



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

2 0 2 1
C O D E X

PROTECTING HEALTH, FACILITATING TRADE



A year of virtual reality

**A TEAM
TO RECKON
WITH**

**A VIRTUAL
YEAR OF REAL
ACHIEVEMENT**

**HOW DID
CODEX SCORE
ON VIRTUAL?**

Required citation:

FAO and WHO. 2021. *Codex – A year of virtual reality*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb7565en>

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ISBN 978-92-5-135295-3 [FAO]

ISBN 978-92-4-004007-6 [WHO electronic version]

ISBN 978-92-4-004008-3 [WHO print version]

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In-kind contributions

The Codex Alimentarius Commission thanks the following Member Countries for their contributions as hosts of Codex committees that took place in the period from CAC43 (September-November 2020) to CAC44 (November 2021).

Australia

Canada

China

France

Hungary

India

Malaysia

Netherlands

Norway

Republic of Korea

United States of America

Acknowledgements

CODEX is the Annual Report of the activities of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, Codex Alimentarius. This is the fifth year of publication in this format.

The editors would like to thank all contributors to the publication including Member Countries and Observer Organizations, Codex Chairpersons and Host Secretariats, colleagues in FAO and WHO and in the Codex Secretariat.

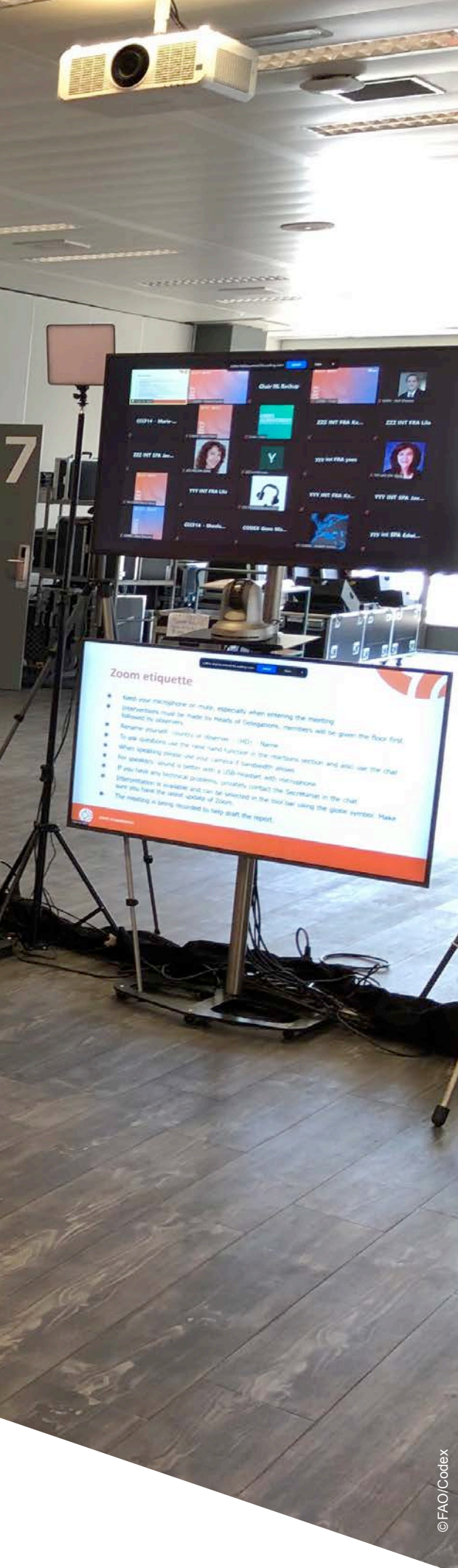
We also gratefully acknowledge the contributions of the photographers, videographers and communications teams in FAO and WHO and in Host Governments for their contributions to this publication.

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Visual Communication:

Acosta Design Lab



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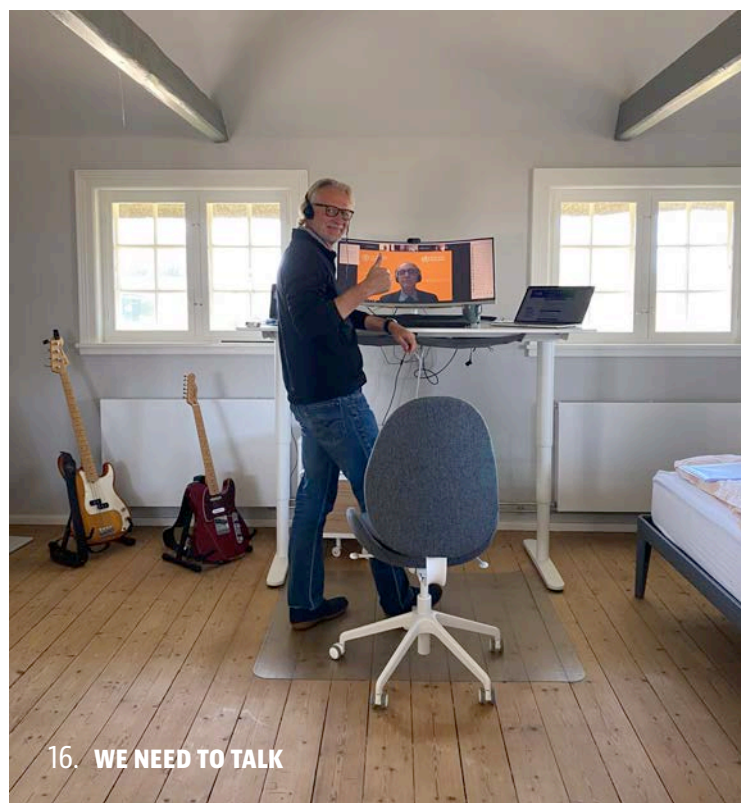
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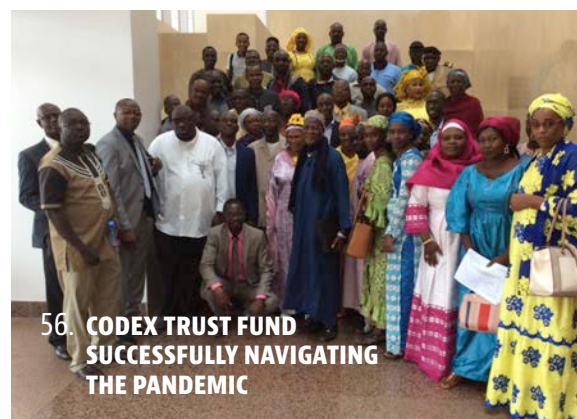
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WHAT IS THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS?

The Codex Alimentarius, or “Food Code”, is a collection of standards, guidelines and codes of practice developed by consensus and based on the most robust up-to-date science available. Codex texts are not mandatory but governments frequently use them as the basis for national legislation to ensure food safety, quality and fair practices in food trade. Since 1963, Codex has developed hundreds of internationally recognized standards, guidelines and codes. It has defined thousands of permitted levels of additives, contaminants and chemical residues in food. The end goal: ensure food is safe for everyone, everywhere. Codex texts are an important reference point for the dispute settlement mechanism at the World Trade Organization.

The standards are adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which currently comprises 188 Member Countries and 1 Member Organization (The European Union) and 240 Observers of which 60 are intergovernmental organizations, 164 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.

DID YOU KNOW?



The image shows the cover of the book 'Understanding Codex', Fifth Edition. The cover is colorful and features various food items like carrots, lemons, tomatoes, and a bowl of soup. It also includes the logos of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The title 'UNDERSTANDING CODEX' is prominently displayed in the center, with 'FIFTH EDITION' above it and 'CODEX ALIMENTARIUS' written vertically on the right side.

Understanding Codex is an excellent introduction to the world of Codex and international food safety standard setting for everyone. Currently available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS MANDATE



PROTECT
the health
of consumers



ENSURE
fair practices
in food trade

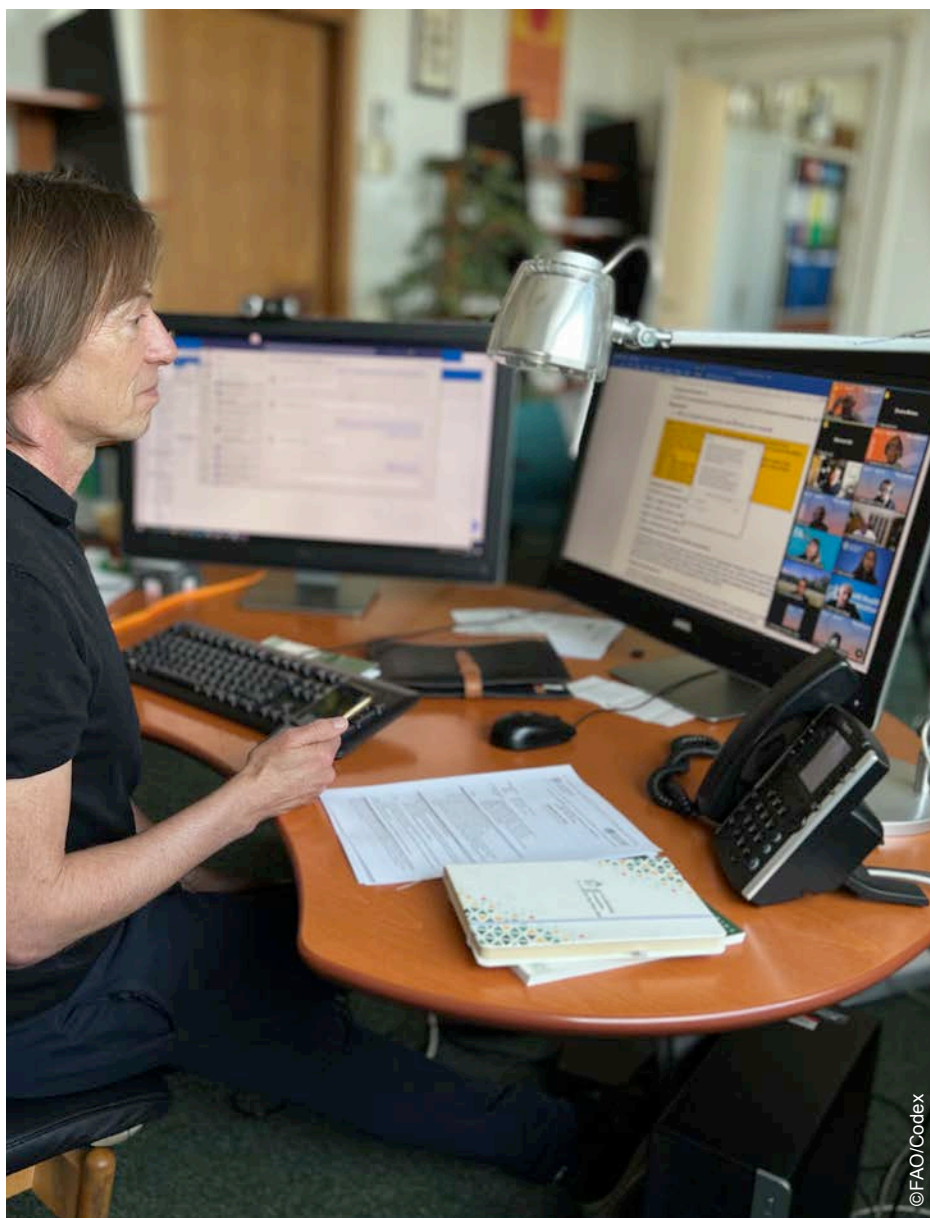


PROMOTE
coordination of all
food standards work



A YEAR OF VIRTUAL REALITY

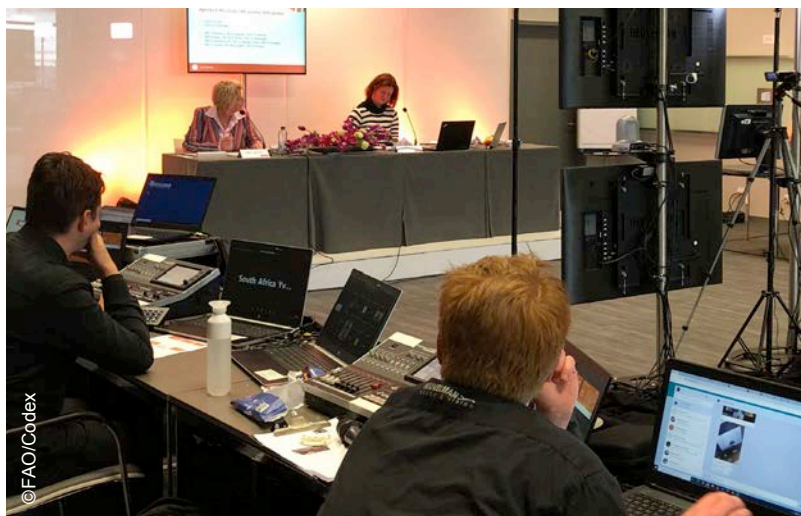
Welcome to our annual review highlighting what has happened in Codex since the last Commission which ended in November 2020.



The Codex Secretariat has revolutionized the way meetings are managed and introduced new ways to bring experts and Codex delegations together to exploit the additional time meeting cancellations gave us and prepare for the new virtual sessions. We report on the 12 bodies that did meet and the two that are still to convene.

Guilherme Da Costa, Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Vice Chairpersons have been serving for over four years since their appointment at CAC40 in July 2017. Read their final reviews as they step down ahead of elections which will take place in Geneva during CAC44.

Operating virtually has provided opportunities and challenges. We investigate how Codex has performed and ask what the road ahead may look like.



The parent organizations FAO and WHO look at the big picture for food safety and experts from their scientific advice programmes discuss how they have coped having shifted their detailed technical discussions online.

The regional coordinators continue to play a leading role in supporting the strategic goals of Codex and in a new section they bring examples of how Codex standards are being employed in different parts of the world.

This digital edition describes a year of virtual reality where an international food safety standard-setting body achieved so much - moving forward without travelling.



Working virtually has been the reality for Codex Secretary Tom Heilandt and for the Codex Trust Fund (p6) Bhutan, as well as for meetings and Members across the Codex family (p7 clockwise: Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Paraguay, United Kingdom).

AN HONOUR TO SERVE AS CHAIR



©FAO/Codex

“Codex never stops. It cannot. Food is a commodity like no other.”

GUILHERME DA COSTA JUNIOR,
Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

The 44th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission is our second virtual meeting as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has made it impossible to convene physically.

Following the historical CAC43 which took place thanks to endorsement given by more than two-thirds of Members our meeting this year has also been made possible based on a membership agreement to suspend certain Rules of Procedure and endorsement of the proposal to conduct elections by secret ballot through in-person voting in Geneva.

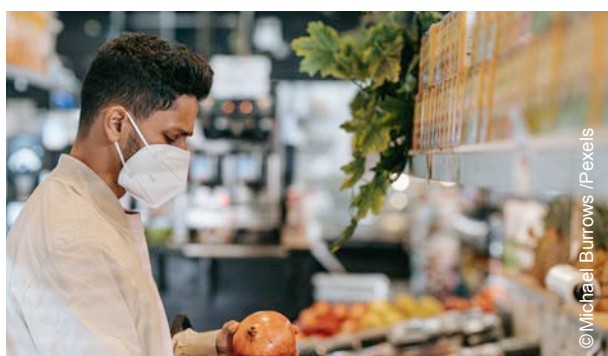
Codex never stops. It cannot. Food is a commodity like no other. But what challenges will Codex face in the future to remain the preeminent, science-based international food safety and quality standard-setting body?

Since 2017, I have had the honour of chairing the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Since we look over these last four years, we can see the new challenges Codex has been facing and the results and improvements the organization has achieved.

“It is essential to highlight the role countries can play in ensuring all people have access to enough affordable, nutritious and safe food.”



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We need to guarantee that Codex continues to be member-driven. It is essential to highlight the role countries can play in ensuring all people have access to enough affordable, nutritious and safe food while adopting a science-based approach in diverse areas impacting food systems. In this context, our Strategic Plan 2020-2025 is an incredible deliverable to pave the way for Codex. Or rather, “where the world comes together to create food safety and quality standards to protect everyone everywhere.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has left no country untouched. It still presents an era-defining challenge to public health and the global economy. Its consequences, short- and long-term alike, are still little understood. I would like to extend my sincere condolences to all those who have lived through challenging days during this pandemic.

The Codex family has demonstrated tremendous maturity, union, collaboration and resilience during these difficult times. We can see this behaviour through the successful results of the first-ever Executive Committee, CAC and most of the Codex Committees' virtual meetings and their achievements.

This CAC session is the fourth and last Codex Alimentarius Commission session that I have the honour of chairing. In this remarkable moment for me, I would like to express my warmest thanks to all Codex Members, Observers, my fellow Vice Chairpersons, the Chairpersons and Secretariats of all Codex Committees, the Codex Secretary and his entire team, the FAO and the WHO for all the support received during these four years and four months of intense and pleasant work. I am looking forward to us achieving our best Commission session ever together as a team!



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ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

“Codex has managed to enhance its resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.”



**PURWIYATNO HARIYADI,
Vice Chairperson**

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many disruptions in various aspects of life, including the way Codex runs its business. Managing change is always very challenging. However, it turns out that some of these changes can also produce positive results. The establishment of a new means for conducting Codex meetings, for example, has opened more opportunities for Members and Observers to participate in meetings. As a result, there has been an increase in participation, which also means Codex is able to reach more audiences. I myself have been able to attend more Codex meetings than I did before the pandemic.

Codex has succeeded in developing good online discussion methods, while still upholding its core values. This achievement is attributed to all members of the Codex family, who innovatively ensure that Codex remains agile and effective in carrying out its mandate, develops standards to protect consumer health and facilitates fair practices in the food trade. Ensuring Codex executes its mandate is even more important during a pandemic, where ensuring the availability of safe and good food, and fair global food trade are critical components of a COVID-19 mitigation strategy.

Witnessing all the changes that occurred during the pandemic, I increasingly understand, appreciate, and believe that all members of the Codex family share the same passion, and uphold the same core values, to come together to create food safety and quality standards to protect everyone everywhere.

