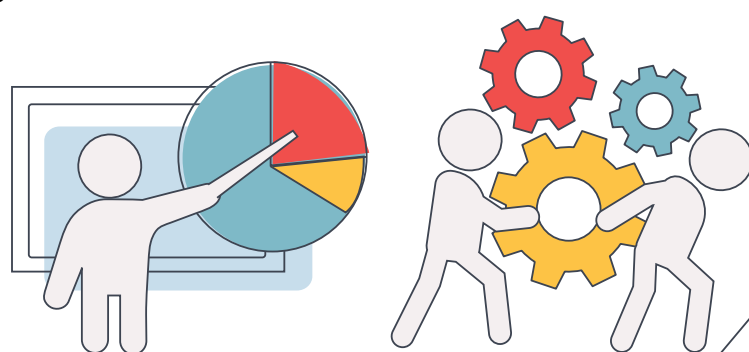


PROMOTE
coordination
of all food
standards

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Collaboration the key to success

Chairperson da Costa underlines the teamwork required throughout the Codex process



The Codex Alimentarius international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice contribute to the safety, quality and fairness of the international food trade.

Whenever Codex disciplines are applied, consumers can trust the safety and quality of the food products they buy and importers can trust that the food they ordered will be in accordance with internationally recognised specifications.

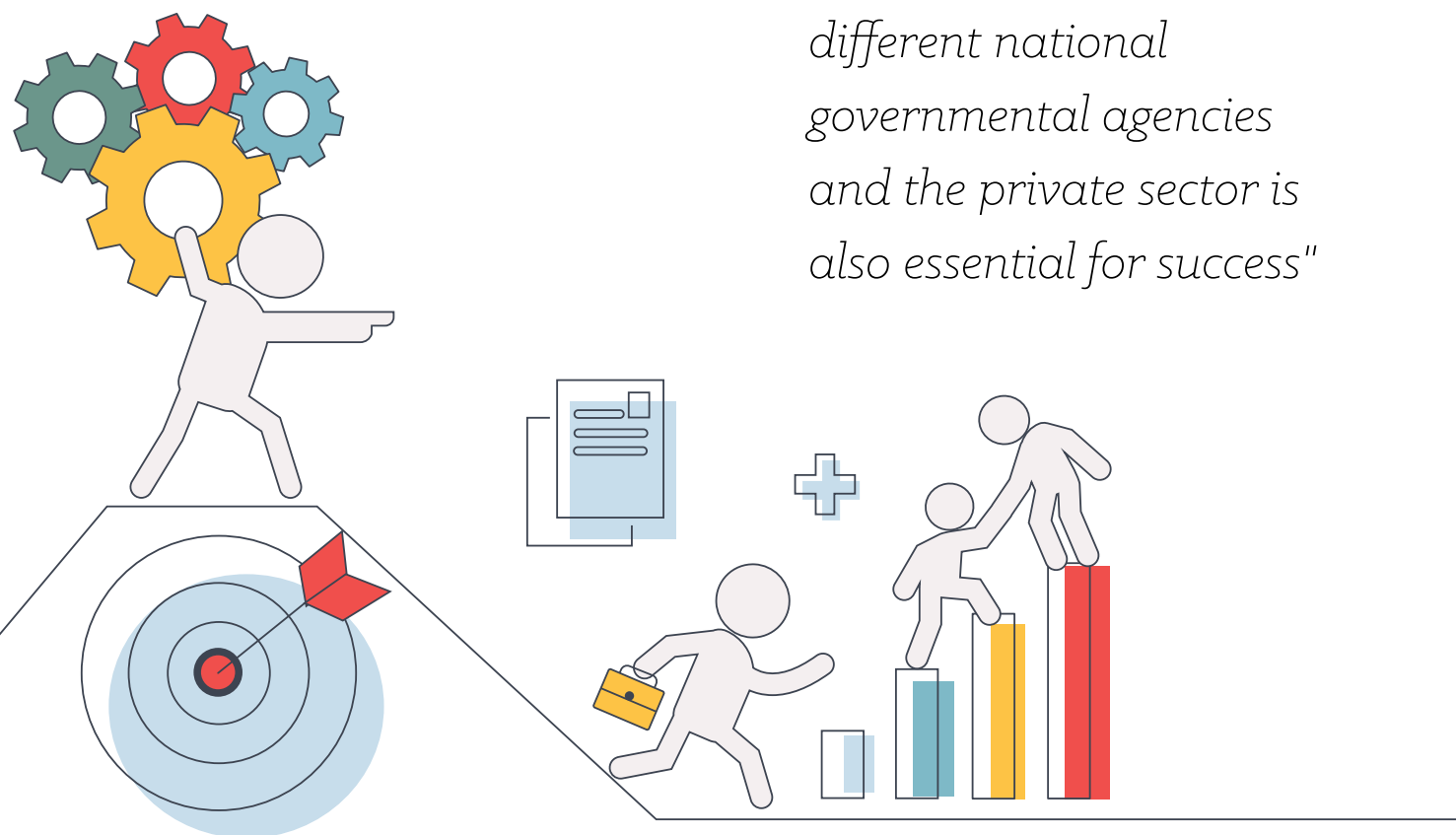
The process of developing Codex standards demands the robust participation of all actors involved in the food production chain. When Member Countries prepare their positions and Delegations meet during Codex Sessions, multilateral negotiations serve to ensure Codex texts can be used in a practical way.

During the Codex standard setting process, which requires the presentation of discussion papers based on science and with a robust trade related element, the collaboration of all actors, e.g. governmental officers, private sector experts, academics, officers



Guilherme da Costa Junior is Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

"Collaboration between different national governmental agencies and the private sector is also essential for success"



from International Organizations, consultants, consumer representatives, private sector associations and legal officers is paramount. This collaboration is a key element for the successful achievement of food safety and fair practices in food trade.

When a Member Country is in a process of harmonizing its national legislation with Codex texts, collaboration between different national governmental agencies and the private sector is also essential for success.

This is also true when Codex texts are actually being implemented. Regardless of whether it is the governmental or the private sector, the implementation process requires collaboration between the different actors.

One phrase that clearly defines the need for collaboration when we are dealing with food safety and Codex issues is "Food Safety, everyone's business".

Therefore, collaboration is a key element in Codex work. Collaboration between actors throughout the food chain, collaboration between International Organisations and all our partners. Indeed, successful Public and Private Partnerships on food safety are always the result of robust collaboration in this area.

The World Food Safety Day established by the United Nations in December last year and celebrated this 7th of June is an international observance which provides a unique opportunity to draw attention to this paramount aspect of our daily lives. To prevent, identify, manage and control foodborne risks is key to guaranteeing safe food for everybody, everywhere as well as to maintaining fair practices in the food trade.

In this context, teamwork is absolutely essential for food safety and for Codex.

Guilherme da Costa Junior

Vice-Chairs

*The challenges and strategies
in a global organization*



Mariam Eid

This year, June 7, has been declared World Food Safety Day. We, the Codex family, feel a deep sense of responsibility to bring Codex to every home, so that the concept of food safety becomes a possibility for every one of us, young or old. From this conviction, the Member States of the Near East, have worked to strengthen the status of Codex in our countries and involve decision makers in Codex life, at the same time strengthening the role of our countries in the Codex Alimentarius because we believe that it represents the future of food safety.

