



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON SPICES AND CULINARY HERBS

Seventh Session

Kochi, Kerala India

29 January – 2 February 2024

**PROPOSED RESPONSES TO CCFL47 QUESTIONS PREPARED BY THE INFORMAL WORKING
GROUP ESTABLISHED BY THE CCSCH CHAIR**

Based on the informal discussions held on agenda item 2, following is the proposed text that accounts for varying member views on the issue of country of origin and country of harvest while answering the questions posed by CCFL47.

Agenda item 2

CCFL questions: Clarify the distinction between country of origin and country of harvest; provide rationale why the provision for country of harvest should be mandatory and how such a declaration would be beneficial for fraud prevention.

Country of Origin: According to 4.5 of the GENERAL STANDARD FOR THE LABELLING OF PREPACKAGED FOODS (CXS 1-1985):

“when a food undergoes processing in a second country which changes its nature, the country in which the processing is performed shall be considered to be the country of origin for the purposes of labelling”.

CCSCH recognizes that this definition is broad and applicable to all food commodities.

Country of Harvest: CCSCH recognises that there is no definition for ‘country of harvest’ in Codex. However, in the glossary of terms for spices and culinary herbs, “harvest” is defined as the act or process of gathering agricultural crops. Based on this, the “*country of harvest is the country in which the gathering of the crops takes place*”.

Even though the country of origin and the country of harvest may be the same for many herbs and spices, these are two different terms. As such it will be beneficial for CCSCH to include in its glossary of terms an explanation of country of origin and/or country of harvest as it specifically applies to spices and culinary herbs.

The quality characteristics of saffron vary considerably depending on the country where it has been cultivated. The labelling provisions should provide clear and reliable information to consumers.

Some operators may think that the treatment of saffron, including mixing saffron from different countries, can qualify to change the label even though this process does not change the nature of the product. Therefore CCSCH6 recommended the standard for saffron including the labelling provisions for adoption.