MARIAM EID, Vice Chairperson

The period since the last Commission has been exceptional in every respect but full of achievements. The most important is that Codex has managed to enhance its resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, and Codex Alimentarius committees have continued to discuss updates to international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice that meet the needs of Member Countries and respond to emergencies.

The involvement of the seven regions of the world in Codex strategic planning 2020-2025 has underlined the leading role of Codex in driving international food standard setting. Indeed, having served both as regional coordinator and as a vice chairperson I firmly believe that one of the strengths of Codex lies in listening to the concerns of countries with very differing needs and ensuring that Codex solutions meet their needs equitably.

A huge number of pre-meetings, webinars, informal meetings and expert working group sessions were organized to assist committees in achieving their agendas. I recognize the great collective effort between the Codex Secretariat, Chair and

Vice Chairs, Chairs of committees, hosting countries and delegates to make this happen. But I also recognize that we miss meeting each other in person.

During my tenure as Vice Chair of the Commission, I have learned from the experiences of Codex Members, I have understood that consensus can change the face of the world. I would take this opportunity to invite the world to follow the example of Codex Alimentarius and to dismiss conflicts and war.

I hope we have left a good mark in the history of Codex Alimentarius, which has occupied a part of our lives.

Thank you to everyone who has participated to maintain Codex work to ensure safe and efficient food supply chains.



“The establishment of a new means for conducting Codex meetings has opened more opportunities...”



STEVE WEARNE, Vice Chairperson

Looking back over my previous contributions to this magazine, I am struck by how much has changed. Of course the pandemic has changed the world we live in, perhaps for ever, and has challenged governments, the food system and Codex. Last year, I hailed the achievement of our switch to virtual meetings and we are now preparing for our second virtual Commission, where we will hopefully agree to adopt a range of standards and new work proposals from each of the bodies that will have met since February. That is a huge achievement.

But that is not the only change. In 2019, I wrote of my hopes that CAC42 would adopt the draft Strategic Plan 2020-2025. It did, and despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic there has been a wide range of activity from all

Codex actors that has moved us significantly towards the goals we agreed for Codex. I hope this year that CAC44 will recognize, endorse and celebrate these achievements.

And back in 2018, in my first contribution, I talked about maintaining momentum in our work on countering antimicrobial resistance and I am thrilled that TFAMR has completed its work on time and recommended two texts for adoption by CAC44.

So, for our rapid adaptation to our virtual environment, the delivery of our Strategic Plan, and the advancement of key texts, I'm taking this opportunity to recognize the work and efforts of everyone in the Codex family – members, observers, host country secretariats and chairpersons, and our Codex Secretariat.

“There has been a wide range of activity from all Codex actors that has moved us significantly towards the goals we agreed for Codex.”

LEADING AN AMAZING TEAM



TOM HEILANDT,
Codex Secretary

2021 was a special year and the vision, voiced in late 2020, to not move or cancel any more Codex meetings was easier said than done! So my review of 2021 has to begin with expressing thanks to the team in the Codex Secretariat.

We have had to reinvent what it means to work globally - whether it be the officers establishing innovative mechanisms to keep standard setting on track or colleagues building IT systems and supporting the host secretariats. I feel we have performed courageously, tirelessly and delivered a functioning prototype for days to come.

Every single person in the team contributed to make the ambitious goal of a full year of virtual Codex reality.

The Chairperson and Vice Chairpersons have also had to extend their commitment well beyond what they could have imagined. Right from their election in 2017, they became more involved than ever, forming a core team with the Secretariat, and I am sure the new officers will continue in the same vein.

However, our efforts have come at a price. It is difficult to imagine that the Codex Secretariat can maintain this number of annual meetings indefinitely as the support to virtual meetings takes more time if we want to deliver high-quality meetings. I see no other remedy but to limit the number of meetings to around one per month.

In the longer term, I believe, we need to fundamentally rethink the way we work, our committee structure and meeting schedule considering the new possibilities at our disposal. We have had amazing success with electronic working groups preparing texts that could then be moved forward by virtual committees. I invite bold and brave ideas from the wider Codex community, the Chairpersons and the host governments to explore ways of operating in 2022 and beyond.

“Every single person in the team contributed to make the ambitious goal of a full year of virtual Codex reality.”

There is value in working face-to-face, whether to thrash out a workable solution in the margins of plenary, discuss technical issues in-depth with top experts or build the Codex community by introducing new blood.

But we have also opened the door to a new breed of meeting, where specialists can take part as required with zero travel and environmental cost. Many more countries, many more people have participated in our virtual meetings, giving new meaning to transparency and inclusivity.

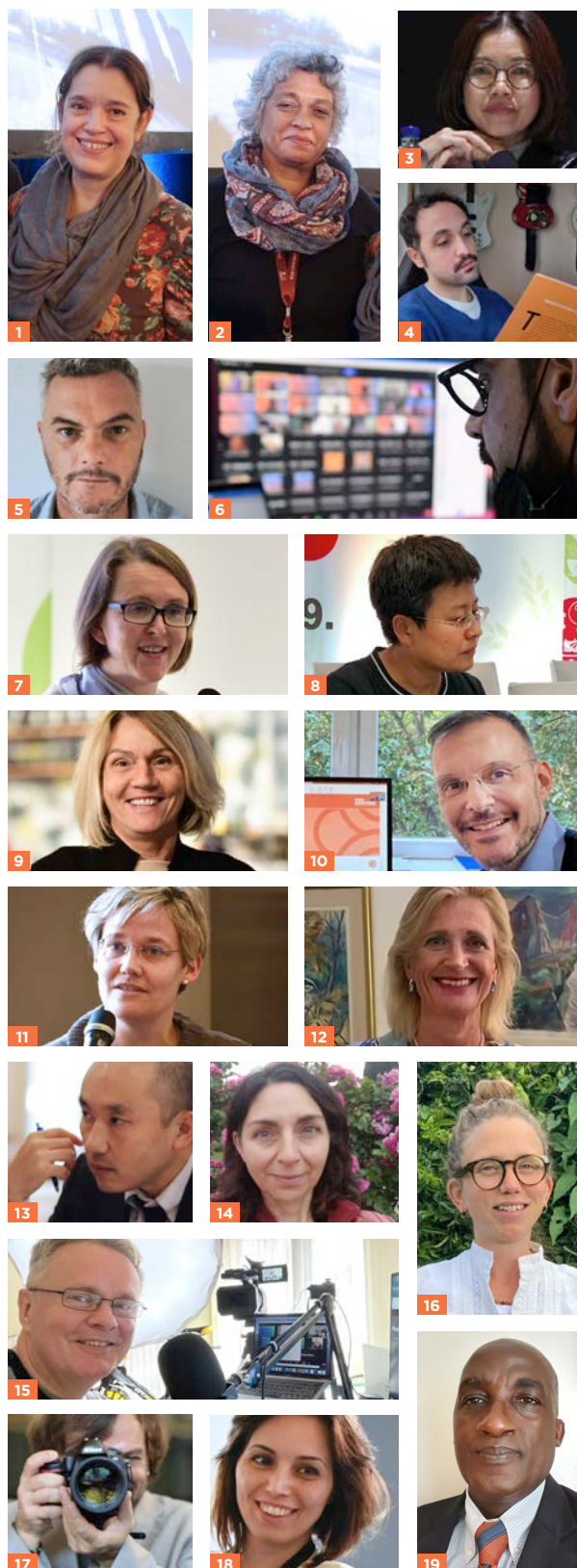
I know that I would not be able to live with the idea of closing the door again to those who may not be able or wish to travel. Travel will remain more difficult and expensive. We will have to prioritize what should be physical, what should be virtual and what could be hybrid.

Eighteen months ago - I was not able to organize an audio-conference with the Chairperson and the Vice Chairs without technical glitches.

Today thousands have participated in our online meetings, successfully setting standards.

Eighteen months from now - I am sure the technical means we have will be even better, but I still hope and would much prefer to meet all of you in person for the 60th anniversary of Codex.

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Codex Secretariat:

Gracia Brisco (1), Sarah Cahill (7), Verna Carolissen (2), Myoengsin Choi (3), Robert Damiano (6), Giuseppe Di Chiera (4), Peter Di Tommaso (5), Farid ElHaffar (10), Jocelyne Farruggia (9), Hilde Kruse (12), Florence Martin De Martino (11), Goro Maruno (13), David Massey (15), Elaine Raheer (16), Natalia Rodríguez Hidalgo (14), Roberto Sciotti (17), Patrick Sekitoleko (19), Ilaria Tarquinio (18), Lingping Zhang (8).



SCIENCE IN A VIRTUAL WORLD



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Ian Dewhurst is a retired civil servant from the United Kingdom and Michael Doherty is a residue chemistry expert from the United States of America. They spoke about their work on the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR), one of the joint FAO/WHO expert groups that provides scientific advice to Codex.

What is your role in JMPR?

ID This year, I chaired the WHO group and I reviewed one of the compounds under evaluation. I also helped prepare some of the texts in response to the Codex concern forms. I enjoy attending JMPR and I particularly enjoy the level of scientific discussion that is there.

MD I serve as an independent, expert committee member on the FAO panel to the JMPR. I evaluate data that may lead to the JMPR making recommendations to the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues for maximum residue levels of pesticide compounds and metabolites in food and feed.

How did meeting virtually impact JMPR's work?

ID We had some experience of virtual last year when we did some background presentation and discussion. So, a lot of what we evaluated this year had already been moved into a reasonably good position. But you do tend to lose the spontaneity. The control within the meeting was as good as I've ever seen, with people raising their hands, not just jumping in - but the in-depth scientific discussion was difficult.

MD One of the biggest challenges we have faced with virtual meetings is the vastly reduced time available for discussion. One of the new ways of working was to set up small teams of experts, spanning fewer time zones, in order to go through the draft documents, identify issues and to begin to form consensus conclusions. We also did a lot more pre-planning by video conference. We have also understood the importance of small side meetings, which are impossible in the virtual environment.

How much of a risk is there that you will deliver less output only working virtually?

ID There's no risk: it's an absolute certainty. It's a foregone conclusion. I think we delivered something like 50 percent less. We agreed that we would ensure the quality of what came out would match what had gone previously. And if anything had to slip, it would be the quantity.

MD Having completed two virtual meetings, I can say with confidence that working only in a virtual format will result in less output. In addition to the reduced working hours, we have found that virtual meetings are not as efficient as in-person meetings. That said, we are able to accomplish some of the work in a virtual environment and meeting virtually is better than not meeting at all.

What is it about in-depth face-to-face discussions on these technical topics that cannot be replicated in a virtual environment?

ID I think virtual meetings offer limited possibilities. With pesticides, we look for patterns across several studies and the easy way to do that is for three or four people to sit around a table with printouts from those studies so everybody can discuss it. There's no way you can do that in a virtual meeting. I also think it's much quicker, much easier to get into the detail when people can leave the main meeting room and just have five or ten minutes between themselves. Sadly, with the pesticide assessments, it's very rare that we get one that's straightforward.

MD There are aspects of basic in-person communication—facial expressions, body language, and the like—that help to make for more efficient discussions. Also, being able to pick up a piece of paper or your laptop and take it to someone and have a conversation is also often better than having to direct people to this sentence on that page of a particular file. The ability to really focus on the technical topics for long periods of time really aids progress, and that is something we cannot replicate in a virtual meeting due to time-zone differences, language, technology issues or competing priorities.

What advantages, if any, have you seen in virtual working?

ID I can only see benefits in working virtually on preliminary discussions. For the formal meeting, if a participant had domestic commitments that precluded them from travelling, or if an expert was to contribute on one specific point only, for example, then virtual might be a benefit. As for this year, virtual has meant we could forward some work to Codex, albeit less than desired. It has been a good stopgap.

MD Reviewing and editing documents is easier with advances in document sharing brought about by remote working. This means documents are in better shape and conclusions are well-supported for consensus building within the full group during the actual meeting. Furthermore, as we saw with this year's meeting, if an extra day or two is needed to finish work, it is easy to set up additional meeting time—something that would be nearly impossible for an in-person meeting.

What do you see happening in the near future regarding this work?

ID We will meet physically in Rome next year. If any participants are under travel restrictions, then they might have to attend virtually.

MD There are strategies, like more frequent pre-meeting planning and the use of the small teams, that I will be promoting in my role as FAO Chair. But I truly hope the next meeting is in person.

All the expert bodies that provide scientific advice reported similar experiences and concerns. The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meetings on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA) and the ad hoc groups all look forward to returning to work face-to-face as soon as possible (Ed).

WE NEED TO TALK

“These new tools give us new possibilities; we need to agree on how to best use them”

Tom Heilandt, Codex Secretary

Codex has completed an entire virtual year, with 11 technical and commodity committees and one task force meeting to advance work and forward proposals to the second fully virtual Codex Alimentarius Commission meeting, CAC44. The virtual scenario made beginners of everyone: delegates, committee secretariats and the Codex Secretariat itself all had to adapt to a new working landscape of technical glitches, shortened sessions, more succinct interventions and an explicit understanding now that “silence is agreement”. We’ve shown we can make it work. But is virtual the sustainable option?

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Meeting surveys are a great way to comment on what is working, what is not and to share your own ideas.

We’d love to hear from you directly too – either through your contact point or via codex@fao.org



Jens Therkel Jensen, Denmark at CAC43

“

I haven't seen any problem in virtual communication that has become impossible to overcome.

Leonardo Viega, Uruguay

I have the comfort of working where the wind is blowing and no hassle with visa applications.

Nar Diene, Senegal

No long-haul flights, no jet lag and a chance for team participation are some of the advantages of virtual meetings.

Pisan Pongsapitch, Thailand

It's become more democratic in many ways because it allows people to participate who wouldn't otherwise participate.

Carel du Marchie Sarvaas,
HealthforAnimals

Virtual allows more and therefore more specifically qualified delegates to attend for any one country and diversity of thought is what makes really good standards and guidelines.

Kathy Tardew, Canada

For physical meetings, many spend just a couple of weeks beforehand preparing positions and becoming familiar with documents and then a week in China focusing on the session, but for virtual sessions, you might take much more time on document-studying.

Fan Yongxiang, China

There are opportunities for countries that would otherwise not be able to come to the meetings because of travel limitations or they're not equipped to send some of their valued governmental staff, then Member Countries will have this opportunity to attend should they wish. But they definitely need some help with the special protocols and procedures that happen in Codex in order to feel confident to speak.

Alison Fleet, UNICEF

Right now, we're riding on the in-person meetings that we've had in the past. But what happens when the personnel changes? What happens when memories fade?

Scott Tipps,
National Health Federation

This is a consensus organization, so you want new people, new faces more people actively involved ... but the odds of solving hard problems are better if people are face to face.

Fran Freeman, Australia

IDF welcomes the swift shift to virtual meetings of Codex committees to ensure progress and development of standardization work. Working virtually is challenging and requires more preparation, but it also allows for wider participation and engagement. However, IDF does look forward to renewing relationships once we can meet in person again!

Aurélie Dubois-Lozier,
International Dairy Federation

The advantage of the virtual format is much greater participation from different SDOs, while time zones and connectivity issues create their own disadvantages.

Richard Cantrill,
Food Ingredients
Expert Committee, USP

Delegations that were active in physical sessions have increased their number of stakeholders in specific meetings, which suggests they were previously limited in how many they could send to physical meetings. Some Members might think it's easy to participate in the virtual sessions because you just switch on the computer and log on.

Hakim Mufumbiro, Uganda

I strongly agree with the view that a hybrid meeting is not necessarily the best way to go at this time. We don't want a situation of having a 'first among equals' in terms of people who can participate in the meetings physically as opposed to those who can't.

Usha Sriram-Prasad, Australia

Unfortunately, as Codex committee agendas get fuller and fuller, often discussion has to be very limited because there's only so much time, and with virtual it's going to be even harder.

Jane Badham,
Helen Keller International

It is crucial at some point to have in-person discussions to build relationships more strongly.

Steve Havlik,
Institute of Food Technologists

”

FAO MEETING FUTURE CHALLENGES AND VIRTUAL REALITY?

©FAO/Codex



VITTORIO FATTORI, MARKUS LIPP and MARIA XIPSITI, FAO

As readers of the CAC44 Magazine are aware, 2021 was yet another year where most of our interactions and, in fact, most of our work, fully played out in virtual settings. This is true not only of the Codex sessions but also of the meetings that generated the scientific advice requested by Codex committees.

The Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), the Joint Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA), the Joint Expert Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) as well as ad hoc expert meetings on allergens and on nutrient requirements all met on several occasions in virtual mode this year.

FAO and WHO are extremely grateful for the ongoing commitment of the experts to the scientific advice programme and express our gratitude for the tremendous efforts made. In particular, the Joint FAO/WHO Secretariat greatly appreciates the flexibility of all experts to accommodate the virtual work modalities and scheduled meeting times that were inconvenient for many.

Read what the experts themselves said on pages 14-15.



New food sources and production systems

Beyond these virtual challenges, however, FAO continues to develop exciting new initiatives in the food safety arena. One of the food system innovations shaping our agri-food landscape is “new food sources and production systems” (NFSPS). In relation to this, FAO has been working recently on food safety aspects of edible insects; ([Looking at edible insects from a food safety perspective. Challenges and opportunities for the sector](#)) and will soon publish a report on food safety and regulatory aspects of seaweed called *Food safety in seaweed: current status and future perspectives*.



© Viktorija

The expansion of research by the burgeoning NFSPS sector and the growing interest among consumers currently outpaces the development of the harmonized regulatory frameworks needed to govern such areas. To safeguard the health of consumers globally and keep Codex standards current, it is important to address these emerging issues and innovations and facilitate the development of appropriate guidance at the international level.