During 2019, we succeeded in making a difference increasing the number of National Codex Committees in countries and training our people about Codex. We have taken part in Codex activities and we still have more to give.

There is no doubt that we face many challenges, but those who follow the principles of science, transparency, consensus and inclusiveness will surely reach a safe haven.

Purwiyatno Hariyadi

Since the last Commission, I have been involved in many Codex meetings and activities. I had opportunities to attend the CCFICS24 in Brisbane, Australia; CCSCH4 in Kerala, India; CCFO26 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; CCGP31 in Bordeaux, France and finally CCCF13 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The contaminants meeting was special for me, because it was co-hosted by Indonesia and my aim was to ensure that as many national Codex stakeholders as possible, especially government officials, could be present. By participating, they learn the Codex process, and hopefully this will help them gain a better understanding and eventually participate more effectively in Codex.

In attending Codex meetings, wherever they may be, my observations are always that Codex is truly a global organization involving many members and observers, all actively communicating, sharing and collaborating to develop standards addressing shared concerns on public health and fair practices in international food trade. As a vice-chair of the Commission, this observation is what motivates me the most. I believe that food safety is a shared responsibility. All actors along the farm-to-fork continuum, including producers, processors, distributors, retailers, and consumers, need to work together towards safer food. With the increasing importance of international trade, the 'farm' and 'fork' may grow ever further apart. This is why, mutual understanding and collaboration between food producing and consuming member countries is essential to strengthen the global supply of safe food for everyone, everywhere.



Photos ©Bob Scott



Steve Wearne

Much of the time I have spent on Codex issues in the past year has been dedicated to the drafting and revision of what I hope will be adopted by CAC42 as our Strategic Plan for 2020-2025. At the outset, I'd like to recognise the valuable input and efforts of the CCEXEC sub-committee and particularly Mariam Eid, its alternate chair, and all the members and observers of Codex who have made comments and suggestions throughout the consultation period that the Secretariat has organised and supported. The intention of the Chair and Vice-Chairs has always been for member countries and regions to feel they own the strategic plan and, with the exceptional level of engagement we have witnessed, I feel we are close to achieving this goal.

Final consultation is still ongoing, but we already have a draft strategic plan whose structure and content is simpler and more straightforward, a clear focus on our vision and mission for Codex, and on our strategic goals and objectives for the next six years. Following adoption of the strategic plan, supporting work plans will be developed and the Regional Co-ordinating Committees will also be invited to develop regional implementation plans. This sense of a living document, whose ownership is shared by all of us, and which is regularly reviewed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, should keep it relevant and useful through the coming years.

A new energy in the Caribbean

Innovation, competition and change will require strong donor support

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fter many years of leading the FAO food safety programme, I have moved to the Caribbean to coordinate FAO's programmes there.

It was my intention, in this article, to reflect on the achievements that so many countries have made in terms of their food safety situations and in making their mark in the Codex decision-making processes. The progress is unquestionable and the Food Safety and Quality Unit at FAO will continue to evolve to provide the assistance that countries need to continue along this path.



Renata Clarke is FAO Sub-regional Coordinator for the Caribbean

After a month in the Caribbean, however, rather than reflect on countries' past achievements I prefer to testify to the new energy that is gathering force to address food safety issues. In many of the Caribbean countries, there is attention at the highest levels being focused on food safety and quality. There is a desire to address a range of public health issues. Countries are working to facilitate access of small-scale food businesses to the tourist market so that the tourist dollar can have wider social impact.

They are building a robust base for regional harmonization in order to support expansion of intra-regional trade. By enabling local producers to better compete on the domestic market countries can reduce staggering food import bills as well as secure niche export markets where opportunities exist.

In the Caribbean, there is a high level of awareness of the need to innovate within agriculture and food systems in general in order to enhance competitiveness while minimizing the environmental footprint.

The Addis and the Geneva International Food Safety Conferences have been important catalysts for thought about embracing change and harnessing new technologies to promote safe and sustainable food systems.

FAO has already for some time been partnering with the Pan American Health Organization and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, on strengthening food safety systems in the Caribbean. Some of you – but unfortunately too few – have been partners in these efforts.

We will be reaching out to you for greater technical and funding support to extend and accelerate our efforts to improve food safety, to address critical issues of nutritional quality and to enable the Caribbean countries to be leaders in the fight against the spread of antimicrobial resistance.

We will be following closely, from afar, the discussions of CAC42. Best wishes from the Caribbean.

Renata Clarke



Scientific advice to Codex, a WHO viewpoint

Expanding the donor base and sharing costs key to sustainability

Scientific advice provided by WHO and FAO to Codex is critical for the development of international standards based on sound science.

Lack of sufficient resources for scientific advice risks constraining the ambitious Codex agenda. Why this situation? Seen from the WHO angle, the root cause of the problem is primarily structural.

First, the founders of Codex conceived in the early 1960s a Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme with Codex as the sole component. They did not include the existing Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) or the newborn Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) in the Joint Programme. Since then, Codex and scientific advice have been managed separately, although the WHO and FAO secretariats have always done their best to coordinate the work programme and match the levels of ambition between the risk assessment bodies and Codex.

Second, WHO is in a particular situation where only 20 percent of the Organization's revenue comes from the Assessed Contribution of the Member States. This does not even allow WHO to cover the full salaries of the existing staff providing the secretariat to the expert groups in food safety (JECFA, JMPR and Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meetings on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA)), not to mention expanding staff capacity or covering the costs of activities (travel of experts etc.)



Kazuaki Miyagishima is Director of Food Safety and Zoonoses, World Health Organization

Third, a number of WHO Member States, including some known donors to WHO, neither speak to food safety in the WHO governing bodies nor provide resources to the food safety programme in WHO, because their health ministry does not have the primary responsibility for food safety. Luckily there are a few exceptions! These exceptions should become numerous, as the WHO panel and the FAO panel of experts have distinct roles in JECFA and JMPR, and both panels need to be well resourced.

“Lack of sufficient resources for scientific advice risks constraining the ambitious Codex agenda.”

The fourth, less structural, and more psychological reason is that many Codex members are so used to receiving scientific advice from WHO and FAO that they have started to take it for granted, as something free, like the air we breathe. In reality, within the current UN environment, every single programme needs to be vigorously justified, supported and promoted in order to continue to exist.

For the time being, the scientific advice in risk assessment provided by WHO is heavily dependent on the financial and in-kind contribution from a handful of donor countries. WHO is very grateful for their support. Awaiting a fundamental solution to the problem of sustainability, it would be good if the donor base were expanded and the cost more equitably shared by Codex members who benefit from the science-based Codex standards.



What's in a Codex Contact Point?

The Turkish experience, interview with *Betul Vazgecer*

Turkey has played a supportive role in the European Region this year, delivering training in Azerbaijan and sharing experiences on building a successful national Codex structure.



Haci Hasan Aydin©123RF.com

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The Turkish Codex Contact Point (CCP) is located in the General Directorate for Food and Control under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF). The Ministry is responsible for all Codex matters and oversees the National Food Codex Commission (NFCC).

How are you organised?

There are 29 sub-committees for each issue related to food or different food groups under the NFCC. All relevant stakeholders including universities, private sector, and consumer associations sit on these committees.

Consultation is important?

Yes. Draft standards are published to encourage the participation of citizens and other interested parties through the Ministry web page. Everyone, including non-nationals, can comment and they have a month to do so. We also notify WTO members in accordance with the SPS and TBT Agreements.

Betul Vazgecer is the Codex Contact Point in Turkey

Did you know?

The Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the "SPS Agreement") entered into force with the establishment of the World Trade Organization on 1 January 1995. It concerns the application of food safety and animal and plant health regulations. Codex texts are the benchmark standards under the agreement.

What about EU harmonisation?

Our own food code is prepared by harmonizing the EU legislation into national legislation. For non-harmonized areas in the EU, if there is a Codex standard, this can be used as a basis for national regulations.

What are your main tasks in the CCP?

We are specifically involved in management and coordination activities across a whole range of areas within Codex, from our functions as the Secretariat to the national committee, to drafting legislation, handling WTO notifications, training food inspectors and overall coordination of national and international Codex responsibilities.

How do you make the CCP work effectively?

We emphasize the importance of using Codex standards in the context of international trade through various platforms and work to ensure active participation in Codex work especially for important product groups in Turkey. Establishing views based on scientific principles for draft standards is another one of our main objectives. The main task of the NFCC is to prepare the Turkish Food Codex and having high-level managers on the committee ensures they are fully aware of Codex work.

What advice would you give to less experienced countries?

First of all, improve your knowledge about the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its work so you can determine national priorities on food safety in international trade. Build an administrative structure that is responsible for preparing food safety legislation; employ the relevant expert personnel; develop the necessary electronic infrastructure and identify specific contact people in the right areas.

It is also important to determine your country's priorities on food safety issues to ensure you participate in the relevant Codex committees together with the regional coordinating committee.



Facing food safety emergencies

A member-driven network is connecting food safety authorities around the world

The FAO/WHO International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), established in 2004, facilitates urgent communication among more than 600 members from 188 FAO and WHO Member States, ensuring rapid sharing of information during food safety emergencies to stop the spread of contaminated food from one country to another.

In January 2019, a study was launched to explore the experiences of INFOSAN members and better understand the role of the network in mitigating the burden of foodborne illness around the world. The study will:

- examine access to and usage of the INFOSAN Community Website
- explore barriers and facilitators to active participation in INFOSAN
- determine perceptions about the utility of INFOSAN to mitigate foodborne illness and
- scrutinize how participation in this network creates value for members.

Data collected to date suggest that a certain group of active members in several Member States contribute much of the information exchanged through the network. For example, 9 (5%) Member States were each involved in 24 or more food safety events communicated through INFOSAN between 2011 and 2017, whereas 123 (65%) Member States were involved in 3 events or less, including 36 (19%) involved in none. These data also demonstrate that although the overall responsiveness of members during emergencies has improved in recent years, impediments to rapid and efficient information sharing may persist for some INFOSAN members.

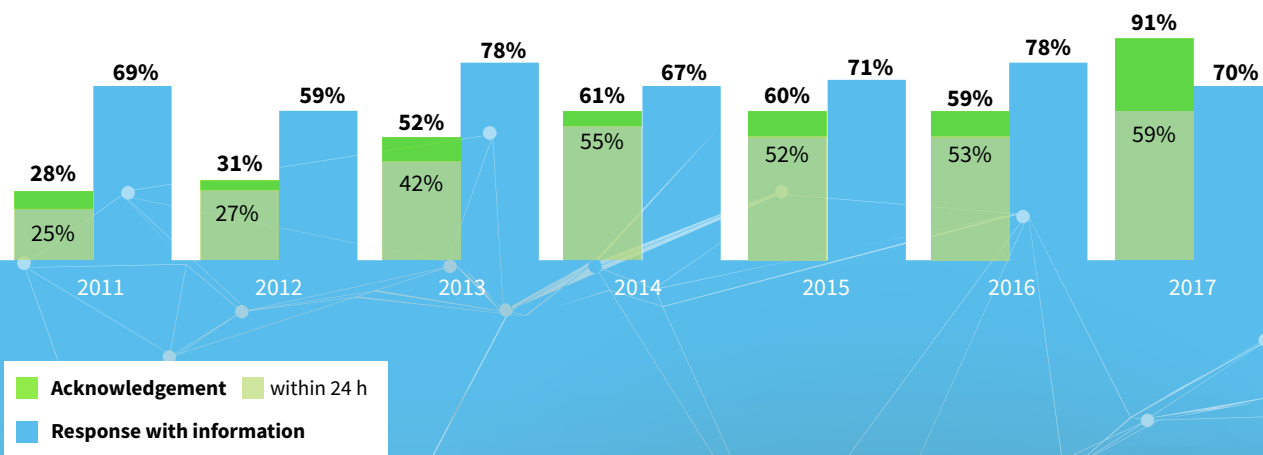
Several potential barriers to active participation in INFOSAN have been hypothesized, but members themselves have not been conferred with on their relative importance. This study will therefore investigate the experiences of INFOSAN members in a rigorous and systematic manner to illuminate the specific areas in which the INFOSAN Secretariat can introduce operational shifts to:

- strengthen the global INFOSAN Community of Practice
- increase the value of INFOSAN among members and
- have a robust and meaningful impact at country level to reduce the burden of foodborne disease globally.

A manuscript providing additional background to this study has recently been published online, titled “The FAO/WHO International Food Safety Authorities Network in Review, 2004–2018: Learning from the Past and Looking to the Future”.



INFOSAN members increased their responsiveness to requests for information from the INFOSAN Secretariat during international food safety events from 2011 to 2017



Both Peter Ben Embarek, Scientist, and Carmen Joseph Savelli, Technical Officer, work in the WHO Food Safety and Zoonosis Department

Enhancing cross-border food safety and security



The World Customs Organization (WCO) and Codex work closely in ensuring the safety of food traded internationally

The WCO is an independent intergovernmental organization whose primary mission is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Customs administrations worldwide. WCO Members, across the globe, collectively process 98 percent of world trade.

The WCO's role in food safety and trade

The WCO develops and maintains a range of instruments, standards and tools covering core Customs procedures related to commodity classification, valuation, rules of origin, compliance and enforcement, trade facilitation and capacity building.

The International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures, the blueprint for modern and efficient Customs procedures, states “When scheduling examinations, priority shall be given to the examination of perishable goods like food to allow their release within shortest possible time.” The Immediate Release Guidelines also provide guidance on the release and clearance of perishable goods.



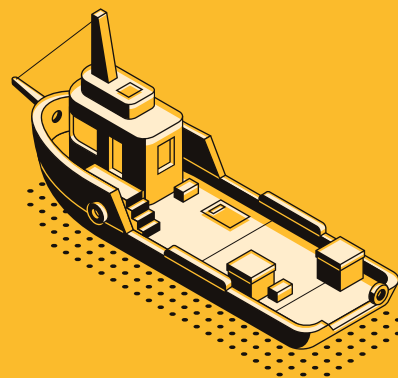
Kunio MIKURIYA is Secretary General of the World Customs Organization

Cooperation between the WCO and Codex

The WCO continues to forge partnerships with a large number of international and regional organizations to strengthen cooperation. It has already signed cooperation agreements with the relevant Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) organizations recognized by the WTO SPS Agreement. Likewise, the WCO will continue working with Codex on matters of common interest. Codex has been invited to be an Observer at relevant WCO meetings, while the WCO participates as an Observer at meetings of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Certification and Inspection (CCFICS).