Challenges and opportunities for the sector



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Trans Fatty Acids

Any reduction in the consumption of trans fatty acids (TFA) may help decrease the risk of coronary heart disease. This issue was first introduced to Codex at the 38th session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL) in 2010, as a project document describing planned work on the establishment of claims for sugars, salt/sodium and TFA. The Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) was then asked to develop proposed conditions for a "free of" TFA claim, but suspended work due to

concerns regarding the use of available methods to accurately assess TFA content in foods at the proposed levels. The Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO) was informed, and this year has agreed to explore possible work to reduce TFAs or eliminate partially hydrogenated oils. Accelerated actions are needed by all Member States to achieve the WHO-declared global goal of eliminating industrially produced TFAs by 2023, and FAO is looking forward to collaborating with Codex as this work develops.



WHO GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR FOOD SAFETY



CHENG LIANG
and **LILIYA SMIALKOVA, WHO**

The ongoing virtual reality did not halt progress on the update of the WHO Global Strategy for Food Safety. This year, the WHO Secretariat successfully organized two virtual meetings with food safety experts from all over the world and these two meetings informed the first draft of the strategy with five interlinked and mutually supportive strategic priorities focusing on: national food controls; emerging risks; data and science; stakeholder engagement and communication, and safe

food trade. By implementing this strategy, national governments will be able to strengthen their food safety systems with fundamental infrastructures and eventually aim for forward-looking, data-driven, people-centered, and cost-effective systems. One of the biggest milestones is that this strategy also proposes global targets not only to increase the accountability of the strategy but also to stimulate action and political commitment to food safety.

“One of the highlights ... is the importance of international cooperation in food safety.”



© Yann Forget - Wikimedia Commons

One of the highlights within the updated strategy, which is also welcomed by Member States and the international community is the importance of international cooperation in food safety. The strategy will also unite all stakeholders with concerted actions towards the mitigation of current and future food safety risks under a One Health and a food systems approach. WHO will continue engaging with Member States, partners and sister agencies

before and beyond the expected endorsement of the strategy by the seventy-fifth World Health Assembly in May 2022. Hopefully by that time, we can celebrate the birth of the new strategy face-to-face, together with the world.



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THE TECHNICIANS WHO PROVIDED A LOCKDOWN MIRACLE TO KEEP FAO FUNCTIONING



SERGIO FERRARO

Sergio Ferraro is Deputy Director of Governing Bodies Servicing which provides the Secretariat of the Conference and the Council, and supports all Governing and Statutory Bodies of FAO with multilingualism expertise and protocol services.

When the pandemic hit, the first thing we did was to ensure that all our staff were safe and could work, so what we did was to arrange for remote working, ensuring that everybody had a computer and could work from home. We then investigated solutions for remote interpretation, how we could continue to provide the service in a situation where we cannot meet physically. We found that, in fact, FAO had recently adopted Zoom as a meeting tool, and although it had an interpretation function it didn't suit the way we work where the relay between languages - when English, for example goes first through French and then into Arabic - is essential for interpreting discussions. We found that for full meetings we needed the interpreters to be here in the building.

So, we negotiated special conditions for having the interpreters back in FAO. The main condition was that they had to work in individual booths and when they entered the building, they couldn't meet each other, so they had to socially distance. We had to double the number of interpretation booths: for six languages we need fourteen interpreters.

I am proud of the technicians because they were the first ones in Europe to work the miracle of providing the feed from Zoom and supplying the interpreted audio in six languages just as in a face-to-face meeting. After a few months, we were contacted by other organizations like the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), WHO and the United Nations headquarters, asking us how we managed to achieve this.

Now, after 18 months, many Members are ready to meet physically again. But I believe hybrid is the future, where a delegation or part of the delegation is physically present and a delegation unable to attend in person or, for example, a technical expert attends remotely, even just for a specific topic. This will increase participation and the quality of discussions. What we need is to be ready technically for all options.

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMITTEE MEETINGS

February to October 2021



GREG NOONAN,
Co-Chair, Physical Working Group
(PWG) on Endorsement

I think I've learned through Codex perhaps to be a better listener and also, instead of holding your position, to try to find the way forward. How do we weave an international standard, or how do we weave something internationally through that complex arena? And I think it's helped me in my career, from a managerial perspective, in dealing with colleagues and in dealing with, be it the general public or other companies within the US. So those soft skills, that's been a great development I didn't expect I would get, and it's been very positive.

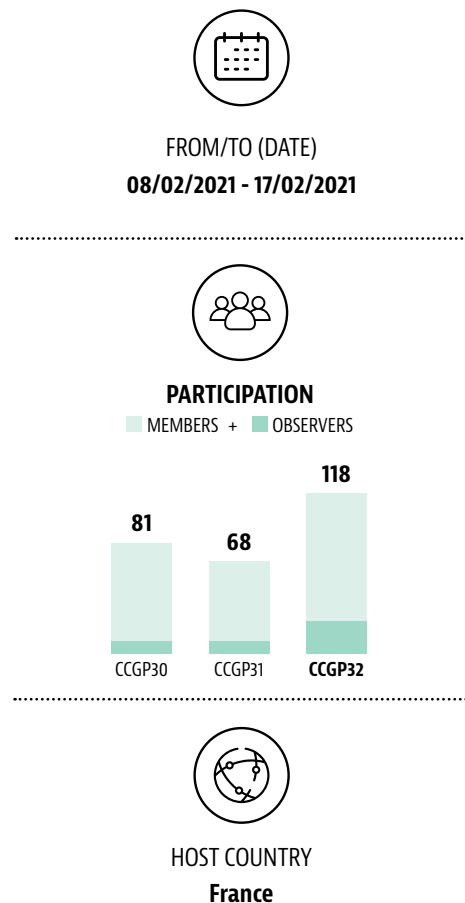
CCGP32 KICKS OFF A YEAR OF WORKING VIRTUALLY

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The 32nd Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP32) was the first Codex technical committee to meet virtually. As such, Chairperson Jean Luc Angot commented that “the CCGP must show the way by being able to adjust its procedures.” Appropriately, as the Chairperson commented, the key text under consideration was that dealing with Procedural Guidance for Committees working by Correspondence. The committee also debated the Guide to the

Procedure for the Amendment and Revision of Codex Standards and Related Texts and the Format and Structure of the Codex Procedural Manual. Committee moved on to discussion papers covering Monitoring the Use of Codex Standards and Monitoring Codex Results in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals.

A CCGP32 side event was held on 10 February to discuss Food Safety and Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) measures



in the context of the proposed Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The event was moderated by former Codex Alimentarius Commission Chairperson, Awilo Ochieng Pernet, and welcomed Agnes Kalibata, UN Special Envoy for the Food Systems Summit.



©FAO/Codex

From the Chairperson

JEAN LUC ANGOT

Being the first virtual session of a technical Codex committee, there were great expectations towards the 32nd session of CCGP. The first surprise – and it was a good one – was the exceptional attendance. The session also proved that virtual

was productive, be it in terms of the quality of discussion or the ability to move forward and advance texts. But we also have to recognize that nothing compares to a real-life coffee break or French food degustation!

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

FRANCK RIESTER
Minister Delegate
for Foreign Trade and Economic
Attractiveness, France

We are counting on CCGP to create ambitious new standards. The fight against the pandemic has deeply modified the manner in which we work and CCGP must, of course, adapt to these new circumstances and to working remotely.

RAJ RAJASEKAR
New Zealand
(Electronic Working Group (EWG) chair)

We are truly grateful to the members of the working group, as well as the committee for supporting the further development and advancement of this document, which will provide procedural guidance on how to conduct meetings by correspondence to ensure they operate within the core values of Codex.



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From Codex

GUILHERME DA COSTA JUNIOR,
Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

It is never too much to remind ourselves of our great responsibility towards the global society when it comes to food safety. It is essential and paramount to do our best, now in this new-normal environment, to

develop and disseminate Codex standards to ensure the safety and quality of food for all, everywhere, following the Sustainable Development Goals which are linked to the Codex mandate.

Planning and leadership from the French team and high level interventions set a positive tone at CCGP.

CODEX'S NEWEST COMMODITY COMMITTEE FORGES AHEAD WITH ITS WORK AGENDA AT CCSCH5

©FAO/Codex India

Now having completed just five sessions, the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) could be seen as the 'baby' of the Codex family, but it is actually one of the most prolific commodity committees. In this fifth session, a busy agenda saw discussion on seven draft standards regarding oregano, ginger, cloves, saffron, chilli pepper and paprika, basil and nutmeg. In addition, the committee agreed to propose new work to CAC44 on cardamom, turmeric and dried fruits and berries.

The committee is hosted by India where a strong global demand for high quality spices has been noted as a consequence of an increased interest in therapeutic and nutraceutical properties of spices. But, the host secretariat noted in its CCSCH5 newsletter, this demand has coincided with disrupted supply caused by the pandemic. "The two conflicting scenarios combined to pose a unique challenge to the global spices sector," they note.

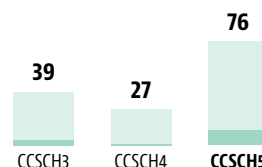


FROM/TO (DATE)
20/04/2021 - 29/04/2021



PARTICIPATION

MEMBERS + OBSERVERS



HOST COUNTRY
India



STANDARDS FOR ADOPTION AT CAC44

Draft Standard for dried oregano

Draft standard for dried roots, rhizomes and bulbs - dried or dehydrated ginger

Draft Standard for dried floral parts-cloves

Draft standard for dried basil



© FAO/Codex

From the Chairperson

M.R. SUDHARSHAN

CCSCH5 was the first commodity committee to conduct its session virtually, hence the CCSCH Secretariat, the Chairperson and the Codex Secretariat were all involved in extensive preparations to make the meeting a success. Delegates spent extra hours in the informal meetings and in-session working groups in addition to the plenary to resolve issues and reach consensus. All these efforts worked very well. I was surprised by the participation of delegates in large numbers in the informal meetings

especially from the disadvantageous time zones, to sort out issues and reach consensus. In the CCSCH5 sessions, initially it was uncomfortable to look at the camera instead of delegates and conduct the meeting. As time progressed, it became a lot better, however, the feeling is still strange. With proper preparation and participation of delegates it is possible to successfully conduct virtual meetings.

The recipe for success? Preparation, participation and spirit of compromise to reach consensus were the factors for success.



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From Codex

**PATRICK SEKITOLEKO,
Codex Secretariat**

The committee is developing its ability to elaborate and agree standards based on the grouping technique which classifies spices based on parts (botanical family, part of plant used, roots, stem, leaves, flowers/fruits). At CCSCH we see countries leading working groups on the



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different commodities of particular importance to them in international trade and then navigating the technical aspect of drafting with the support of experienced delegations, just what Codex should be about.

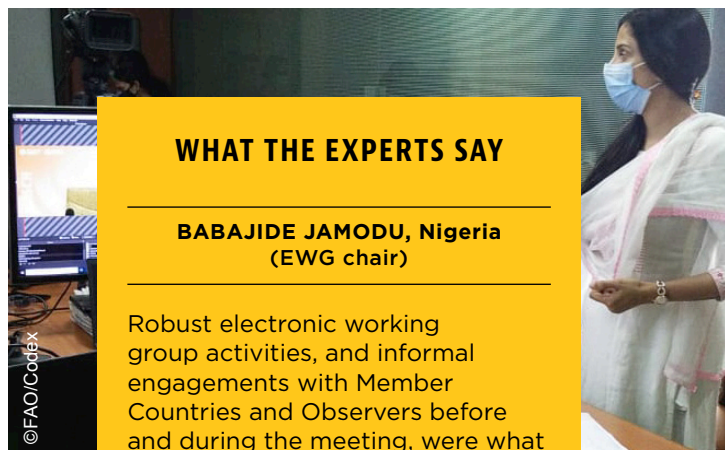
WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

**BABAJIDE JAMODU, Nigeria
(EWG chair)**

Robust electronic working group activities, and informal engagements with Member Countries and Observers before and during the meeting, were what helped reached consensus on cloves and ginger. The adoption of these two standards “will address technical barriers that have been inhibiting the international trade of dried ginger and cloves.”

**AHMED EL HELW, Egypt
(EWG chair)**

The keys to getting consensus [on the standard for dried basil] were: good preparation for the draft Standard using the Codex forum (EWG), in cooperation with national stakeholders and experts, taking into consideration all the comments received from the EWG Members and other Codex subsidiary bodies.



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CCCF14 AGREES ON MLS, CODES OF PRACTICE AND ONGOING WORK

The Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF) met virtually for the first time and worked through a packed agenda to reach consensus on Maximum Levels (MLs) for cadmium and for lead and to agree on a new and a revised Code of Practice. There was agreement, too, on how different Electronic Working Groups (EWGs) should progress CCCF work in the coming year.

Hosted by the Netherlands, the CCCF14 was attended by approximately 400 delegates. This, said the Chair, Sally Hoffer, was an upside of the virtual nature of the meeting: "it is more inclusive; we're bringing in many more delegates than we could ever before."



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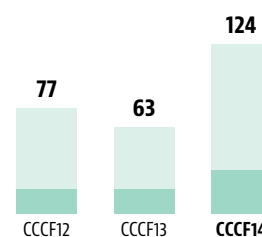


FROM/TO (DATE)
03/05/2021 - 13/05/2021



PARTICIPATION

MEMBERS + OBSERVERS



HOST COUNTRY
Netherlands



STANDARDS FOR ADOPTION AT CAC44

ML for cadmium in chocolates containing or declaring < 30% cocoa solids on a dry matter basis

ML for cadmium in chocolates containing or declaring > 30% and ≤ 50% cocoa solids on a dry matter basis

Revision of the *Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Lead Contamination in Foods (CXS 56-2004)*

ML for lead in fruit juices and grape juices (Amendment to the ML for lead in fruit juices in the *General Standard for Contaminants in Food and Feed (CXS 193-1995)*)

From the Chairperson

SALLY HOFFER

Chairing for Codex was a great experience and I am very happy with the outcome. Not only did we discuss all agenda items and advance several MLs and a code of practice to the CAC, we as a group managed to keep the meeting within the agreed time schedule. Credits go to all the participants who kept their interventions concise and to the

point. And also great thanks to the efforts by the electronic working groups for preparing the meeting documents and the Codex, JECFA and Dutch Secretariat for all their support and directions. The overall commitment to work on food safety and pushing ourselves to the next level during this meeting was exhilarating.



From Codex

GRACIA BRISCO, Codex Secretariat

The virtual meeting shows compromise can be reached on complex or sensitive issues with enhanced preparatory work in EWGs and collaboration between the Chair and the Codex Secretariat.

The revised text on lead contamination and the maximum levels agreed for cadmium for different categories of chocolates are strong examples of such an approach working well.



WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

ANDREW PEARSON, New Zealand (EWG chair)

On new work on MLs for methylmercury in fish:

Establishing Codex MLs for these species balances protecting consumers from exposure to excess methylmercury, making sure they get all the nutritional benefits of fish consumption, while supporting a harmonized international approach to the trade in these species

ROMMEL BETANCOURT, Ecuador (EWG chair)

On agreed MLs for cadmium in chocolate:

CCCF14 has recommended the adoption of the ML for cadmium in chocolates after several years of extensive discussions. The membership compromise is an example of how to get consensus to strengthen the Codex for protecting consumer health and establishing fair practices for the international food trade.

For new chairperson Sally Hoffer chairing digitally was a great experience and a chance to work in person with colleagues again (main photo, CCCF Host Secretariat team).

CCMAS41 SEES THE LATEST CHAPTER IN A 'NEVER-ENDING STORY'



The Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS) welcomed around 50 percent more attendees in its 41st meeting, with nearly 400 people participating from all over the world. In collaboration with observers such as expert technical bodies, industry and consumer associations, the committee discussed the revision of the *Guidelines on Measurement Uncertainty (CXG 54-2004)* and the revision of the *Guidelines on Sampling (CXG 50-2004)* in

addition to Criteria for Selection of Type II Methods from Multiple Type III Methods.

Finally, on the agenda was what committee Chairperson, Attila Nagy, called 'the never-ending story' of the review and endorsement of the *Methods of Analysis* in standard CXS-234.

As part of the discussion process, a separate Working Group on Endorsement meeting was held on 11 and 12 May.



FROM/TO (DATE)

17/05/2021 - 25/05/2021

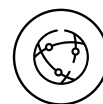
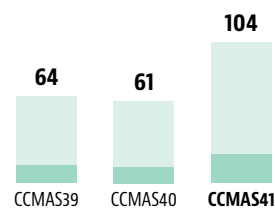
The working group on endorsement:

11/05/2021 - 12/05/2021



PARTICIPATION

MEMBERS + OBSERVERS



HOST COUNTRY

Hungary



LIST OF STANDARDS FOR ADOPTION AT CAC44

Methods of Analysis for provisions in Codex Standards

Revision of *Guidelines on Measurement Uncertainty (CXG 54-2004)*



From the Chairperson

ATTILA NAGY

A physical [CCMAS] session is generally attended by 150-180 participants. This year the maximum number was over 400 persons, but 340-350 participants were constantly present at the discussions.

In the life of CCMAS the holding of a session virtually doesn't result in significant changes, the disadvantages of not meeting in person (like the lack of informal discussions) were compensated by the fact that double [the number] of experts could join. If the system of meetings normalizes, I would still like to maintain the opportunity of virtual participation, because many colleagues cannot travel to Budapest, but they are interested in the topics of CCMAS and they would like to join in our work.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

GREG NOONAN,
United States of America
(PWG on Endorsement,
co-chair)

There were clearly disconnects between the standards and what was in the commodity standards and what was particularly in CXS 234. CXS 234 is such the bulk of what CCMAS does, that it's important that it be accurate, and I think this move towards a single, analytical standard or method standard is a great idea. It will keep us from making disconnects or mistakes in the future.

**AURÉLIE
DUBOIS-LOZIER,**
International Dairy
Federation

CCMAS is very important for the International Dairy Federation (IDF) as it makes the connection between analytical standards, such as those developed by IDF and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the Codex Dairy Standards, in order to verify the provisions they contain. Codex standards are a key element to ensure the products traded worldwide respond to the same safety and quality criteria.