Codex work of special interest to the WCO

From a coordinated border management perspective, Codex standards can help to improve cooperation between Customs and food safety standard authorities, and enable greater efficiencies in managing trade flows, while maintaining a balance with compliance requirements. With this in mind, the WCO welcomes its Observer status at CCFICS, where it is able to actively contribute to the work of the Committee and its working groups. In this regard, the WCO is contributing to the development of Codex guidance on the use of paperless e-certificates.



Customs Border Patrol Agriculture Specialists search products coming into the U.S. as food products in Cargo



Codex and current trends in food trade

Increasing agri-food trade highlights the need for harmonized standards

Global trade of food products in real terms has doubled over the last 20 years rising to USD 1.6 trillion in 2016. Developing countries have played a very important role in this expansion as exports of agricultural products from low-income countries have grown by over 150 percent since 2002. While, high-income markets remain their primary destinations, the share of agri-food exports in the total exports from low-income countries is very high and accounts for almost 40 percent, despite a decrease during the last two decades.

In terms of specific commodities, low-income countries mainly export vegetable products such as fruits, nuts, coffee and tea, whilst they import cereals, oilseeds and food and beverages. In addition to the important role of agricultural exports in total trade in low-income countries, this suggests a high dependency on the export of just a few agricultural commodities.

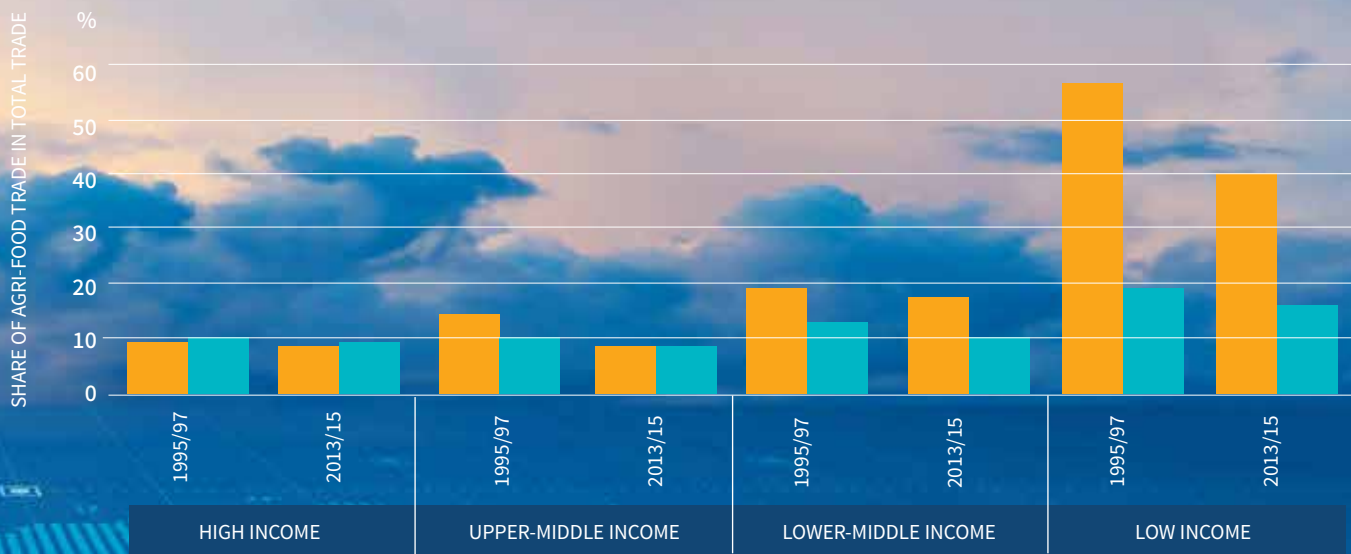
This dependency significantly increases the risk of economic damage in cases of rejection of these products from low-income countries at the borders of importing countries. Indeed, the press very often reports cases of rejections of food products due to non-compliance with food safety standards of the importing country. At the same time, trade concerns are often being raised by WTO members, in the context of the SPS Committee, with regard either to rejections/detentions at the borders or legislation that is considered to be discriminatory and creating obstacles to international trade.

Indeed, while it is of paramount importance to have standards that will ensure healthy populations, it is also fundamental to make sure that these standards are not being used as unnecessary barriers to trade. In this context, Codex Alimentarius standards, based on sound scientific analysis, protect public health, but also ensure fair trade practices.

Georgios Mermigkas (left) and Andrea Zimmermann work in the FAO Trade and Markets Division



Imports vs exports of agri-food products



Source: Trade policy brief N. 23, FAO (2017)

EXPORT
IMPORT

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Building consensus on nutrition

How Nepal depends on Codex standards and scientific research

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tul Upadhyay is a regular delegate at the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU), sits on the National Codex

Commission in Nepal as a nutrition expert and after eight years in government currently works for the Helen Keller Institute, one of the 229 Codex Observers. He is particularly involved in child feeding issues in his home country.

"What I have seen in the last two years is that we all believe in consensus", he said underlining the work of the nutrition committee in general and in striving to reach agreement on challenging areas such as follow-up formula for older infants. Countries like Nepal are often unable to carry out the research necessary to

develop their own standards and guidelines. "Most of our standards are based on Codex documents", said Upadhyay. "We really depend on these texts and seek to contextualize them for the national standards".

This is all the more vital in a country where Upadhyay is concerned about shifts in eating habits and the related nutrition issues, especially a decline in breastfeeding. "The current situation is very concerning regarding exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months as we are not meeting our 80 percent SDG targets and levels are actually declining", he added. Reasons for the decline include the promotion of breastmilk substitutes and the rise in levels of disposable income, which is encouraging mothers to use formula milk, a sign of affluence for some.



© FAO/Chris Steele-Parkins

“After six months, complimentary feeding practices have also been displaced by unhealthy snack food, particularly with instant noodles and biscuits which are very cheap and convenient”, said Upadhyay. This is true in urban settings but also now in rural settings where the government is trying to redress the issue through various nutrition intervention programs.

The diverse sectors that come together at the nutrition committee ensure a broad exchange of views. Similarly, the 2018 Codex workshops on the strategic plan encouraged the widest possible participation and Upadhyay strongly supports such initiatives.

“What we did at the Asian regional workshop in Beijing was a great example of how Codex should be moving forward even in the nutrition sector”, he said.



Atul Upadhyay works with Helen Keller International



Did you know?

Founded in 1915, Helen Keller International is dedicated to saving and improving the sight and lives of the world's vulnerable by combating the causes and consequences of blindness, poor health and malnutrition. www.hki.org

©FAO/J. Maita



Setting standards all year

Tom Heilandt, Codex Secretary reports on 2018-2019 where food safety has been everyone's business

If you take a look towards the back of this publication you will find a list of meetings and a list of standards. As *lists* they don't perhaps say much but they represent a year of excellence, a year of commitment and a year where experts, scientists, policy makers and consumers have contributed to ensuring that what we eat is safe and can be traded fairly. This has also been a year when the future of food safety has very much been on the global agenda at the first FAO / WHO / AU International Food Safety Conference that was held in Addis Ababa in February 2019 and the International Forum on Food Safety and Trade in Geneva in April 2019.





I am very proud to chair the committee that used innovative webinar technology for the first time. Such technologies have great potential.

Fran Freeman | CCFICS



We produce products that are not only relevant, but also practical and applicable for the international community.

Emilio Esteban | CCFH



We continued to discuss compositional and labelling requirements for follow-up formula for older infants and a similar product for young children whose name is still to be identified.

Anja Brönstrup | CCNFSDU

Both events confirmed the importance of the work that we all are doing together, also highlighted by the inaugural World Food Safety Day on 7 June.

The Codex Alimentarius Commission is the international body where the world comes together to agree on the standards that build trust in the safety of our food. Since the last Commission, many Codex committees have advanced their work and started important new projects.

The Codex year began in Australia with CCFICS working on global issues such as voluntary Third Party Assurance programmes, paperless use of electronic certificates, recognition and maintenance of equivalence of national food control systems, and the complex issue of food fraud, a major threat to our modern and complex food chain.

CCFH was co-hosted in Panama marking 50 sessions since experts gathered in Washington DC, in 1964 to begin building consensus on how to avoid or minimize microbiological contamination of food which remains one of the major causes of foodborne diseases. CCFH is also updating its major weapon against such contamination: HACCP and also addressing new issues such as food allergens.

CCNFSDU met in my home country Germany, continuing complex discussions on follow-up formula and other special foods as well as on nutrient reference values and “biofortification”.

The final meeting of 2018, TFAMR met in Korea. In the words of its Chair, Professor Park, the Antimicrobial-Resistance-clock is ticking and the global community needs to take concrete actions based on harmonized practices and AMR surveillance systems to contain foodborne AMR.

CCSCH kicked off 2019 in India and advanced six draft standards (four spices and two culinary herbs), one to final adoption. CCSCH also continued discussions on the task of grouping of spices and culinary herbs, and aligned some of the standards to the group format with a view to ease developing of group standards at its future sessions.

February took us to CCFO in Malaysia celebrating 10 years of hosting the Committee. I salute the outgoing chair Noraini Dato’ Mohd Othman for Malaysia’s expert leadership in tackling issues very much in the public domain, including discussions on the revision of the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils to include almond oil, flaxseed (linseed) oil, pistachio oil, hazelnut oil and walnut oil; as well as palm oil with a higher content of oleic acid.

CCGP, our General Principles committee with a new French team has successfully re-started sessions to look at procedural issues and help us in finding ways forward to work more online while staying true to our principles of inclusiveness and transparency – something the CCPFV on processed fruits and vegetables committee has continued to explore with its work this year.

CCFA, held in China has developed hundreds of food additive provisions in the last year. By applying a new mechanism utilizing preparatory work by observers, CCFA completed alignment work for 23 commodity standards, which broke previous records! A batch of new food additives which have been evaluated by JECFA as safe for use is now entering the step process. I also applaud the ability of delegates to find consensus on replacement notes to note 161.

Staying in China, CCPR continued setting safe residue limits for pesticides and the Chairperson of the committee reminded me of the importance of science and technology as we help countries design their food safety policies through Codex.

Codex work also becomes part of steps being taken to reach targets under the Sustainable Development Goals. Standards build trust in a complex world and the prudent use of pesticides or food additives in line with relevant standards and regulations has been amazingly beneficial to get closer to feeding the world adequately.



TFAMR has narrowed down unpredictable areas and come closer to agreement. The difficult conversations are now ongoing both physically and electronically.

Yong Ho Park | TFAMR



Attempting elaboration of group standards is challenging but I am confident we will be in a position to take up work on more commodities in future sessions.

MR Sudharshan | CCSC



©FAO/Marco Longari

Did you know?

Note 161 of the *General Standard for Food Additives* (CXS 192-2005) explains how a specific additive is subject to national legislation of the importing country aimed in particular, at consistency with Section 3.2 of the Preamble. The intent of having this note in the standard was to make clear that national authorities could require further restrictions within their jurisdiction on the use of sweeteners to ensure this use would not mislead the consumer, has advantages, and is technologically justified.

Ref. ALINORM 07/30/12, paras. 102 – 103



The work of CCFO will remain relevant and challenging, due to increasing demand for healthier fats and oils and the need to ensure their authenticity.

Noraini Dato' Mohd Othman | CCFO

CCPFV has continued to rely on cost-effective electronic working groups to prepare and draft revisions and new standards for Committee consideration.

Richard Boyd | CCPFV



Delegates drafted a stimulating agenda for the committee with a view to helping the whole of Codex use new working tools in the most appropriate way.

Jean-Luc Angot | CCGP

Another co-hosted session this year was the CCCF, which met in Indonesia. They concluded discussions on timely topics such as unregulated chemicals present in food, providing valuable guidance to governments on how to perform an indicative risk assessment and mitigation practices to reduce contamination in refined oils and food products made with refined oils. CCCF also set MLs for important contaminant-commodity combinations such as lead in various commodities and cadmium in certain categories of chocolates.

CCFL met in Canada in May and made a lot of progress on the guidance for labelling of non-retail containers; other ongoing work is on principles for front of pack labelling as it is not only the availability and safety of food that preoccupies members but also the question of how to help consumers compose a healthy diet, internet sales/e-commerce and allergen labelling. Future work may include alcohol and multipack labelling, innovation in food labelling and the use of the term “high-in”.



The last committee of this cycle, CCMAS, met in Hungary in May. Their Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CXS 234-1999) provide the basis for the fair application of many Codex standards. I am delighted to acknowledge the contributions of Brazil and Uruguay and that of the Codex Secretariat for initiating and coordinating development of the preamble, structure for this text and the future development of a database for methods and sampling plans to improve its usability for our members. CCMAS is one of our centers of excellence in cooperating with other standards development organizations on whose work we rely and I acknowledge the efforts made by the United States of America on a new approach for common rules by which we will all work together on the review of methods.

This is a very subjective selection of the work going on in Codex. A lot of other important work takes place, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the tireless efforts of our Chairperson and Vice-Chairs of the Commission, all Chairs of Committees and working groups, delegates, host secretariats, scientific experts and colleagues in the Codex Secretariat and in FAO and WHO for the work that allows us to develop the standards that are the core of our work and our mandate.



Countries are working together to identify the justification on sweeteners and significant consensus has been reached on their use (the famous “note 161” in GSFA).

Fanyong Xiang | CCFA



We are refining risk analysis principles to fit the diverse realities around the elaboration of maximum residue limits, challenging ourselves to strive for a higher level of consensus through compromise.

Xiongwu Qiao | CCPR



Co-hosting for us is a means to bring Codex and everything it stands for closer to the different regions in the world.

Wieke Tas | CCCF

This year I would also like to recognize the extensive efforts made to reach out to our membership on the development of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 with a view to adoption at CAC42, under the leadership of the CCEXEC subcommittee and with the support of the Regional Coordinators. The high level of engagement underlines the strong interest of our Members and Observers to ensure that Codex remains fit for purpose.

The Secretariat has also carried out substantive work on reviewing issues that you asked us to look into last year to continue improving how Codex works – inside and in cooperation with others. Many of these issues require careful analysis and I look forward to interesting discussions and decisions in Geneva.

I hope there will be time to meet as many delegates as possible at CAC42 and that the “lists” become adopted Codex standards that continue to protect the health of consumers and ensure a level playing field for food trade.