From Codex

GRACIA BRISCO,
Codex Secretariat

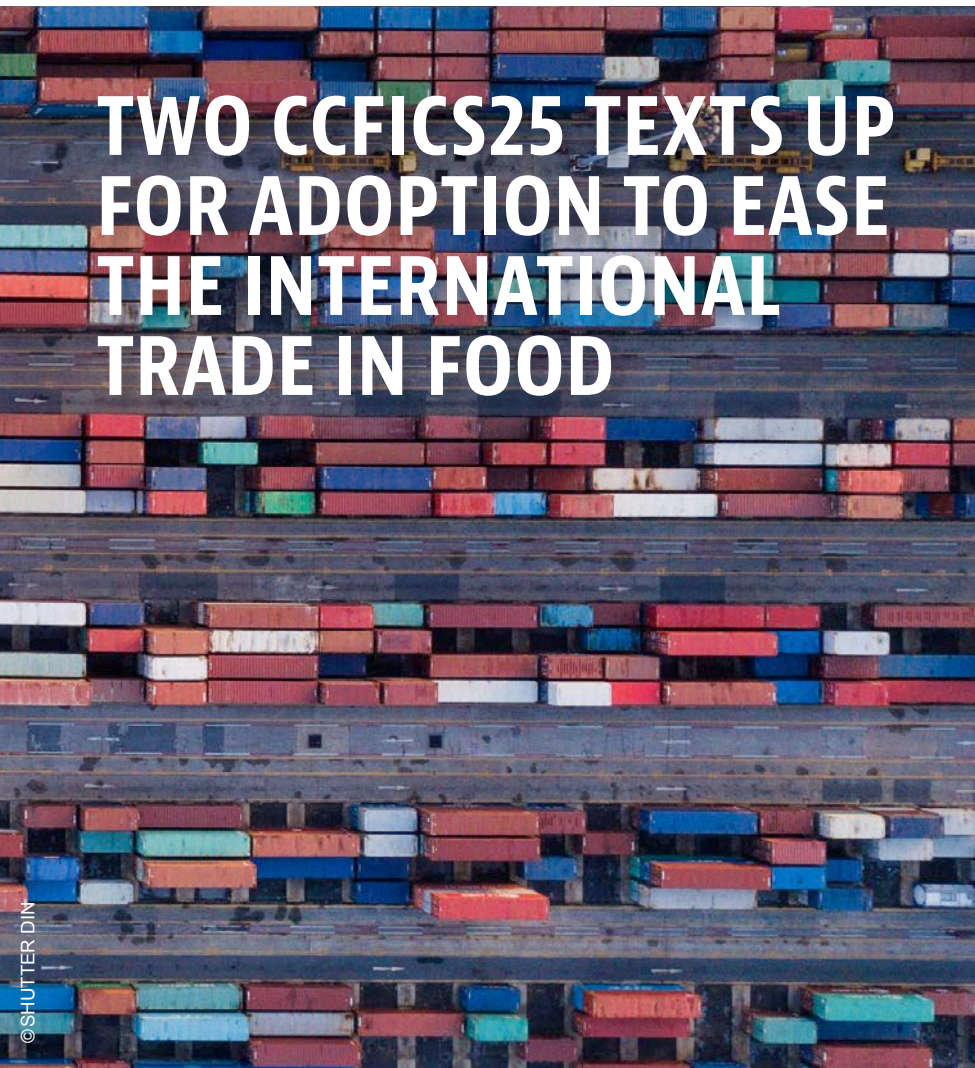
On the revision of the *Guidelines on Sampling (CXG 50-2004)*, this is a very important text in Codex, and the aim is to assist both Codex committees and countries in the development of sampling plans that suit the specific provisions in a Codex standard.

This work started many years ago in response to a request from the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products to provide more user-friendly guidance for the development of sampling plans. A key feature is the innovative use of web-based applications, and this is really the very first example we have in Codex, which we in the Secretariat believe could facilitate the application of complex Codex texts. And could also pave the way for similar approaches in future for other complex or difficult or critical Codex texts – and in doing so to also facilitate the application of our texts by Codex Member Countries.

VERNA CAROLISSEN,
Codex Secretariat

We are embarking on a huge effort to clean up our Codex standard 234 and we are also converting everything to a very new format, and a database. While we are undertaking this huge task, we are realizing that we need to be a little bit clearer and more open and transparent about the way in which we undertake our endorsement work. And we've actually just last year published some guidance on that which is available on the website.





TWO CCFICS25 TEXTS UP FOR ADOPTION TO EASE THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN FOOD

More than 600 delegates registered for the 25th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS25), representing 88 Member Countries. The committee considered three key guidance texts for endorsement, including on voluntary third party assurance programmes for food that will help global food businesses reduce risks in their supply chains. In addition, paperless use of electronic certificates was considered, which will lead to increased paperless trade, making world trade

more secure. Also considered was equivalence across national food control systems, which will minimize unnecessary duplication of documentation in the trade in foods.

The meeting agreed to propose future work on the Development of Codex Guidance on the Prevention and Control of Food Fraud and discussed issues on Guidance on Remote Audit and Verification in Regulatory Frameworks, and Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within Food Inspection and Certification Systems.

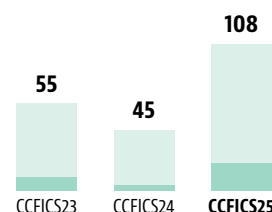


FROM/TO (DATE)
31/05/2021 - 08/06/2021



PARTICIPATION

MEMBERS + OBSERVERS



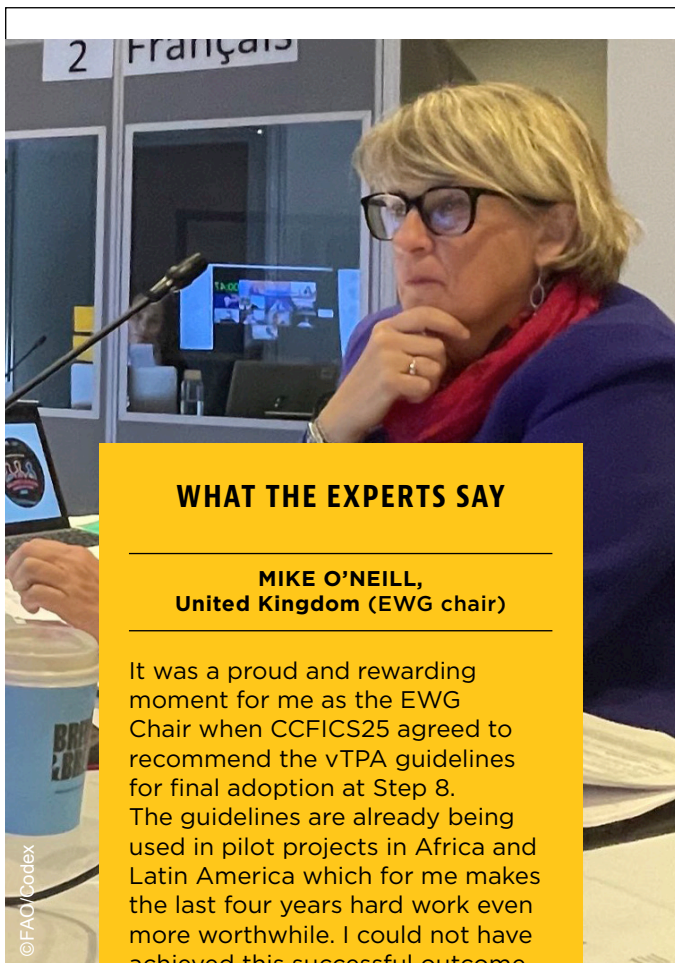
HOST COUNTRY
Australia



STANDARDS FOR ADOPTION AT CAC44

Draft Principles and Guidelines for the Assessment and use of voluntary Third-Party Assurance (vTPA) programmes

Proposed draft Guidance on Paperless use of Electronic Certificates (revised *Guidelines for Design, Production, Issuance and Use of Generic Official Certificates (CXG 38-2001)*)



WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

MIKE O'NEILL,
United Kingdom (EWG chair)

It was a proud and rewarding moment for me as the EWG Chair when CCFICS25 agreed to recommend the vTPA guidelines for final adoption at Step 8. The guidelines are already being used in pilot projects in Africa and Latin America which for me makes the last four years hard work even more worthwhile. I could not have achieved this successful outcome without the support of my co-Chairs Canada and Mexico, plus the members and observers whose input has helped shape the final product.

ERIK BOSKER,
Netherlands (EWG chair)

The revision of the guidelines for official certificates is to support paperless trade in food. This new guidance is about paperless certification between competent authorities. For paperless exchange you need electronic certificates which is strongly related with information technology. So our biggest challenge was to keep these guidelines a policy paper and not to change it into an implementation guide.

From the Chairperson

FRAN FREEMAN

It was a pleasure to chair the first virtual CCFICS meeting providing the opportunity to welcome so many more participants compared to previous sessions.

As with other committee meetings, time zones provided challenges! The professionalism and commitment of the secretariat teams working seamlessly despite this, with the

committee to deliver a successful meeting was inspiring. My colleagues from all over the world demonstrated their commitment to come together to consider and collaborate on many complex matters considered at all hours of the day and night.

I was reminded again of the resilience of the Codex family to adapt in these challenging times and progress our important work.

From Codex

PATRICK SEKITOLEKO, Codex Secretariat

The Codex Secretariat had to deal with the time zone challenges that often create disadvantages for countries when Codex meets in Central

European working hours. It has been another step in the learning process for meeting management this year – a challenge that we have had to rise to meet.

HILDE KRUSE, Codex Secretariat

CCFICS is the committee that focuses on trade. The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the value of our work in this area and the need to ensure

strong preparatory engagement between sessions to ensure we are able to adopt the Codex texts for which there is clear need.

*Chairperson Fran Freeman
pictured in the CCFICS studios
in Canberra, Australia*

CCRVD25: A MEETING OF INNOVATION AND ROBUST DEBATE

Everyone involved in the 25th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Food (CCRVD25) was anticipating robust debate around the issue of zilpaterol, which involves, according to Chairperson Kevin Greenlees, “very strongly held positions on both sides”. However, as the Chair also pointed out, this meeting is much more than one issue. The Committee is carving out a reputation for innovation in Codex, with cross-committee work on compounds of dual use, particularly in edible offal, and with proposals for a new “Principles and approach to the parallel review of a new veterinary drug by JECFA and regulatory agencies” and work on “Extrapolation of MRLs to one or more species”.

In addition, the agenda included discussion on unintended carryover of residues of drugs in feed as well as Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for a number of compounds.

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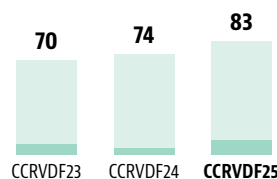


FROM/TO (DATE)
12/07/2021 - 20/07/2021



PARTICIPATION

MEMBERS + OBSERVERS



HOST COUNTRY
United States of America



STANDARDS FOR ADOPTION AT CAC44

- MRL for flumethrin (honey)
- MRL for diflubenzuron (salmon - muscle plus skin in natural proportion)
- MRLs for halquinol (swine - muscle, skin plus fat, liver and kidney)
- The definition of edible offal for inclusion in the *Glossary of Terms and Definitions* (CXA 5-1993)



From the Chairperson

KEVIN GREENLEES

CCRVDF is a highly functional expert committee encountering some serious problems with developing and forwarding standards for residues of veterinary drugs in foods to the CAC, which CCRVDF has addressed with flexibility and ingenuity. The Committee has developed and maintains a database that identifies veterinary drugs that Members feel need standards ... [it] has launched and evaluated a pilot for simultaneous review of a veterinary drug by competent national authorities and JECFA ... [and] an approach for

extrapolation has been adopted to leverage JECFA risk assessments, and Codex standards for those species and tissues less common in international trade. CCRVDF reached out to the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) to parallel the similar efforts between JECFA and JMPR to leverage the available data for compounds with dual use as a veterinary drug and pesticide. ... All of this reflects intense effort by CCRVDF members – including assistance of observer organizations – and a flexible, problem-solving approach to risk management.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

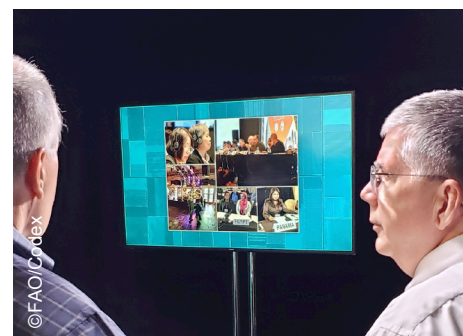
ALLAN AZEGELE, Kenya (EWG chair)

You may find residues in food. But anyone finding residues in food cannot tell whether the source was veterinary use or use as a pesticide. So, offering multiple MRLs would simply provide confusion ... it's very important, and it's good to have such cross-cutting issues discussed among Codex committees and a procedure also developed to see that it can be worked out seamlessly.

From Codex

GRACIA BRISCO, Codex Secretariat

The agenda for the CCRVDF might be one of the most interesting and challenging of recent years, not only because of the zilpaterol discussions, but also a number of novel approaches to facilitate establishment of MRLs have emerged. The work on edible offal is quite an interesting exercise for the Codex Secretariat itself. There, you can see an example of collaboration between two key committees in Codex: CCRVDF and also the Committee on Pesticide Residues. These two committees are working together on common issues to harmonize definitions that I believe will facilitate the establishment of single MRLs for compounds with dual uses – and so their enforcement by Codex Members and Observers. This innovative example of coordination between two committees will allow us to identify good practices and could lead to Codex guidelines for joint meetings or joint agendas in the future. The combined CCPR and CCRVDF work is not only going on at the Codex level, but also at national level, where the Codex Contact Point is key to ensure this synchronization.



WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

NICK JARRAT, The European Medicines Agency

The technique of extrapolation of MRLs will allow them to be established in additional species and so ultimately increase the availability of medicines. The species we are interested in extrapolating to are often those species, such as goats and rabbits, for which it is unlikely a sponsor would come forward with data.

The CCRVDF reputation for innovation extended to a slick studio set up and a mystery guest from the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH).

VIRTUAL OUTCOMES ON A PAR WITH PHYSICAL MEETINGS FOR CCPR52



In welcoming participants to CCPR, Zhang Taolin, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, commented that CCPR has developed the largest number of standards among all Codex committees. The 52nd meeting of the committee helped maintain that record.

Core work included discussion on Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for pesticides in food and feed, and other work items included discussions on responses to specific concerns raised by

CCPR that arose from the 2019 FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) regular meeting, and the establishment of schedules and priority lists of pesticides for evaluation or re-evaluation by JMPR. The agenda also included discussion papers on a review of mass spectrometry provisions, monitoring the purity and stability of certified reference material of multi-class pesticides during prolonged storage, and a review of the International Estimated Short-Term Intake (IESTI) equations.

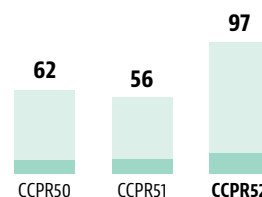


FROM/TO (DATE)
26/07/2021 - 03/08/2021



PARTICIPATION

MEMBERS + OBSERVERS



HOST COUNTRY
China



STANDARDS FOR ADOPTION AT CAC44

Draft MRLs for pesticides

Revised Class C: Primary animal feed commodities and Table 7: Examples of representative commodities for Class C

Revised Class D: Processed food of plant origin and Table 8: Examples of representative commodities for Class D as amended

From the Chairperson

XIONGWU QIAO

CCPR52 should be a stress test for holding a virtual session. Thanks to the close cooperation of all the participants from more than 90 Members Countries and observer organizations, the achievements exceeded our expectations.

All of the results proved that CCPR's rule-based decision making, cooperation, and transparency functioned smoothly. It demonstrated that virtual meetings can not only be conducted effectively under the current Codex framework, but also that they can promote better inclusiveness of CAC as well. The platform provided by the Codex Secretariat, and new technologies of the world wide web played an indispensable role, in addition to all the traditional forces, in the CCPR activities.



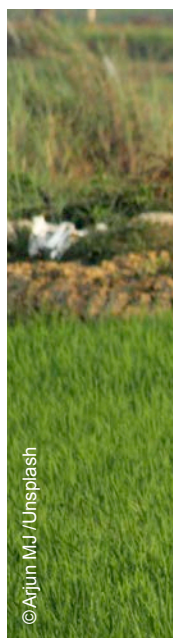
WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

KARINA BUDD, Australia (EWG chair)

The Schedules and Priority List of Pesticides prepared by CCPR52 identifies chemicals for evaluation by JMPR in the coming year and demonstrates the importance of CCPR work. Following evaluation, JMPR will propose Codex MRLs for consideration and endorsement by CCPR and adoption by the Commission into Codex MRLs (CXLs). This important science-based and transparent work is conducted according to the Codex risk analysis principles and provides a process for establishing CXLs that protect consumer health on food and feed moving in international trade.

BILL BARNEY, United States of America & DORIN POELMANS, Netherlands (EWG co-chairs)

It is deeply gratifying for the Chair and Co-Chair of the EWG for Revision of the Classification of Food and Animal Feed to work with the EWG and all the member countries and observers that contributed to the effort to reach Step 5/8 for Class C (Primary Animal Feed Commodities) and Class D (Processed Food of Plant Origin) and the corresponding representative commodities. We would not have been able to complete this effort without their contributions, suggestions and expertise.



From Codex

TOM HEILANDT, Codex Secretary

I have always felt that CCPR and the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) were our biggest and most complex committees and when we had to cancel both last year this caused a lot of distress in the Codex community, showing how much these numerical standards are needed. CCPR meeting online is doing an important job.

GRACIA BRISCO, Codex Secretariat

We have managed to attain the expected outcomes in this virtual meeting which are overall the same as we would have expected if we met physically. In particular for the MRLs or the revision of the Classification, the expected outcomes were fully achieved.

Chairperson Xiongwu Qiao (pictured) led the committee through a full agenda including 400 MRLs for adoption.

CCFA52 SENDS OVER 500 FOOD ADDITIVE PROVISIONS FOR ADOPTION



©123RF

The Codex Committee on Food Additives reached consensus on recommendations that include over 500 food additive provisions already in the Codex step procedure and 90 proposed provisions that will all now proceed for consideration by the Codex Alimentarius Commission in November 2021.