Photos ©FAO/Bob Scott



Perhaps most noteworthy is the progress made on the guidance on the labelling of non-retail containers. CCFL45 discussed this for the first time in plenary and great progress was made.

Kathy Twardek | CCFL



We made very good progress on the revision of the guideline on Measurement Uncertainty and important work on restructuring Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling.

Attila Nagy | CCMAS

The next 50 years of food hygiene

Guiding efforts to keep food safe from microbiological contamination along a changing supply chain

They say hindsight is 20/20. As we approach calendar year 2020, the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) will hold its 51st session. This is a good moment to reflect on our successes and learn from our mistakes, so we can look forward to the next 50 years.

When the first CCFH convened in 1964, only nine countries participated. The 50th session of CCFH, held in Panama last year, included 56 Member countries, one Member organization and 13 Observer organizations. In the past 50 years, international trade in food has increased exponentially in terms of volume, value and variety. Codex has contributed significantly to ensuring that growth in trade doesn't negatively impact food safety for consumers and promotes fair practices in trade. Codex standards provide the harmonized, science-based approaches needed to ensure that foods are safe to eat, accurately labeled, and of standard quality to the benefit of consumers worldwide.



Emilio Esteban, Chief Scientist in the US Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service, serves as the CCFH Chairperson





The terms of reference for CCFH include the simplest of all charges: to draft basic provisions on food hygiene applicable to all food. Over the course of time we have covered a myriad of challenges such as incorporating hygiene measures across the food chain, underpinning Codex standards with a risk-based approach, responding to emerging issues, and addressing microbiological and non-microbial hazards. Always faithful to the Codex principles, decision-making based on science, aided by decision-making tools crafted to serve the globally relevant interests and economic and technological realities of all Member countries, regardless of the size of their economies.

So, what can we expect for the next 50 years? Significant challenges are evident. Our physical environment is constantly evolving, the world population has expanded by billions, and previously unimagined food items are now a reality. Through modern communication, everyone on the planet experiences life in real-time and food commodities are forever expanding and immediately available. Technology is portable, wireless connectivity available in remote areas, and consumers are more educated than ever. The world

food production of the future includes concepts for vertical farming within cities, self-sustaining production facilities run by energy derived from organic waste material, gene editing for production of customized food, nanotechnology used for disinfection/decontamination, next generation hydroponics for soil-less farming, and food printers. Remember those television shows where one could manufacture dinner on demand? We are not far from that.

To remain relevant, the Codex family needs to remain engaged, flexible and proactive. The era of taking five or six years to develop a standard or guideline are past. The number of physical meetings will be reduced in favour of tele-meetings. The traditional structure of commodity-type committees may need to be reconsidered in favour of a horizontal structure that reflects production technologies (gene-edited, engineered food), rather than a commodity-based (fruits, spices, meat) assembly.

I see very exciting times ahead. Shall we just react to the new world or are we ready to lead?



Photos ©Freepik.com



Speaking the language of Codex

Delivering training to ensure fluency on Codex tools and to ensure buy-in to the Strategic Plan

The series of Regional Technical Workshops for National Codex Contact Points continued after CAC41 with meetings in India, Vanuatu, China and Kazakhstan.

The workshops in India and Vanuatu supported staff from national Codex systems to work within the Codex international standard-setting environment. This was through the use of electronic tools, such as the new Codex website; the Online Commenting System; and the Digital platform for Electronic Working Groups.



In China, work focused on the next Codex Strategic Plan (2020-2025), bringing together in Beijing 31 participants from 14 countries. Discussions on national and regional food safety and trade matters lead to planning what countries see as the goals, objectives and activities that require their maximum attention over the next five years.

The Codex Secretariat delivered an ambitious three-day programme in Almaty, Kazakhstan which combined training on the webtools and a discussion on the Strategic Plan especially aimed at 16 countries from the Balkans, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The Codex Secretariat also organizes regular training courses for Chairpersons and the 2019 session in Bordeaux, France was particularly timely as upcoming meetings will see eight new chairs and co-chairs leading sessions for the first time. The workshop was enhanced by the presence of members of the Executive Committee, which allowed for discussions to take place on the critical review of Codex standards.



NEW DELHI
India

5-6 SEPTEMBER 2018
 **14**
 **30**



PORT VILA
Vanuatu

28-30 OCTOBER 2018
 **22**
 **11**



BEIJING
China

1-2 NOVEMBER 2018
 **31**
 **14**



	Participants
	Countries



ALMATY
Kazakhstan

7-9 NOVEMBER 2018
👤 42 🚩 16



BORDEAUX
France

16-17 MARCH 2018
👤 27 🚩 20



ROME
Italy

19 DECEMBER 2018
👤 20 🚩 14

Just before the end of 2018 there was also a final opportunity for members of the Executive Committee to meet, build on the workshops held in China and Kazakhstan and discussions in Panama at the Food Labelling Committee, and finalize the draft text of the new Strategic Plan. In a creative environment where dialogue and listening were equally prized, the group was able to push ahead together and worked with enthusiasm and commitment to find consensus.

The extremely practical and creative nature of the workshops will impact directly on the operational capacity of countries to work within the standard-setting process. Enhanced familiarity and confidence with how systems operate and contributions to strategic planning can translate directly into building stronger national Codex systems – a major step in achieving effective participation in Codex.





INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
PLANT HEALTH

2020

**PROTECTING PLANTS,
PROTECTING LIFE**

Representing the world of flavourings

Observing Codex involves engaging, from the perspective of the International Organization of the Flavor Industry (IOFI)

F

ounded in 1969, IOFI is the association representing the industry that creates, produces and sells flavourings worldwide.

Through its membership composed of sixteen national / regional associations – representing hundreds of SMEs – and ten global flavour companies, IOFI covers approximately 85 percent of the global flavour business.

IOFI's mission is to advance the global trade of safe, responsibly produced flavourings that respect the environment and enrich the lives of consumers.

The IOFI Science Programme

One of the driving principles of IOFI is to ensure the safe use of flavouring ingredients globally. Central to achieving this goal is the IOFI science programme, which is guided by a fundamental strategic objective: Lead a consistent global approach for the safety assessment of flavouring ingredients based on sound science.



IOFI conducts scientific studies to assess the safety of ingredients for their intended use as flavourings, and regularly submits such testing results to regulatory and safety assessment bodies around the world, such as JECFA.

Hence, since the inception of the JECFA flavouring evaluation programme back in 1995, IOFI has consistently contributed safety data and related information in response to the various JECFA calls for data. So far, this has resulted in the completion of the safety evaluation of over 2 250 flavouring substances that are in global commerce.

Collaborating with Codex

With official Observer status at the UN WHO/FAO Codex Alimentarius Commission, IOFI is providing its expertise on flavouring matters since its first attendance at the 8th Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants (CCFAC) Session in October 1970. This includes, for example, guidance on flavour definitions, use of additives in the production of compounded flavourings and appropriate analytical methods.

IOFI was an active observer in the CCFAC and continues that engagement in the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA), which very soon after its creation in 2007 completed the development of Guidelines for the Use of Flavourings (CAC/GL 66-2008).

IOFI participates in Codex discussions to foster global standards and guidelines that contribute to public health and promote regulatory convergence around the globe.

Looking ahead

In 2019 IOFI celebrates its 50th anniversary. Building on this foundation, IOFI continues to be the voice of a vibrant global flavour industry that connects flavourings with the people who enjoy them every day around the world.

Thierry Cachet (left) is a Regulatory and Advocacy Director at IOFI



What are flavourings?

Flavourings serve one primary purpose: they provide taste and make food and drinks enjoyable. They are added in a large variety of processed foods such as soft drinks, dairy and confectionery products, snacks, as well as in non-food applications such as oral care products and pharmaceuticals.

Flavourings can help balance natural seasonal or geographical variations in crops, as well as balance the taste profiles of processed and stored foods as the demand for foods and beverages with less sugar, fat or salt increases. Flavourings can help improve consumers' experiences of these 'lite' products.



Establishing a UN day

Costa Rica reveals its strategy for amassing global support to create a World Food Safety Day

For several years we have tried to make the work of the Codex Alimentarius more visible in Costa Rica. So when Awilo Ochieng, the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) Chairperson at the time, mentioned that there should be a World Food Safety Day, we thought it was an excellent idea. Food safety is a concern and a need throughout the world. However, for it to be a reality, we knew that a country should assume the responsibility of leading it or the idea would not transcend.

At an interregional meeting among Codex friends in Washington in 2015, we made a presentation that included establishing a World Food Safety Day. From the beginning we were determined. We spoke with colleagues from the CCLAC region and took the issue to different forums. When CAC supported our proposal in June 2016, the hard work began. A sense of excitement and satisfaction was building, but also a sense of commitment. We had deadlines and a process to follow, which involved going through FAO, WHO and the UN. Although Codex Member countries are represented in all of them, greater coordination would be needed.



San José, Rome, Geneva and New York work together

Collaboration and continuous dialogue were key to our success. More than political will, we drew on human will, given our shared belief that food safety is important as it affects health, nutrition and trade. In July 2017, we worked together to present the proposal at a side event of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York. Drafting the actual resolution was coordinated by our Mission to the UN, who worked with our capital and Mission to FAO to define the technical content. After the resolution was presented to the Second Committee Bureau, we held bilateral sessions with several countries. Once the negotiations started, we served as a facilitator, receiving language proposals and modifications. The resolution was first adopted by the Second Committee, then by the General Assembly in December 2018.

As you can imagine, bringing such a proposal to the UN is not easy. It was important to secure international support and the truth is, without the help of our diplomatic missions, this would not have been possible. The support of the Codex Alimentarius Secretariat was also essential. Meeting people who have become good friends is a additional gift.

Celebrating food safety

Since 2017, we have been celebrating "National Food Safety Week" in Costa Rica, with various Ministries, academia, industry and consumers taking part. This year we are planning to address topics such as risk analysis in countries with scarce resources like ours, safety management systems in hospitals and food services or places where food is prepared in large quantities and good practices in the preparation of artisanal cheeses, which will include aspects of innovation.

We believe that World Food Safety Day will have global impact on the way that food is produced and consumed by making people aware of the consequences that contaminated food can have. We hope this year's activities can catapult the relevance of food safety and its urgency to help achieve the SDGs.

1. Victoria Hernández, Minister of Economy, Industry and Commerce, since May 8, 2018 **2.** Geannina Dinarte Romero, former Minister of Economy, Industry and Commerce, until May 7, 2018 **3.** Ambassador Marco Vinicio Vargas **4.** Pablo Innecken, Member of the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations in FAO **5.** Luis Carlos Ceciliano, advisor, Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations in FAO **6.** Isabel Cristina Araya, Former Codex Contact Point of Costa Rica, until June 2017 **7.** Melina Flores, Tatiana Cruz y Amanda Lasso, Codex Costa Rica Team 2016-2019





List of Members

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- Angola
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
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- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bhutan
- Bolivia (Plurinational State of)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Brunei Darussalam
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cabo Verde
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Cook Islands
- Costa Rica
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Denmark
- Djibouti
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
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- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Eswatini (Kingdom of)
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- Fiji
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- Gambia
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- Germany
- Ghana
- Greece
- Grenada
- Guatemala
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
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- India
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- Japan
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- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Lao People's Democratic Republic



- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Libya
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Malta
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Micronesia (Federated States of)
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Namibia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
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- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Qatar
- Republic of Korea
- Republic of Moldova
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- Rwanda
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Samoa
- San Marino
- Sao Tome and Principe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Switzerland
- Syrian Arab Republic
- Tajikistan
- Thailand
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United Republic of Tanzania
- United States of America
- Uruguay
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
- Viet Nam
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

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Funding Standards

Six different sources make up the Codex budget

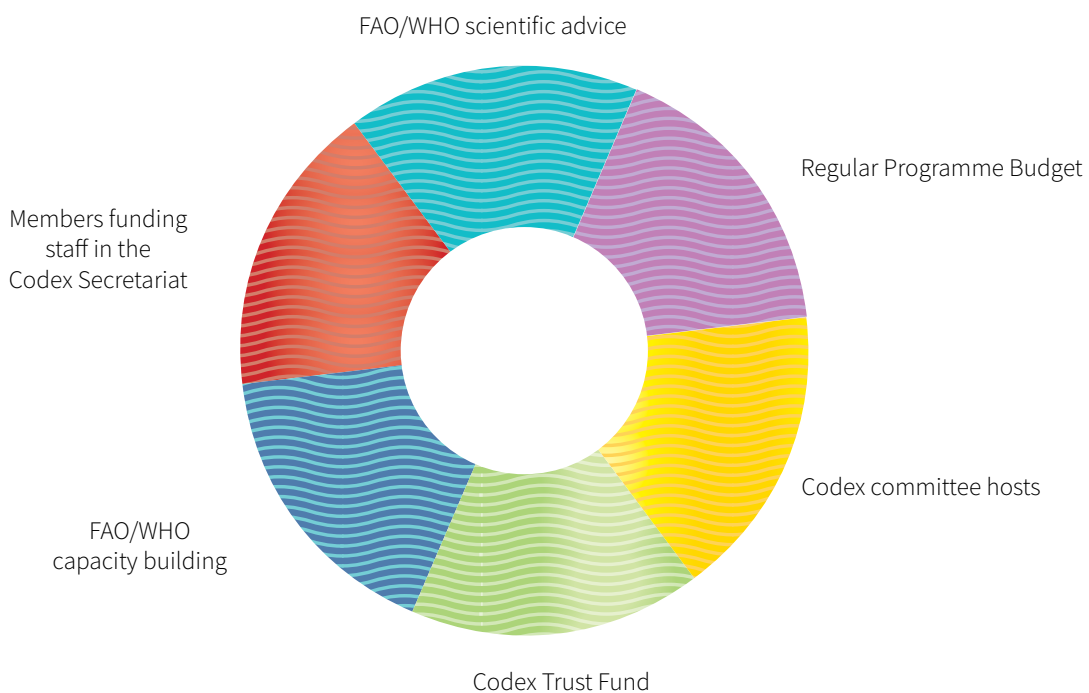


he Codex system is funded by the regular programme budgets of FAO and WHO and through a series of additional sources. These include in-kind contributions from Member

Countries who host Codex Committees, Task Forces and their working groups and the provision of scientific advice from experts of FAO and WHO.

The parent organizations also fund capacity building projects and events related to Codex at national and regional levels, while individual Codex Members provide extra-budgetary funding of staff in the Codex Secretariat either as seconded officers, or through schemes such as the Associate Professional Officer and loaned experts programmes.