The committee, hosted by China, emboldened by the support from the Executive Committee maintained its word that the business of debating and agreeing on standards would not be halted by the challenges thrown up by the COVID-19 pandemic.

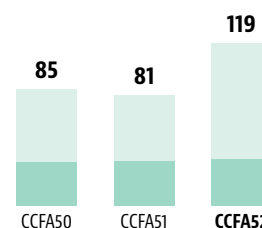


FROM/TO (DATE)
01/09/2021 - 10/09/2021



PARTICIPATION

MEMBERS + OBSERVERS



HOST COUNTRY
China



STANDARDS FOR ADOPTION AT CAC44

Proposed draft Specifications for the Identity and Purity of Food Additives

Adoption of amendments to the Food Additive Provisions of 18 Codex Commodity Standards due to the alignment

Adoption of over 500 food additive provisions under the *General Standard for Food Additives (CXS 192-1995)*

Proposed draft revision of the Class Names and the International Numbering System for Food Additives (CXG 36- 1989)

Inclusion of xanthan gum (INS 415) and pectins (INS 440) in FC 13.1.3 "Formulae for special medical purposes for infants" of the GSFA (CXS 192- 1995)

From the Chairperson

FAN YONGXIANG

It is an exceptional achievement to have completed this challenging agenda which could not have been possible without the expertise of those who have led the individual work streams and the support of the delegations, Members and Observers alike, who gave their time and support so tirelessly.

For sure to Chair the committee virtually was a challenge for me. It was kind of weird to talk to a camera instead of real person. Eye contact is an important way to improve conversation, but we can't anymore.



WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

**PAUL HONIGFORT ,
United States of America**
(General Standard for Food Additives
(GFSA) Working Group chair)

As the Chair of multiple working groups, preparation has always been important towards making progress. However, in this virtual environment I have found that one particular type of preparation is key; that is, to look at a document from the perspective of someone new to the subject. Then ensure as Chair that you present the document in a manner that summarizes not only the topic itself, but also the context surrounding it so that participants understand how we got here and what we are trying to achieve.

STEVE CROSSLEY, Australia
(Working Group on Alignment
and Endorsement chair)

Really, getting so much work done in such a short time comes down to preparation - in terms of the consultation that's already been undertaken with all the Member Countries. There have been two rounds of consultation, through the e-working group and also the detailed discussion and opportunity for written comments that were submitted prior to June, to be evaluated in detail and for the delegations to make their case for changes. So, by the time of this meeting, the hope is that all the issues, all the differences of view have been resolved - or largely resolved - so that the discussion at this particular session can be fairly streamlined.



From Codex

LINGPING ZHANG, Codex Secretariat

The Codex Secretariat has formed a skilled and innovative team leading the way in supporting countries to plan for virtual meetings. I was fortunate to be able to be in China for this session with the host

secretariat but these successful outcomes also depend on close collaboration with fellow food standards officers and the logistics teams that manage the technology.



'A SHOUT FOR JOY' FOR FOOD LABELLING SUCCESSES AT CCFL46


© Laura James /Pexels




According to the CCFL Chairperson, Kathy Twardek, “what really set us up well was all the work the electronic working group chairs did to engage working group members and advance the development of their items in the extra year we had between sessions. The pre-session preparation was excellent, delegates had a sense of how the virtual session would be run and were ready, many having sent in their positions ahead of the session.” The meeting started with the endorsement of labelling

provisions for eighteen regional and international commodity standards. It then went on to debate its four work items: Guidance on Labelling of Non-Retail Containers, Guidelines on Front-of-Pack Nutrition Labelling (FOPNL), Guidelines on Internet Sales and e-Commerce and Guidance on Precautionary Allergen Labelling.

CCFL46 subsequently discussed new work items including technology in food labelling, the labelling of alcoholic




FROM/TO (DATE)
27/09/2021 - 07/10/2021




PARTICIPATION

MEMBERS + OBSERVERS

Session	Members	Observers	Total
CCFL44	52	10	62
CCFL45	65	16	81
CCFL46	105	37	142



HOST COUNTRY
Canada



STANDARDS FOR ADOPTION AT CAC44

- Draft Guidance for the Labelling of Non-Retail Containers
- Proposed draft Guidelines on Front-of-Pack Nutrition Labelling

beverages and the labelling of foods in ‘joint presentation’ and ‘multipack’ formats. In future meetings, and in light of the conclusions of the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), it was agreed that CCFL will be exploring ways to address sustainability claims, food labelling exemptions in emergencies and trans fatty acids.

From the Chairperson

KATHY TWARDEK

Chairing CCFL virtually was an interesting and challenging experience. Everyone really stepped up, and the goodwill of delegates and willingness to find the agreement points as we navigated through the agenda was key to our incredible achievements. Although the agenda was very

full, the pre-CCFL webinar and information sessions and immense preparations by everyone helped us to be ready for the session and really focus our discussions. I will say though I missed feeling the vibe of the room and seeing everyone's faces.



From Codex

VERNA CAROLISSEN, Codex Secretariat

CCFL has completed two major pieces of work that will facilitate trade and ensure consumers receive valuable information when making food choices. We will continue to

innovate in the way we bring experts and our Members and Observers together to ensure we produce robust, science-based standards to deliver on our mandate.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

AMANDA LASSO CRUZ, Costa Rica (EWG co-chair)

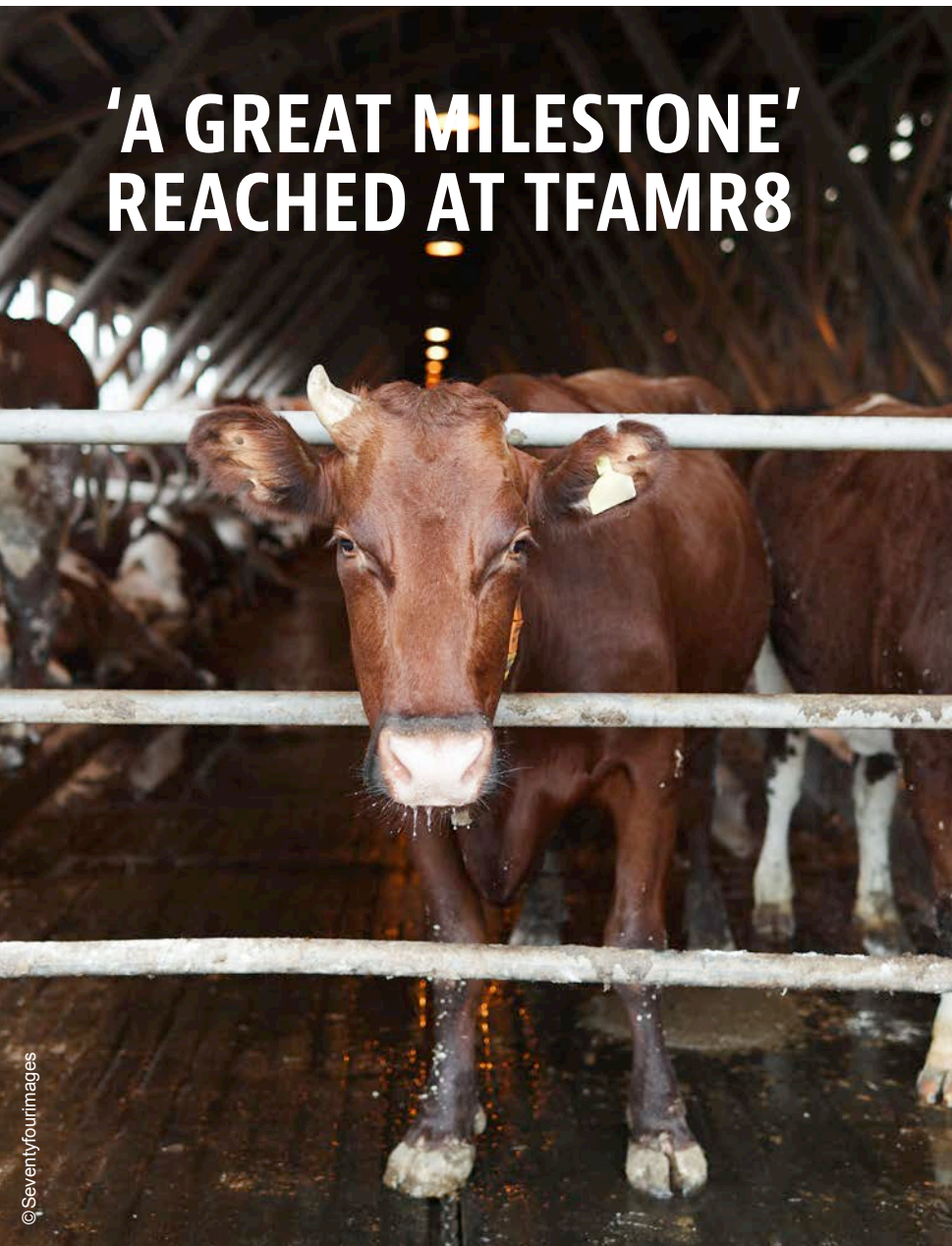
Codex must face new challenges every day regarding food. This guidance will contribute to harmonized implementation and prevent possible obstacles to trade. The virtual approach allowed for broad participation and the excellent willingness to move forward made for an enriching debate to ensure adoption.

JENNY REID, New Zealand (EWG co-chair)

The work on FOPNL has been a huge undertaking and commitment for our team in New Zealand and Costa Rica. It was immensely rewarding to see the preparedness of Codex members to really work together and compromise to move this forward. Time differences made sharing of views outside the plenary to find solutions challenging and led to some unsociable hours. We did shout for joy when the item was moved to Step 5/8, which we would have been a little more restrained about in a face-to-face plenary. It really was a great privilege to be involved in leading this work.

Throughout pre-meetings and webinars on to the CCFL meeting itself, Chairperson Kathy Twardek and the Canadian team demonstrated how to transmit warmth and professionalism online.

'A GREAT MILESTONE' REACHED AT TFAMR8




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The eighth and final session of the Codex Alimentarius Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (TFAMR8) opened under the slogan “there is no time to wait” as the host, the Republic of Korea, sought to underline the unprecedented sense of urgency with which delegates had to approach the two texts under consideration.

QU Dongyu, Director-General of FAO joined WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus in entreating delegates to do their utmost to find ways forward on revisions

to the *Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance (CXC 61-2005)* and the proposed draft Guidelines on Integrated Monitoring and Surveillance of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance (GLIS). “Tackling the challenge of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in food requires collective action with a holistic approach,” said QU, while Ghebreyesus reminded attendees of the gravity of the AMR threat: “Antimicrobial resistance is the existential silent emergency that needs sustained action,” he remarked.




FROM/TO (DATE)
04/10/2021 - 20/10/2021




PARTICIPATION
MEMBERS + OBSERVERS

Session	Members	Observers	Total
TFAMR6	56	0	56
TFAMR7	55	0	55
TFAMR8	56	41	97



HOST COUNTRY
Republic of Korea



STANDARDS FOR ADOPTION AT CAC44

Revision of the *Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance (CXC 61-2005)*

Proposed draft Guidelines on Integrated Monitoring and Surveillance of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance

The virtual sessions attracted over 300 delegates and had to be extended to give delegates time to establish a consensus around the complex and diverse issues at stake. Discussions on the Code of Practice (COP) were completed after a longer-than-scheduled session on 9 October, and final discussions on the Guidelines were extended into the 13 October session, with the adoption of the report moved back to 20 October.



From the Chairperson

YONG HO PARK

We had little time to complete our mission. Delegates needed to be collaborative and constructive in moving the texts towards adoption. We knew the task would not be easy. I applaud with pride the compromises made by so many wonderful people to achieve our ultimate goal. I am sure the rewards of our collective efforts will provide a major contribution in combating AMR for future generations.

From Codex

GRACIA BRISCO, Codex Secretariat

These guidelines will provide a baseline on which countries can expand, in a flexible and continuous way, considering the specific needs, priorities and resources available. So, the result that we will expect / hope to achieve is that each country would be able to design their monitoring and surveillance programmes in line with their national or regional circumstances under an internationally harmonized framework provided by Codex.

TOM HEILANDT, Codex Secretary

The success of TFAMR has shown that complex tasks can be achieved in a virtual meeting.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

DONALD PRATER, United States of America (EWG chair COP)

The task force has achieved a text that addresses the incredibly diverse range of food production sectors across the world. Although we used the different electronic platforms successfully to continue discussion, we were reminded of the importance of interpersonal relationships and physical presence when trying to advance our collective understanding on science and risk topics.

ROSA PERAN, Netherlands (EWG chair GLIS)

It has been a tremendous effort. Opinions were very divergent, but we finally achieved consensus which would not have been possible without the great support and assistance from the co-chairs, especially Canada and New Zealand. Now it is time to start thinking about implementation and how to support countries with this task.

LEIGH NIND, Australia

Australia looks forward to seeing continual improvements in global AMR mitigation, which is now supported by the Code of Practice and Guidelines in conjunction with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Code.

ALLAN AZEGELE, Kenya

The task force has achieved a great milestone in extraordinary circumstances. Thanks to the Codex Secretariat for making it possible.



The TFAMR team bolstered by the physical presence of the EWG chairs went deep into the night to find agreement on the two texts.



 CODEX TASK FORCE “HANDLE WITH CARE”

THE URGENCY OF THE GOAL FOCUSES THE MINDS OF THE TASK FORCE

EVERYONE HAD A ROLE TO PLAY

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) was overshadowed in 2020 by climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic but WHO has declared that AMR is one of the top 10 global public health threats now facing humanity, with a predicted annual death toll of 10 million people by 2050.

There have been many warnings that there is ‘no time to wait’ – which made for an appropriate slogan for the 8th and final meeting of the Codex Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (TFAMR8). With a sense of genuine urgency and a spirit of compromise, TFAMR8 started its virtual sessions on 4 October. All eyes were on Codex and the credibility of the task force itself as it worked to complete its mandate and respond rapidly to the urgent food safety issue of foodborne AMR.

On the surface, there were just two texts to discuss. One was the *Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance (COP)*, a revision in fairly good shape with a few substantive issues to resolve – already at an advanced stage in the adoption process; the other, a new text, on the *Guidelines on Integrated Monitoring and Surveillance of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance (GLIS)* with more work to do. For a regular Codex committee this would not have been of major concern. But this task force was on a strict timeline to deliver.

Following preparatory webinars in January and April 2021, the virtual working groups in June and the formal plenary itself in October, the big issues that threatened to derail the adoption process clearly emerged.

In the new GLIS, how would the task force reach consensus on antimicrobial use (AMU) in the text, and in the revised COP, would delegations be able to reconcile their differences on the term ‘therapeutic use’?

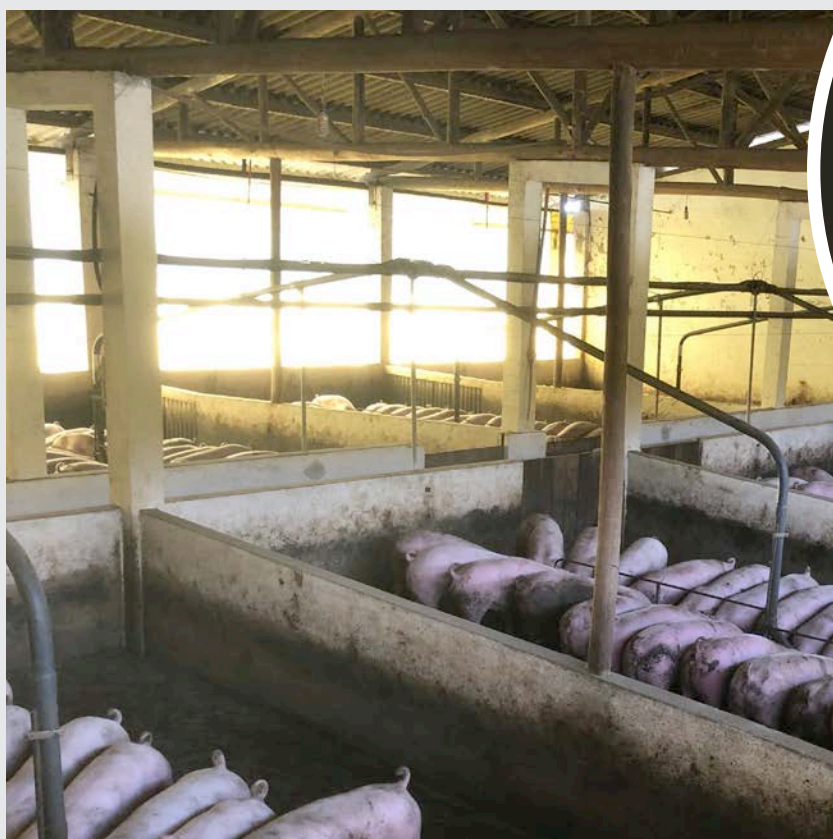
Misuse and overuse of antimicrobials are the main drivers in the development of drug-resistant infections. In humans, over prescription and improper use are addressed through clear agreements around the world on future use. However, when it comes to use of antimicrobials for animal and plant health and the potential for AMR carry-over or transmission into foods – foodborne AMR – there are clearly divergent views that reflect different countries' approaches and interests when dealing with this issue.

The tension in the final sessions of TFAMR was palpable even in a virtual environment. In Buyeo, Republic of Korea, the feeling in the Host Country Secretariat studio was one of urgency mixed with cautious optimism.

The Codex Secretariat coordinated the redrafting of the texts overnight, nearly every night, with the working group leads and coordinated discussions on proposals to aid consensus around sensitive issues in both texts with the Chair and the working group experts. In plenary the Chairperson then chipped away steadily at Codex's own 'antimicrobial resistance', crafting the text around those areas where countries could agree.

An extra day of discussion was needed but nobody gave up – each day over 200 delegates took part – and gradually, as time seemed to be running out and the threat of failure loomed, opposition appeared to melt away and countries found a text they could get behind and send to the Commission for final adoption.