As of 31 December 2018 the level of expenditure was USD 4.262 million out of a total 2018-2019 biennium budget of USD 8.831 million (Regular Programme Budget).



List of standards proposed for adoption at CAC42



Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF)

- Proposed draft revised MLs for lead in selected commodities in the *General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed* (CXS 193-1995)
- Proposed draft ML for cadmium for chocolates containing or declaring <30% total cocoa solids on a dry matter basis
- Draft Code of practice for the reduction of 3-monochloropropane-1,2-diol esters (3-MCPDEs) and glycidyl esters (GEs) in refined oils and food products made with refined oils
- Draft Guidelines for rapid risk analysis following instances of detection of contaminants in food where there is no regulatory level



Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes (CCCPL)

- Two draft sections in the standard for quinoa



Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)

- Proposed draft *Specifications for the Identity and Purity of Food Additives* arising from the 86th JECFA meeting
- Draft and proposed draft food additive provisions of the *General Standard for Food Additives* (GSFA) (CXS 192-1995)
- Revision of the *Class Names and the International Numbering System for Food Additives* (CXG 36-1989) (Proposed draft)
- Revised food-additive provisions of the GSFA in relation to the alignment of the thirteen standards for milk and milk products (ripened cheese), two standards for sugars, two standards for natural mineral waters, three standards for cereals, pulses and legumes and three standards for vegetable proteins
- Revised food-additive provisions of the GSFA in relation to the alignment of provisions for ascorbyl esters (ascorbyl palmitate (INS 304) and ascorbyl stearate (INS 305)) and the Standards for Infant Formula and Formula for Special Dietary Purposes Intended for Infants (CXS 72-1981) and Follow-up Formula (CXS 156-1987)
- Revised food-additive provisions of the GSFA in relation to the replacement notes to Note 161
- Insertion of a footnote to the table entitled "References to Commodity Standards for GSFA Table 3 Additives"

- Revised food-additive sections of the thirteen standards for milk and milk products (ripened cheese), i.e. Standards for Cheddar (CXS 263-1966); Danbo (CXS 264-1966); Edam (CXS 265-1966); Gouda (CXS 266-1966); Havarti (CXS 267-1966); Samsø (CXS 268-1966); Emmental (CXS 269-1967); Tilsiter (CXS 270-1968); Saint-Paulin (CXS 271-1968); Provolone (CXS 272-1968); Coulommiers (CXS 274-1969); Camembert (CXS 276-1973); and Brie (CXS 277-1973)
- Revised food-additive sections of the two standards for sugars and two standards for natural mineral waters, i.e. Standards for Honey (CXS 12-1981); and Sugars (CXS 212-1999) and Standards for Natural mineral waters (CXS 108-1981); and Bottled/packaged drinking waters (other than natural mineral waters) (CXS 227-2001)
- Revised food-additive sections of the three standards for cereals, pulses and legumes and three standards for vegetable proteins, i.e. Standards for Wheat flour (CXS 152-1985); Couscous (CXS 202-1995); and Instant noodles (CXS 249-2006); and Wheat protein products including wheat gluten (CXS 163-1987); Vegetable protein products (VPP) (CXS 174-1989); and Soy protein products (CXS 175-1989)
- The revised table on “Justified use” in food additive section in the *Standard for Mozzarella* (CXS 262-2006)



Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH)

- Alignment of the *Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products* (CXC 52-2003) with Histamine Control Guidance



Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO)

- Proposed draft revision to the *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils* (CXS 210-1999): Addition of Palm Oil with a higher content of Oleic Acid (OXG)

- Proposed draft revision to the *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils* (CXS 210-1999): Inclusion of Almond oil, Flaxseed (linseed) oil; Hazelnut oil; Pistachio oil; and Walnut oil
- Various amendments to align CXS 210-1999 with the current trade practices for commodities such as palm oil and rice bran oil
- Amendment to the food additives sections in CXS 19-1981; CXS 210-1999; CXS 211-1999 and CXS 256-2007



Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS)

- Methods of analysis / performance criteria for provisions in Codex standards
- Preamble and document structure for the *General Standard on Methods of Analysis and Sampling* (CXS 234-1999)



Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR)

- MRLs for different combinations of pesticide/ commodity(ies) for food and feed proposed by adoption by CCPR49
- Revision of the *Classification of Food and Feed* (CXM 4-1989): Miscellaneous commodities not meeting the criteria for crop grouping



Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH)

- Proposed draft standard for dried or dehydrated garlic

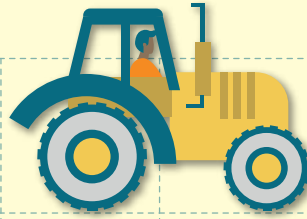
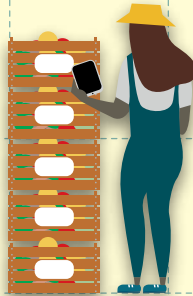
The Codex scorecard

Numbers of Codex Standards, guidelines and codes of practice by subject matter as of July 2018 after the 41st Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

78
Guidelines



53
Codes of Practice



223
Standards

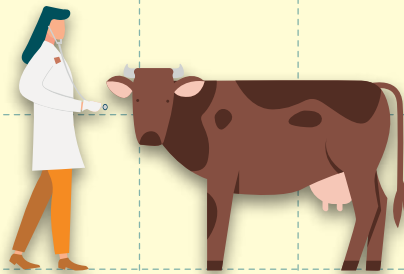
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11

General standards

212

Commodity standards



632
Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for residues of veterinary drugs in foods

covering

66

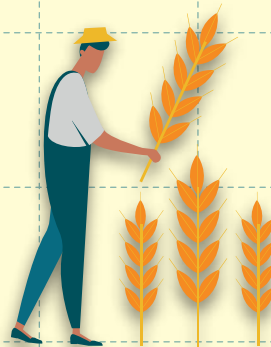
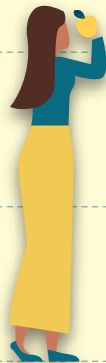
veterinary drugs
Risk Management
Recommendations (RMRs)
for 13 veterinary drugs

111
Maximum Levels (MLs) for contaminants in food

covering

18

contaminants



4 514
MLs

covering

291

food additives or groups
of food additives



5 437
Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs)

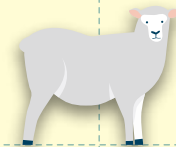
and 63 EMRLs^[1]

for pesticide residues


covering

229

Pesticides




^[1] residues arising from environmental sources



This publication showcases the steps the Codex Alimentarius has taken from July 2018 (CAC41) to July 2019 (CAC42) on the road to safe and quality food for everyone.

Over the course of the year, Codex committees met to discuss updates to the international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice. The “food code’s” governing body, known as the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), makes decisions on the committees’ proposals during its annual meeting in July.

Through an array of magazine-style articles, “Codex” shares the viewpoints and contributions of the diverse partnership, which includes 188 Member Countries and the European Union as well as over 220 Observers.



Since 1963, the Codex system has evolved in an open, transparent and inclusive way to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in the food trade. Codex has developed hundreds of internationally recognized standards, guidelines and codes as well as defined thousands of permitted levels of additives, contaminants and chemical residues in food. Its success lies in working together, building consensus and making decisions based on science.

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