By all accounts, this is a phenomenal achievement and has brought together different views to create overarching international guidance upon which member countries can now build, together with their own priorities and needs, to address foodborne AMR across the food chain.




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CCFFP35 EXPERIMENTS WITH DISCUSSIONS BY CORRESPONDENCE




The Codex Committee for Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP) conducted its 35th meeting by correspondence in September and October this year. The meeting evaluated the *Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine-Type Products (CXS 94-1981)* to determine whether the species *Sardinella lemuru* should be included in the list of sardine species. To do this, the process of 'sensory evaluation' will be used.



BY CORRESPONDENCE




FROM/TO (DATE)
20/09/2021 - 25/10/2021



PARTICIPATION
MEMBERS + OBSERVERS

Session	Members + Observers
CCFFP33	63
CCFFP34	50
CCFFP35	54



HOST COUNTRY
Norway

The sessions mirrored physical meetings by opening an agenda item and having it open for discussion for a period of time. Items were opened for 24-hour periods with a conclusion available shortly after and made available for comments.

From the Chairperson

VIGDIS S. VEUM MØLLERSEN

CCFFP35 worked by correspondence for a month. Members submitted their comments through the online platform used for EWGs. From my point of view this worked efficiently, and the session has

completed its tasks successfully during the period set aside for this work. I would like to convey my thanks to the Codex Secretariat and delegates for their collaboration to successfully arrive at an agreed outcome.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

ULYSSES MADRID MONTOJO,
Philippines

Working by correspondence has offered ample time to review and rationalize issues raised among delegates, unlike in physical meetings. Although it's impossible to negotiate to get support from each other directly, virtual meetings and exchanges of emails could be an alternative. The time differences between Codex regions and differences in work priorities and schedules were all challenges at times.

ESTHER GARRIDO GAMARRO, FAO

CCFFP35 has been a great opportunity to reactivate the committee and inform Codex about the progress that FAO and WHO have made with regard to work on food safety for aquatic products over the last six years. Working by correspondence was a good starting point for the reactivation of a committee that will have important work to deliver in the coming years.

From Codex

HILDE KRUSE,
Codex Secretariat

CCFFP35 has so far demonstrated that working by correspondence can be productive when the task is limited and clear, and that the Commission's core values of collaboration, inclusiveness, consensus building, and transparency can be respected and adhered to.

DID YOU KNOW?

CCFFP is one of six Codex committees chaired by women.

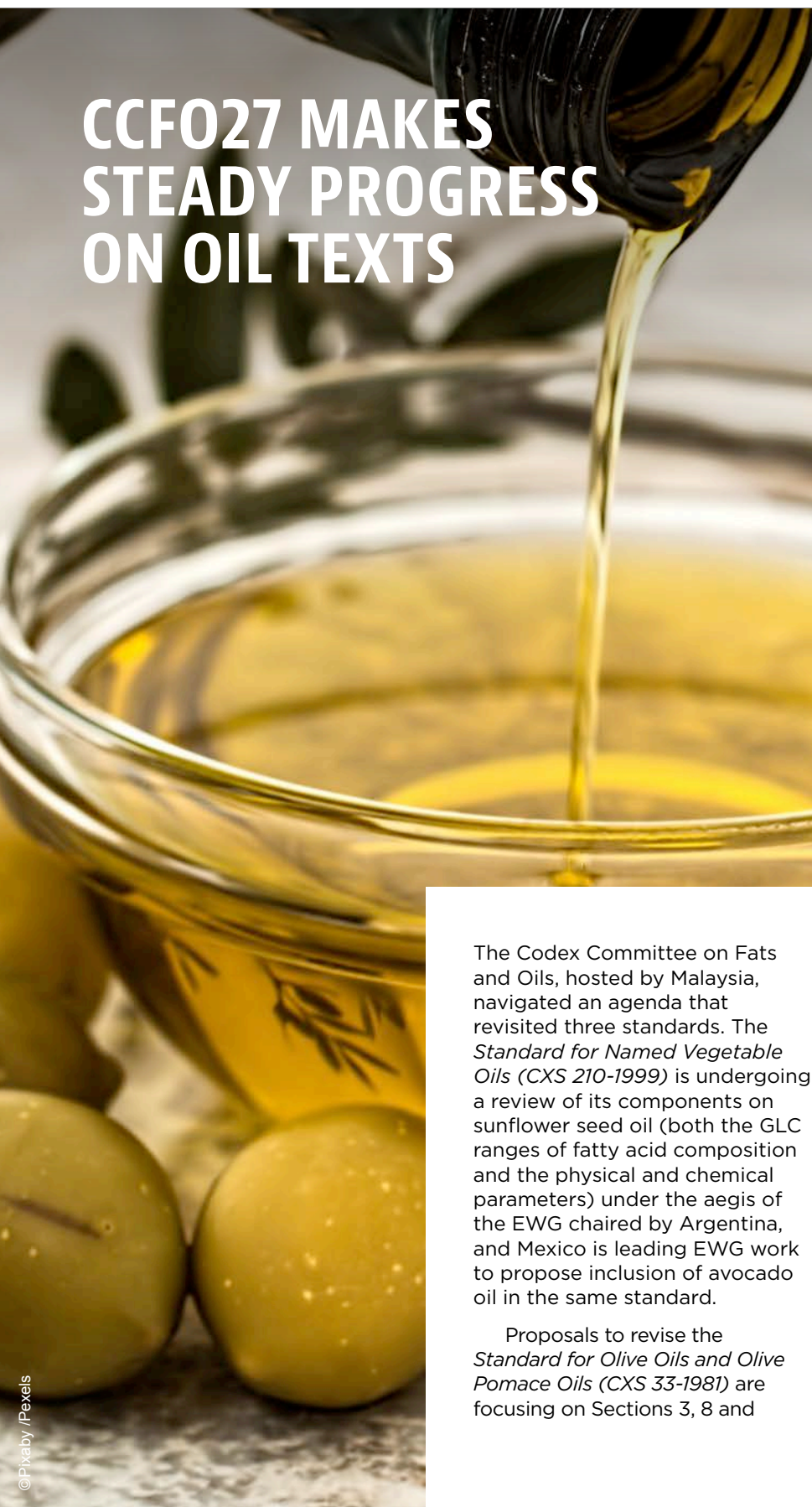
Can you name the other five?

Answer on page 55



The 'fish committee' was using the Codex inclusion mechanism for a new species and road tested working by correspondence all in one meeting.


CCFO27 MAKES STEADY PROGRESS ON OIL TEXTS




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The Codex Committee on Fats and Oils, hosted by Malaysia, navigated an agenda that revisited three standards. The *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CXS 210-1999)* is undergoing a review of its components on sunflower seed oil (both the GLC ranges of fatty acid composition and the physical and chemical parameters) under the aegis of the EWG chaired by Argentina, and Mexico is leading EWG work to propose inclusion of avocado oil in the same standard.

Proposals to revise the *Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils (CXS 33-1981)* are focusing on Sections 3, 8 and




FROM/TO (DATE)
18/10/2021 - 26/10/2021




PARTICIPATION
MEMBERS + OBSERVERS

Session	Members	Observers	Total
CCFO25	46	0	46
CCFO26	45	0	45
CCFO27	45	30	75



HOST COUNTRY
Malaysia



Texts from CCFO27
will be presented at CAC45

the Appendix but, as Senior Food Standards Officer, Sarah Cahill has commented, “in doing these revisions we have realised we might have to make some consequential changes in the other sections”, meaning the work – already described by Committee Chairperson, Norrani Eksan, as involving “complex issues and diverging opinions” – could get more complex still.

The third text under review in this meeting was the *List of Acceptable Previous Cargoes (Appendix II to CXC 36-1987)*.



From the Chairperson

NORRANI EKSAN

Chairing CCFO in a virtual setting was a very valuable experience for me. While a virtual meeting allows more participation; the limited hour, technological complications, and different time zones remain the challenges for delegations to ensure their position can be heard in the sessions.

In the virtual setting, generally, silence is taken as an agreement, and only those who object need to make a verbal intervention. However, this practice seems to limit the opportunity for other delegates who want to express their views or concerns, as compared to the physical setting where delegates have enough time to intervene and voice their position.

From Codex

PATRICK SEKITOLEKO, Codex Secretariat

Working with commodities and issues deeply embedded in culture and heritage makes for very dynamic and impassioned discussions especially as in the case for oils where new producers enter markets or where countries rely on an existing standard to maintain trade. Our role in the Secretariat is to manage the process, supporting the development of text through the working groups and in discussions at plenary. We derive great satisfaction from seeing consensus reached often after extensive and complex negotiations.

SARAH CAHILL, Codex Secretariat

The purpose of this revision is to talk to all the Members and understand their needs within the standard and try to reach consensus in what can then be adopted by Codex as the revised *Standard for Olive Oil and Oil Pomace Oil (CXS 33-1981)*. We depend on the Members to come forward throughout the development process –and it's even more important now because we're working in this virtual environment. We need to use these platforms available to us to try and exchange information because we don't have the benefit of chatting during the coffee break or the tea break.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

KHAIRY JAMALUDDIN, Malaysia

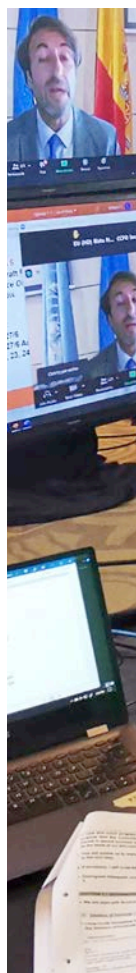
Increasing demand for healthier fats and oils, the need to ensure authenticity in addressing various other challenges including climate change, change in food systems, production in new geographical locations and technological advancements are all likely to keep CCFO busy.

JUAN RAMÓN IZQUIERDO, Spain (EWG chair)

We must congratulate CCFO on the work completed, given that important and interesting advances have been achieved in what will be the next version of this standard. I would underline the constructive attitude in the EWG, making progress possible on many issues, some of which had been pending for a long time. Although some questions remain unanswered, agreement on them will be possible and the same positive attitude will be the key.

GRACE RAMOS, Canada (EWG co-chair)

Significant progress has been achieved on the work to revise the *Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils (CXS 33-1981)*. Many of the outstanding items were resolved with others still to be agreed upon, so the work remains in the step process. Unfortunately, the virtual nature has affected consensus building. We miss the face-to-face in-session meetings and side discussions which could help opposing groups resolve differences and come to a common understanding.



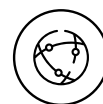
The CCFO team was able to learn from all the earlier committees to design a meeting with high production values to support the discussions.

CCNFSDU42 TO DISCUSS THREE MUCH-AWAITED TEXTS IN NOVEMBER

COMING
SOON



FROM/TO (DATE)
19/11/2021 - 01/12/2021



HOST COUNTRY
Germany



ON THE AGENDA

Review of the Standard for Follow-up Formula
(CXS 156-1987)

Guideline for Ready-to-use Therapeutic Foods

General Principles for the Establishment
of NRVs-R for persons aged 6 – 36 months

In the two years since CCNFSDU41, much has been debated and moved forward on the three key agenda items up for discussion in November. The proposed draft review of the *Standard for Follow-up Formula (CXS 156-1987)* is complex. The work has been split into four different parts, which are not all at the same stage in the step process. Jenny Reid, Chair of the EWG for the review of the Follow-up Formula Standard, summed up sentiments around this review: “I think that in the nutrition committee, anything that might look straightforward often isn’t, so I think we’ll have our work cut out for us”.

Next on the agenda is the long-standing work on the Guideline for Ready-to-use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) that has three remaining issues to resolve before it can be nudged over the finish line at CAC45. Finally, Nutrient Reference Values (NRVs) will be discussed in reference to the General Principles for the Establishment of NRVs-R for persons aged 6 – 36 months.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

JENNY REID, New Zealand
(EWG chair)

Food for infants and young children is scientific, it's political, it's social and it's far from simple. We all want a global standard for a product that is the best it can be for our infants and young children but also recognizes the ideal and gold standard of breast feeding and if people go back and read the documents, they'll see that's come through in all our discussions. We need this standard out there, we need it active, we need countries to be able to use it as soon as possible.

NOLENE NAICKER, South Africa
(EWG chair)

These guidelines started way back in 2014 and we've managed to make a tremendous amount of progress thus far. Countries are also waiting on these guidelines, and we only really have three issues that we need to resolve before the guidelines can be finalised and implemented. So, therefore, we're hoping if we focus on finalizing these fatty acids, the magnesium, the preamble, and based on the above, and with no new areas of concern, we will be able to finalize the guideline for adoption at Step 8 at the next CAC session.



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From Codex

VERNA CAROLISSEN, Codex Secretariat

We haven't met since 2019 but so much work has been happening to keep the momentum going. We will have an abridged agenda for the November meeting so people might wonder about all the other equally important items on the agenda, such as the food additives or the new work proposals. Please don't worry!

We have made special arrangements to meet very soon after the November meeting in June already. So, we hope to complete our work, finalize as much as possible in the November meeting and discuss those other items in the June meeting, so that everything can go to the Commission in 2022.



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The pre-work going into CCNFSU has shown the level of commitment from all involved.

CCFH52 – MANAGING MICROBES FOR A SPRING 2022 MEETING

COMING
SOON



FROM/TO (DATE)
28/02/2021 - 09/03/2021



HOST COUNTRY
United States of America



ON THE AGENDA

Draft guidance for the management of biological foodborne outbreaks at Step 7

Proposed draft Decision Tree (revision of the *General Principles of Food Hygiene (CXC 1-1969)*) at Step 4

Proposed draft Guidelines for the control of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) in beef, raw milk and cheese produced from raw milk, leafy greens, and sprouts at Step 4

Proposed draft Guidelines for the safe use and re-use of water in food production at Step 4

By the time the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) meets for its 52nd session next spring, it will be well over two years since its last meeting. But CCFH and its attendant Electronic Working Groups have all been as busy as the other Codex committees and EWGs. Four key work items fill the agenda. With the draft Guidance for the Management of Biological Foodborne Outbreaks already at Step 7, CCFH

Chairperson, Emilio Esteban is hoping to see that work moving on to finalization. Other topics are still at an early stage, with a proposed draft Decision Tree (to be included in the *General Principles of Food Hygiene (CXC 1-1969)*), draft Guidelines for the Control of Shiga Toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) and draft Guidelines for the Safe Use and Re-Use of Water in Food Production all up for discussion.



From the Chairperson

EMILIO ESTABAN

Hello Codex friends and colleagues! Although for nearly two years we have found ourselves dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, I would like to share with you some very good news: the US Codex Office and Codex Secretariat are preparing for us to engage again in 2022, not once, but twice! Yes! CCFH52 will meet

virtually in February/ March of 2022 and then physically CCFH53 will meet in the beautiful and warm city of San Diego, California, USA during our traditional late November date.

The meeting hiatus has not completely prevented progress. In fact, several electronic workgroups have continued to engage and progress document work. Also, as I write these lines, our Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA) colleagues are managing a third or perhaps fourth Expert Consultation generating advice for us to rapidly pick up where we left off. It is really unique to see us take on a challenge, adapt and react in an exceptional way. To all my Codex family: stay safe and see you soon!

From Codex

VERNA CAROLISSEN, Codex Secretariat

We have worked with all the committee host secretariats and Chairpersons during this period to define the most effective way to advance work.

CCFH operates with an experienced and consolidated team, and it will be exciting to deliver on our agenda holding two sessions in the same calendar year.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

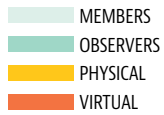
MIRIAN BUENO, Honduras (EWG chair)

By following the guidance, food business operators will be able to use scientific data to safely source, use and re-use water, which will benefit them and our food system in the long term. We all know that water's a really scarce resource and we need to use it rationally.

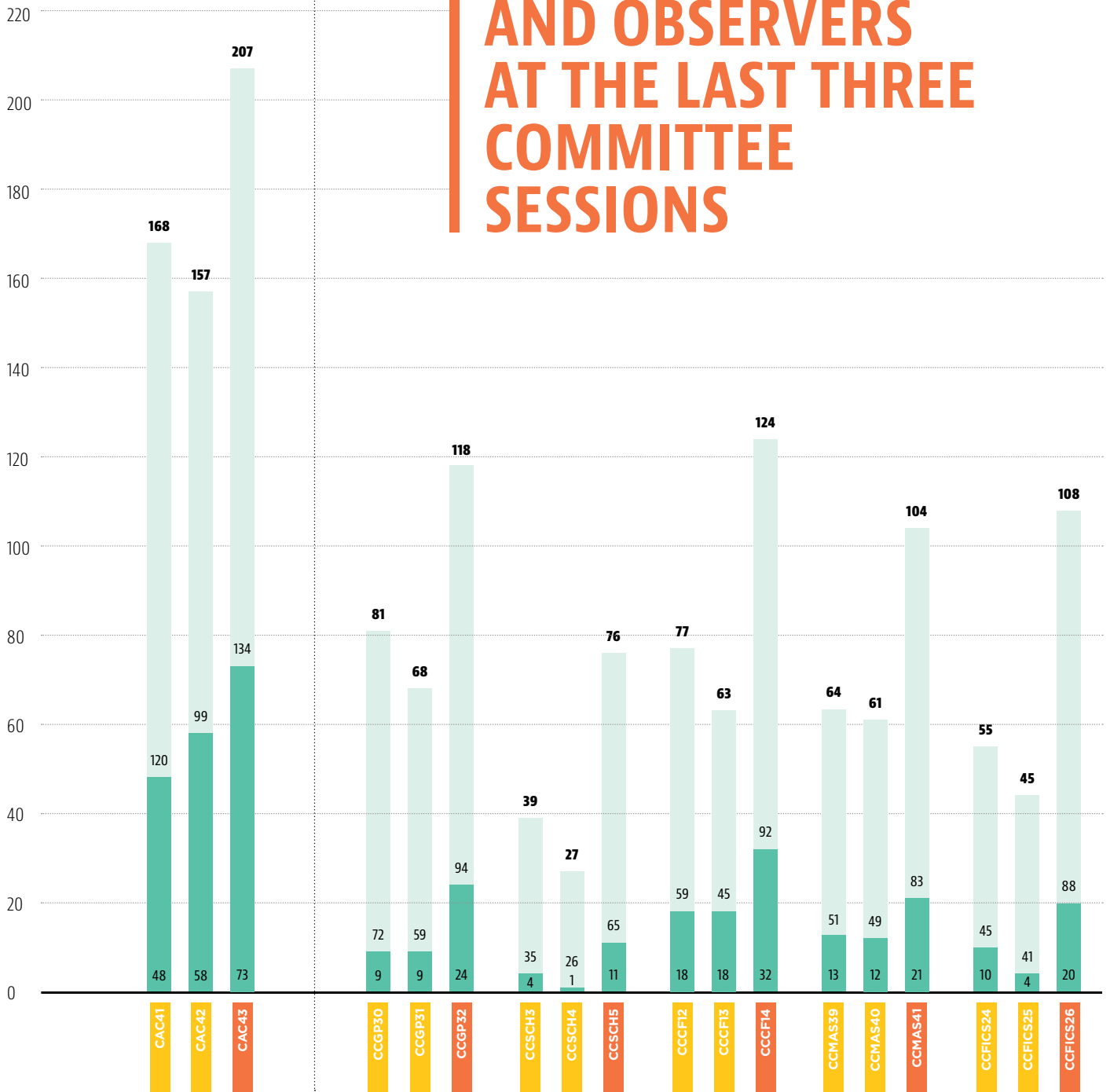
CONSTANZA VERGARA, Chile (EWG chair)

Even without the possibility of having physical meetings, the Codex EWG platform and global consultations have allowed us to advance in the development of the general document and three of its annexes, which also include the conclusions of the JEMRA meetings. We believe that we will arrive at CCFH42 with a robust document, and hoping that some of its annexes can advance to Step 5.



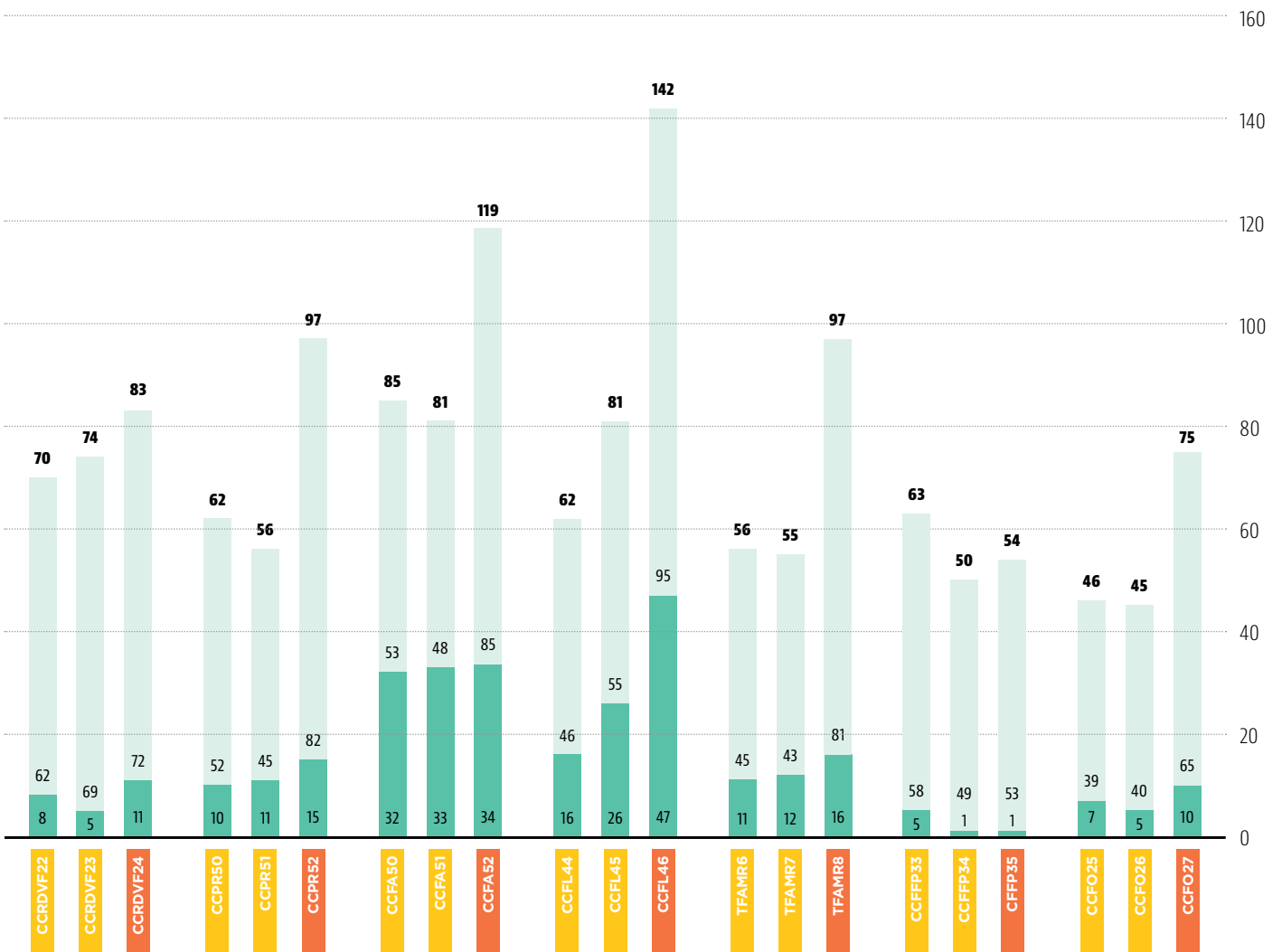


PARTICIPATION BY MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS AT THE LAST THREE COMMITTEE SESSIONS



**ANSWER TO THE
"DID YOU KNOW?" QUESTION
on page 47**

The other five Codex committees chaired by women are:
CCCF, CCFO,
CCFICS, CCNFSDU
(two women co-chair),
CCFL





In Guyana, Mali and Bhutan (all pictured), the CTF work continued under its new Administrator.



CODEX TRUST FUND SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING THE PANDEMIC

I took over the position of Administrator of the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund (CTF) in January 2021, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the Fund had just entered its 7th year of operation. It has been a fascinating learning experience ever since.

Navigating the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has been one of my major tasks as we are working to find ways around limitations to project implementation in countries and managing financial planning as work plans are being adjusted. Together with colleagues from FAO, WHO and the Codex Secretariat, who are part of a network of Codex experts, the CTF is working with countries and donor partners to find solutions

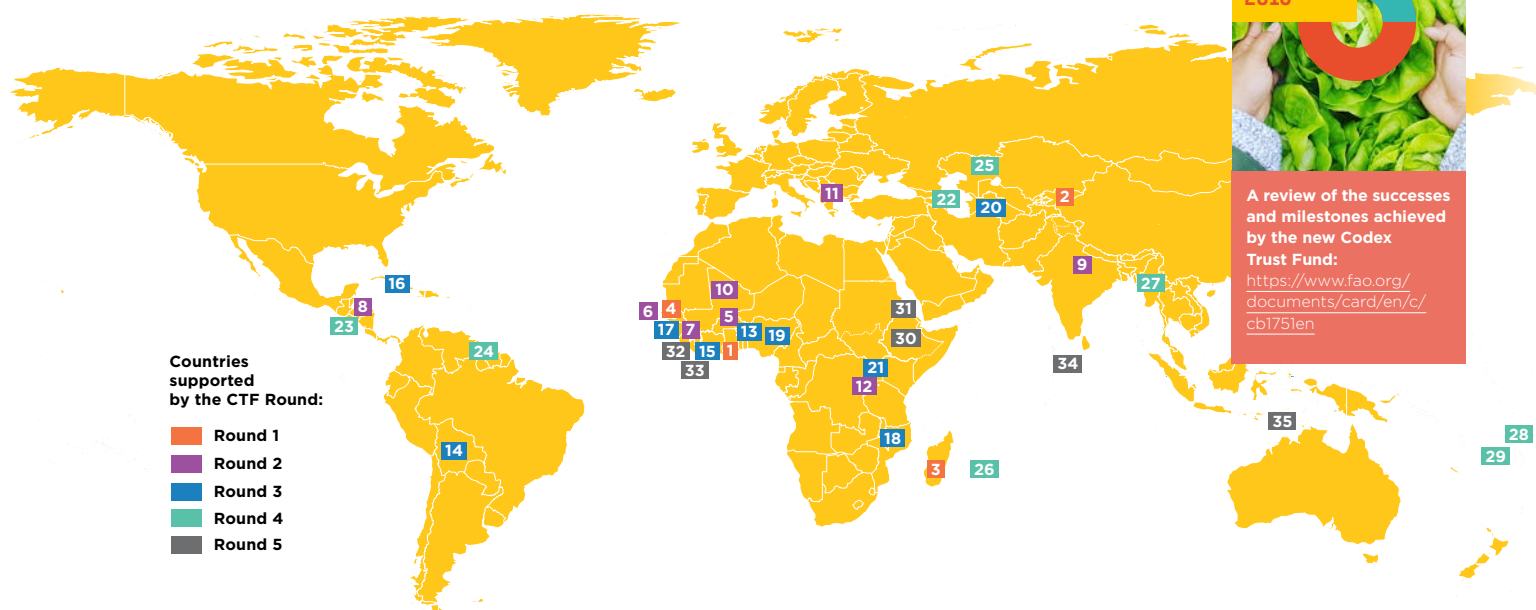
amidst the current challenges. So far, we are managing well, and this is thanks to the engagement of all partners involved.

Besides continuation of operations, my major priority for 2021 is to engage eligible countries to apply for Round 6 of CTF support. This year we held a series of virtual trainings on the CTF application process and the application of the FAO/WHO Diagnostic Tool to self-assess the strength of national Codex systems. These trainings were well received and succeeded in raising awareness about the opportunities offered by the CTF and clarifying questions about which countries can apply and how the process works.

MICHAEL HINSCH,
Programme Administrator

After ten months of leading CTF operations I am delighted to be part of a network of agencies and partners that can look back at a successful history of increasing public health and contributing to enabling fair trade of safe food. I am optimistic that we will continue to overcome major challenges such as COVID-19 and through the new virtual work environment find innovative ways to reach countries that can benefit from CTF support.

COUNTRIES AND PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY CTF



Source: UN Geospatial. 2021. Map of the World. Washington, D.C., UN. <https://www.un.org/geospatial/content/map-world>
Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined.

There are six Codex regions each represented by a joint FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee: Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA), Coordinating Committee for Asia (CCASIA), Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO), Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC), Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific (CCNASWP), Coordinating Committee for Near East (CCNE).

Country	Type of project	Codex Region
1 Ghana	Individual	CCAFRICA
2 Kyrgyzstan	Individual	CCEURO
3 Madagascar	Individual	CCAFRICA
4 Senegal	Individual	CCAFRICA
5 Burkina Faso	Individual	CCAFRICA
6 Cabo Verde	Individual	CCAFRICA
7 Guinea	Individual	CCAFRICA
8 Honduras	Individual	CCLAC
9 India (lead country)- Nepal-Bhutan	Group	CCASIA
10 Mali	Individual	CCAFRICA
11 North Macedonia	Individual	CCEURO
12 Rwanda	Individual	CCAFRICA
13 Benin	Individual	CCAFRICA
14 Bolivia	Individual	CCLAC
15 Côte d'Ivoire	Individual	CCAFRICA
16 Cuba	Individual	CCLAC
17 Gambia	Individual	CCAFRICA
18 Malawi	Individual	CCAFRICA
19 Nigeria	Individual	CCAFRICA
20 Turkmenistan	Individual	CCEURO

Country	Type of project	Codex Region
21 Uganda (lead country)- Burundi-Kenya- Tanzania- South Sudan	Group	CCAFRICA
22 Azerbaijan	Individual	CCEURO
23 El Salvador (lead country)- Guatemala	Group	CCLAC
24 Guyana	Individual	CCLAC
25 Kazakhstan	Individual	CCEURO
26 Mauritius	Individual	CCAFRICA
27 Myanmar (lead country)- Lao PDR- Cambodia	Group	CCASIA
28 Samoa	Individual	CCNASWP
29 Tonga	Individual	CCNASWP
30 Ethiopia	Individual	CCAFRICA
31 Eritrea	Individual	CCAFRICA
32 Guinea-Bissau	Individual	CCAFRICA
33 Liberia	Individual	CCAFRICA
34 Maldives	Individual	CCASIA
35 Timor-Leste	Individual	CCASIA

FOOD SAFETY CELEBRATED FOR THE THIRD TIME



This year World Food Safety Day (7 June) was celebrated in 90 countries - with Codex Members and Observers behind many of the 300 initiatives aimed at raising awareness and inspiring action.



The campaign slogan, “Food safety is everyone’s business”, and 2021 theme, “Safe food now for a healthy tomorrow”, inspired online discussions, videos, staff training sessions, educational activities and more.

Of particular note was how creatively the World Food Safety Day messages were conveyed. Posters and photographs, produced as the result of competitions,

complemented the countless GIFs, animations and images posted across social media platforms. Ultimately these efforts reached many millions of online users, and the #WorldFoodSafetyDay hashtag recorded an exposure of 311.2 million.

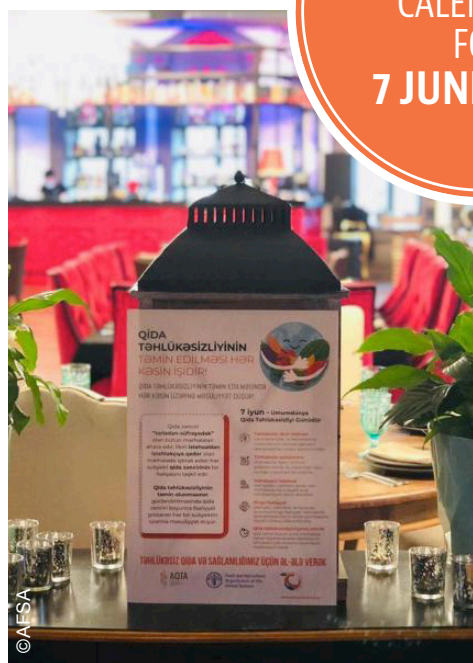
World Food Safety Day 2021
Overview of festivity and creativity



World Food Safety Day 2021 - Overview of festivity and creativity is available in [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), [English](#), [French](#), [Russian](#) and [Spanish](#).



BE SURE TO MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 7 JUNE 2022!



A report, available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, offers a snapshot of the activities as well as the media attention they received.

On 7 September, an all-day Tweet-a-thon for food safety, led by the Codex Alimentarius Twitter account, @FAOWHOCodex, replayed many of the unique moments.

World Food Safety Day is facilitated jointly by FAO and WHO in collaboration with the Codex Alimentarius Secretariat and with support from the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) Secretariat.



©Singapore Food Agency

©Ministry of Food and Drug Safety of the Republic of Korea

©Ministry of Health of Lao PDR

©PAFN

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A PERSPECTIVE ON THE UNITED NATIONS FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT

Steve Wearne, United Kingdom, Vice Chairperson Codex Alimentarius Commission represented Codex at the Rome Pre-Summit, held from 26 to 28 July 2021.

What is the UN Food Systems Summit?

The UN Food Systems Summit took place on 23 September 2021 under the leadership of UN Secretary-General António Guterres as part of the UN General Assembly High-level Week. It was designed as a historic opportunity to harness the power of food systems to support our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and get us back on track to achieve all Sustainable Development Goals.

It was, however, more than a single event on a single day. Over the preceding 18 months, the Summit had brought together UN Member States and constituencies including youth, food producers, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, researchers, and the private sector. So it's probably more appropriate to see the Summit as the culmination of this inclusive global process, leveraging actionable commitments by heads of state and government leaders.

Why is the Summit relevant to Codex?

The Summit recognized that everyone, everywhere must take action and work together to transform the way the world produces, consumes, and thinks about food. This includes Codex and our mission to create food safety and quality standards. Because, put simply, without food safety there can be no food systems.

What did the Summit conclude on food safety?

The Summit agreed five Action Tracks, which provide a framework for discussion and action. The first of these is *Access to Safe, Nutritious Food for All* with a focus on ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition and reducing the incidence of non-communicable disease, so enabling all people to be nourished and healthy.

How might Codex respond?

Making food safer is a key area for action that emerged from the Summit. There is a significant opportunity for Codex and its members to work together with other partners to support delivery of specific actions already identified – including the development of a global alliance for *Safe Food for All*, and assembling and launching a comprehensive Food Safety Toolkit.

We should seize this opportunity, which is central to the purpose of Codex to promote coordination of all food standards work undertaken by international governmental and non-governmental organisations. We will demonstrate the continuing relevance of Codex not only by our work to develop standards in response to the priorities identified by our member countries, but also through our work to increase impact through the recognition and use of Codex standards, in line with our own Strategic Plan Goals.



WIBKE MEYER,
CropLife International

**An observer's perspective on the
Codex Committee on Pesticide
Residues (CCPR)**



THE VALUE OF CODEX

Over recent decades, scientific advances in agriculture, harmonized international food standards (such as Codex standards), and rule-based international trade have provided consumers with a wide variety of high-quality affordable food.

Promoting free trade through the harmonization of food standards is a key goal of Codex to ensure consumer safety along the food supply chain and promote international trade in food, resulting in decreased food scarcity.

The CCPR and its scientific advice panel, the Joint Meeting of Pesticide Residues (JMPR), contribute significantly towards the overall achievement of the [Codex Strategic Plan](#). However, the global pandemic has adversely impacted processes, creating a backlog of more than 1250 pesticide MRLs ([Conference Room Document 11 \(CRD11\) for CCPR52](#)).

Data sponsors like members of CropLife International provide the data and information to support the establishment of Codex MRLs. While this is done on a voluntary basis, there are broad societal benefits. Codex MRLs facilitate international trade, supporting access to international markets for agricultural producers worldwide. The work of Codex as a science-based and independent international authority ensures the safety of the international food supply.

CropLife International is committed to the objectives and values of Codex and continues to support the process through continued engagement with the Codex Secretariat, Member Countries, and Observers, and most importantly through industry's continued data submissions.

CropLife International believes that substantial organizational and procedural changes are urgently needed to modernize ways of working and decision making for the effective implementation of Codex strategic goals. We would welcome open dialogue with all involved stakeholders.

APPLYING THE SCIENCE OF FOOD INTO GLOBAL STANDARDS!

Since its inception, Codex Alimentarius Commission standards for global trade were built on scientific principles.



© FAO/Codex

STEVE HAVLIK,
Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) Codex Coordinator

As a Codex Observer for over 29 years, the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) has sought to bring together its mission of promoting the science of food and its application into the Codex process as an important objective. Every single person in the team contributed to make the ambitious goal of a full year of virtual Codex reality.

In 2021, IFT chose to enhance its Codex engagement to more fully impact this objective by substantially increasing the number of IFT volunteer observers participating across CAC and seven Codex General Committees and their Working Groups. IFT built teams of 4-6 members each, encompassing global food science expertise from both academia and industry, to better facilitate engagement with the Codex activities, which has been particularly helpful regarding the Codex virtual meeting structure across the time zones involved.

Each team has a leader with historical experience working with Codex that are also the IFT head delegates. The team leaders guide in assessing the seven Codex Committee’s proposed standards and guidelines and are providing the Committees with comments related to scientific principles built on established food science research. Teams are regularly communicating back to IFT membership about Codex decisions and their global impact, while the team approach allows engagement of food scientists new to the Codex experience and connection with the full scope of IFT’s scientific expertise as Codex topics change.

While the virtual meetings have been challenging at times, the new IFT observer teams have been encouraged that the Codex process continues to progress forward well.

DID YOU KNOW?

All observer organizations can support Codex by collaborating on the [dedicated pages on the Codex website](#).

Write to codex@fao.org for details.

Goal 3 of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 is to “Increase impact through the recognition and use of Codex standards”.

CCAFRICA UGANDA

Milk and related processed products contribute significantly to the Gross Domestic Product of Uganda. Exports of milk products to the Middle East, Europe and the United States of America have been on the rise for the last five years, especially for products such as milk powders and dairy permeate powders. For the niche markets to be consistently serviced, the exportable products must meet quality and safety standards. In December 2019, Uganda adopted the Codex Standard for Dairy Permeate Powders (CXS 331-2017) as a response to innovations in the industry. With the effective implementation and application of the provisions provided in this Codex standard, the industry has been able to consistently export dairy permeate powders to the United States of America for the last three years. This is clear demonstration of the value and impact of Codex standards in facilitating international trade.



These six examples, one from each Codex region, aim to inspire countries to continue to report on how Codex texts are implemented at national level and with what results.

CCASIA CHINA

Based on the Codex Codes of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Peanuts (CXC 55-2004), in Tree Nuts (CXC 59-2005) and in Dried Figs (CXC 65-2008), China has made a first attempt to develop her own Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Food (GB 31653-2021). The text includes requirements for harvesting, pre-storage processing, storage and transportation, processing, testing and documenting of peanut, maize, walnuts, hazelnuts, pistachios, pine nuts, Brazil nuts, figs and oil-bearing cottonseed. This code of practice has been developed to ensure the safety of raw materials and downstream products. It has already been adopted into national legislation and will come into force in February 2022. This is the first and, currently, only code of practice for the prevention and reduction of mycotoxin in China. With plans for more codes of practice on the way, the transition from regulation of final product to a precautionary approach marks a significant shift in China's management of food safety risks.



CCEURO BELARUS

Since 2017, Belarus has implemented principles for assessing health claims related to declared properties of food or food components. The Belarusian documents are based on the *General Standard for the Labelling of and Claims for Prepackaged Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CXS 146-1985)* and contain guidance to producers on how to formulate statements for labelling of the special nutritional properties and / or the therapeutic, dietary or preventive purposes of food. The documents also advise how to accompany these statements with the necessary scientific evidence, for which the Ministry of Health has a standardized review procedure. This system helps to prevent misleading practices and provides consumers with informed choices about healthy diets.



©Eduardo Soares on Unsplash

CCLAC HONDURAS

In 2008, an export ban was imposed on the melon production sector in Honduras following a salmonella outbreak that caused people to fall ill in the United States of America. This led to government action to improve practices across the sector. In collaboration with the private sector industries involved in melon production, packaging and transportation, the government developed its own standard for melon production, based on the *Codex Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CXC 53-2003)* (Annex IV for Melons, 2017 revision). Now, the melon producers have implemented good hygiene practices in their fields and factories, as well as social welfare initiatives to improve the wellbeing of their employees. For its part, the government ensures a rigorous inspection regime. This partnership has helped Honduras restore its melon sector.



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CCNASWP FIJI

In 2009, the Government of Fiji established its Food Safety Regulation. The Regulation is set to protect the health of the public and to protect consumers against food fraud and from food of unacceptable and poor quality. In relation to Codex, should there be no standard established for any product under the published regulation, relevant Codex Standards shall be applied in Fiji. In addition, Fiji has adopted a number of standards directly into national legislation, including standards for milk and milk products, fruit juices and fruit and vegetables. All pesticide MRLs set by Codex have been adopted directly by the Fijian government.



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CCNE EGYPT

The Codex Contact Point in Egypt works under the aegis of the Egyptian Organization for Standardization and Quality (EOS), and promotes Codex Alimentarius texts as key references for national food standards and regulations, where appropriate. In 2017, the Government of Egypt established the National Food Safety Authority (NFSA), which, in cooperation with the EOS, continues using Codex texts when legislating on food safety issues such as additives, foods for special dietary uses and pesticide residues. One of the objectives of the NFSA is to “fulfill the requirements of food safety to preserve human health and safety” by regulating the approval or rejection of components of or additives to food that “affect its safety according to Codex Commission criteria and standards adopted by international bodies”. Additionally, in reference to specific food legislation, the NFSA draws on a variety of Codex texts. For example, in the “Rules Governing the Registration and Handling of Foods for Special Dietary Uses” Codex provisions on aspects of labelling and claims are used.



©279photo

REINVENTING COMMUNICATIONS IN CODEX

Codex Secretariat builds a support team from scratch

DAVID MASSEY,
Codex Secretariat

After the first Zoom calls and initial attempts at virtual meetings in 2020 we quickly realized the need to revolutionize our own approach and impress on all those involved, if we were to succeed in putting on major Codex meetings, the need to turn the static and lonely environment of a virtual call into an online event.

Bringing in audio/visual production teams to manage the technical operations, the cameras, lighting and sound, hiring space for the meeting - but a studio space - were all skills we developed and honed in real time.

HOW TO CONTACT CODEX ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The best way to contact Codex on Social Media is via your own **Twitter** account and then follow and tag **@FAOWHOCodex**, DM (direct message) us, retweet our posts and use typical hashtags like **#CodexFamily**, **#FoodSafety** and **#SafeFood**.



CAN YOU HEAR ME?

Since the French CCGP team bravely kicked off this cycle of virtual committees, each host has built on the experience gained across the Codex landscape. Chairpersons have had to develop different skills when leading committees through at times delicate and complex negotiations; how to ask the right question, manage requests from the floor equitably, follow the chat (or 'chatter') box, interpret silence. Delegates too have had to raise their game and are learning how to deliver a message in 30 seconds, look at the camera, connect with their virtual audience, praying the Wi-Fi will hold and that the microphone is not muted. "Can you hear me?"

The unsung heroes who ensure that message gets heard are the staff in the Codex Secretariat, some of whom had never really worked directly on a Codex meeting beyond the Commission, now finding themselves improvising at all hours as ushers, timekeepers, gatekeepers and all round trouble shooters.

Communications in Codex have been reinvented to respond to our mandate in the new virtual reality: officers have created informal meetings, webinars and briefings to open Codex to an ever wider audience. Colleagues have been extended professionally and personally to keep the work moving.



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October 2020 → October 2021



5.5 MILLION UNIQUE VIEWS



More than 16 000 FOLLOWERS



Over 2 500 TWEETS



3 800 MENTIONS



The updated version of the *Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products* is an essential reference point for both small and large-scale operators.

Slightly under the radar has been the publication of the revised *Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products* (CXC 52-2003) which heralds a new way of raising awareness about Codex texts. A refreshed design combined with statistics and citation data available in real time is a positive step and one the Secretariat aims to replicate with all the texts adopted at this Commission.

The website is the hub for all Codex information and it has held up well throughout the pandemic with enhanced meeting pages for each committee. Social media too and the @FAOWHOCodex Twitter account remain a daily focus for Codex activities and especially for #WorldFoodSafetyDay.

The Secretariat looks back with pride on the communications achievements of this year and looks forward to new challenges as the reinvention of the way we talk about food safety and set standards continues.



Regular Programme Budget

Members funding staff in the Codex Secretariat

FAO/WHO scientific advice

Codex Committee Hosts

FAO/WHO capacity building

Codex Trust Fund

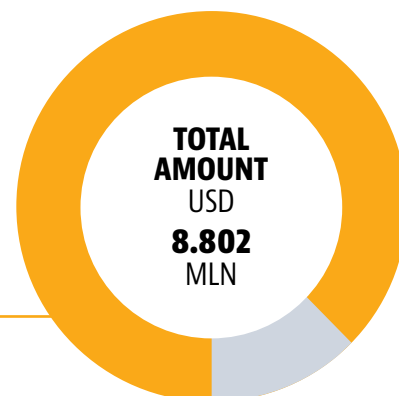
HOW CODEX IS FUNDED

The 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 second staff to the Codex Secretariat. As of 31 August 2021, the level of expenditure was about USD 7.4 million out of a total 2020-2021 biennium budget of USD 8.802 million (Regular Programme Budget).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all technical sessions of Codex were postponed from 2020 to 2021 or 2022. There was also a decrease in operating expenses and travel which generated a lower level of expenditure in 2020. On the other hand, in 2021 more sessions of subsidiary bodies of the Commission are taking/will take place virtually, requiring a range of preparatory meetings and webinars with interpretation in different languages and increased communication products including their translation to facilitate their successful implementation.

REGULAR PROGRAMME BUDGET
2020-2021

EXPENDITURE
AS OF 31 AUGUST 2021
7.4 MLN



THE CODEX SCORECARD



79

Guidelines



232

Standards

of which

11

General Standards

221

Commodity Standards



55

Codes of Practice



113

Maximum Levels (MLs) for contaminants in food

covering 18 contaminants



5663

Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs)

and 63 Extraneous Maximum Residue Limits (EMRLs) for pesticide residues

covering 231 Pesticides



632

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

covering

79 veterinary drugs

Risk Management Recommendations (RMRs) for

13 veterinary drugs



4596

Maximum Levels (MLs)

covering

376

food additives or groups of food additives

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Codex committees including food additives; residues of veterinary drugs; pesticide residues, and contaminants did not meet between CAC42 and CAC43 and so the data remain unchanged.

LIST OF STANDARDS AND NEW WORK PROPOSED FOR FINAL APPROVAL BY CAC44

STANDARDS

CCSCH5

Draft standard for dried oregano

Draft standard for dried roots, rhizomes and bulbs — dried or dehydrated ginger

Draft standard for dried floral parts – dried cloves

Draft standard for dried leaves - dried basil

CCCF14

MLs for cadmium in chocolates containing or declaring <30% total cocoa solids on a dry matter basis, *General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (CXS 193-1995)*

MLs for cadmium in chocolates containing or declaring ≥30% to 50% total cocoa solids on a dry matter basis, *General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (CXS 193-1995)*

Revision of the *Code of practice for the prevention and reduction of lead contamination in foods (CXC 56-2004)*

Amendment to the MLs for lead in fruit juices, *General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (CXS 193-1995)*

CCMAS41

Adoption/Amendments - Methods of analysis / performance criteria for provisions in Codex standards, *Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CXS 234-1999)*

Revised *Guidelines on Measurement Uncertainty (CXG 54-2004)*

CCFICS25

Draft principles and guidelines for the assessment and use of voluntary Third-Party Assurance (vTPA) programmes

Proposed Draft Guidance on paperless use of electronic certificates (revised *Guidelines for Design, Production, Issuance and Use of Generic Official Certificates (CXG 38-2001)*)

CCRVDF25

Maximum residue limit for flumethrin (honey)

Maximum residue limits for diflubenzuron (salmon - muscle plus skin in natural proportion)

Maximum residue limits for halquinol (in swine - muscle, skin plus fat, liver and kidney)

Amendment to the *Glossary of Terms and Definitions (CXA 5-1993)*: Definition of edible offal

CCPR52

Proposed draft MRLs for pesticides

Revised *Classification of Food and Feed (CXA 4-1989)*, Class C – Primary feed commodities, Type 11 – Primary feed commodities of plant origin; and revised *Principles and Guidelines for the Selection of Representative Commodities for the extrapolation of MRLs for Pesticides to Commodity Group (CXG 84-2012)*, Table 7 - Representative commodities for Class C

Revised *Classification of Food and Feed (CXA 4-1989)*, Class D – Processed foods of plant origin; and revised *Principles and Guidelines for the Selection of Representative Commodities for the extrapolation of MRLs for Pesticides to Commodity Group (CXG 84-2012)* Table 8 - Representative commodities for Class D

CCFA52

Proposed draft Specifications for the Identity and Purity of Food Additives

Draft and proposed draft food-additive provisions of the *General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) (CXS 192- 1995)*

Revisions to adopted provisions of the GSFA (CXS 192- 1995)

Proposed draft revision of the *Class Names and the International Numbering System for Food Additives (CXG 36- 1989)*

Inclusion of xanthan gum (INS 415) and pectins (INS 440) in FC 13.1.3 "Formulae for special medical purposes for infants" of the GSFA (CXS 192- 1995)

Changes related to the group header STEVIOL GLYCOSIDES in the GSFA (CXS 192- 1995)

Revised provisions of the GSFA in relation to the amendments to title and food category number for CXS 283 in Annex C of the GSFA (CXS 192- 1995)

Revised food-additive provisions of the GSFA (CXS 192- 1995) in relation to the alignment of nine standards for CCMMP, six standards for CCFO and three standards for CCSCH

Revised food-additive provisions of the GSFA (CXS 192- 1995) in relation to the partial alignment of CXS 249-2006, CXS 273-1968, CXS 275- 1973 and CXS 288-1978 to include tamarind seed polysaccharide (INS 437)

Proposed revised food-additive provisions of the GSFA (CXS 192- 1995) in relation to the linked entry for food category 12.5 in the References to Commodity Standards for GSFA Table 3 Additives in the Annex to Table 3

Revised provisions for sweeteners in different food categories (CXS 192- 1995)

Revised food-additive sections of the nine standards for milk and milk products, i.e. *Group Standards for Cheeses in Brine (CXS 208-1999)*; *Unripened Cheese including Fresh Cheese (CXS 221-2001)*; *Standards for a Blend of Evaporated Skimmed Milk and Vegetable Fat (CXS 250- 2006)*; *a Blend of Skimmed Milk and Vegetable Fat in Powdered Form (CXS 251-2006)*; *a Blend of Sweetened Condensed Skimmed Milk and Vegetable Fat (CXS 252-2006)*; *Standards for Cottage Cheese (CXS 273-1968)*; *Cream Cheese (CXS 275-1973)*; *Extra Hard Grating Cheese (CXS 278-1978)*; and *General Standard for Cheese (CXS 283-1978)*

Revised food-additive sections of the six standards for fats and oils, i.e. *Standards for Edible Fats and Oils not covered by Individual Standards (CXS 19-1981)*; *Olive oils and olive pomace oils (CXS 33-1981)*; *Named vegetable oils (CXS 210-1999)*; *Named animal fats (CXS 211-1999)*; *Fat spreads and blended spreads (CXS 256- 2007)*; and *Fish oils (CXS 329-2017)*

Revised food-additive sections of the three standards for spices and culinary herbs, i.e. *Standards for Black, White and Green Peppers (CXS 326-2017)*; *Cumin (CXS 327- 2017)*; and *Dried Thyme (CXS 328- 2017)*

Amendments to *Standards for Bouillons and Consommés (CXS 117-1981)* and *Wheat Flour (CXS 152-1985)* due to alignment of methyrate copolymer, basic (INS 1205)

CCFL46

Draft General standard for the labelling of non-retail containers of foods; and consequential amendment to the Procedural Manual

Proposed draft *Guidelines on front-of-pack nutrition labelling* and inclusion as an Annex to the *Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling (CXG 2-1985)*; and consequential amendment to Section 5 of the *Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling (CXG 2-1985)*

TFAMR8

Draft revised *Code of practice to minimize and contain foodborne antimicrobial resistance (CXC 61-2005)*

Proposed draft *Guidelines on integrated monitoring and surveillance of foodborne antimicrobial resistance*

NEW WORK

CCSCH5

Project document for the development of a standard for small cardamom

Project document for the development of a standard for dried and dehydrated turmeric

Project document for the development of a group standard for spices in the form of dried fruits and berries (All spice, Juniper berry, Star anise and Vanilla)

CCCCF14

MLs for methylmercury in orange roughly and pink cusk eel, *General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (CXS 193-1995)*

Development of Code of practice for the prevention and reduction of mycotoxins contamination in cassava and cassava-based products

CCFICS25

Project document for new work on the development of guidance on the prevention and control of food fraud

CCFL46

Proposal for new work on labelling information provided through technology

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In a year of virtual reality where all Codex meetings have been moved online, this publication highlights the innovations led by the Codex Secretariat to ensure progress on international food-safety standard setting could continue. It tells the story, committee by committee, of the commitment by global experts, host governments and the Codex family of Members and Observer organizations to ensure that the 44th Codex Alimentarius Commission would take place and have over 30 texts to adopt, protecting health and facilitating trade.

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ISBN 978-92-5-135295-3



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CB7565EN/1/11.21