



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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USE OF CODEX STANDARDS AND RELATED TEXTS AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

Comments received in reply to CL 2012/20-LAC: Chile, Colombia and Costa Rica

CHILE

Item 6: Use of Codex standards and related texts at national and regional level

Question 5: Codex standards: national priorities, interests and implementation

1. Please describe:

a. Which specific Codex standards and related texts (currently under development or already existent) are currently of most importance and interest to your country

All the Codex regulations are relevant for the country, and Chile in general adopts these international standards and regulations.

b. What are the current priority areas for setting national standards

The field of food safety.

c. Status of inclusion of Codex standards in national regulations and their implementation

The Food Health Code follows the Codex Alimentarius regulations to a large degree.

d. Difficulties in the inclusion of Codex standards in national regulations and their implementation (e.g. difficulties in the interpretation of Codex standards, shortcomings in the food control system, etc.)

No obstacles have been detected.

e. Ways forward to strengthen the inclusion of Codex standards in national legislation and their enforcement – possible needs for capacity-building in this regard

No technical assistance is required for these purposes.

COLOMBIA

Item 6: Use of Codex standards and related texts at national and regional level

Question 5: Codex standards: national priorities, interests and implementation

Government agencies are reviewing the technical information relative to the Codex standards and related texts. Generally these standards and texts are adopted partially. These regulations are applied to both domestic and imported food.

Activities are currently being carried out under the National Residue Plan, in accordance with the regulatory guidelines set forth in the Codex Alimentarius of the FAO. These documents are used in conjunction with ICA regulations on the proper use of veterinary drugs and were prepared in a joint effort with INVIMA.

d. Difficulties in incorporating Codex standards

Considerable differences between Codex standards and other international norms.

Differences among Codex standards on products and general standards (e.g., additives in chocolates and the general list of additives).

In addition, although the standards seem very relevant, we still find regulations from developed countries, the scientific basis of which is very solid, and in many cases we find differences among the requirements themselves.

COSTA RICA

Item 6: Use of Codex standards and related texts at national and regional level

Question 5: Codex standards: national priorities, interests, and implementation

1. Please describe:

a. Which specific Codex standards and related texts (existent or under development) are currently of greatest importance and interest to your country

Ans/. The important standards for the country are:

- All standards for dairy products.
- Preliminary Project review of the Principles for the establishment and application of microbiological criteria for food.
- Preliminary Project Annex regarding berries, for the Code of Good Hygiene Practice for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables.
- Review of the CCFV (Codex Committee on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables) standards (avocado, pineapple, etc.).
- Preliminary Project guidance on the performance of risk assessments on feed.
- Preliminary Project List of Hazards in feed, by order of priority.
- Maximum residue limits for veterinary drugs and pesticide, and maximum levels in food additives.

In addition, based on Codex standards, the Ministry of Health is developing a regulation on the assessment of Genetically Modified Living Organisms (GMO) in order to prioritize this topic.

Generally, the National Regulation is based on Codex standards so that all standards for product and transversal Committees may be of national interest.

b. What are the current priority areas for setting national standards

Ans/. The Technical Subcommittees establish the national standards and have agreed to a prioritized plan that will enable them to better improve standards that have already been approved, and to assess the need and possibility of raising new proposals for the establishment of new standards in accordance with the requirements of the country. However, this has not been an easy task.

c. Status of inclusion of Codex standards in national regulations and their implementation

Ans/. The most commonly used product standards include Cheddar, Gouda, Emmental, cream and other milk products. Codex standards have also been adopted, such as Pre-packaged Food Labelling and Nutritional Labelling.

Codex standards are of great importance to the country and are widely used in the absence of national regulations, which are the reference standards. As discussed, these standards are the basis for national legislation because the country does not have enough resources to generate scientific support data.

d. Difficulties in the inclusion of Codex standards in national regulations and their implementation (e.g. difficulties in the interpretation of Codex standards, shortcomings in the food control system, etc.)

Ans/. Costa Rica wishes to fully comply with the established requirements in the Codex standards and the issued technical food regulations. It also wishes to strengthen the control of all food in order of priority. However, many specified aspects are difficult to verify owing to lack of human, infrastructure and economic resources to perform market verification of the mandatory requirements. Costa Rica is therefore working with a prioritized product list. There have also been difficulties in the interpretation of the CCMAS (Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling) standards.

e. Ways of strengthening the inclusion of Codex standards in national legislation and their subsequent enforcement – possible needs for capacity building in this regard

Ans/. Costa Rica has plans to prioritize the adoption of Codex standards. However, this requires greater awareness and understanding of the benefits of these standards for the national production industry.

Similarly, awareness and publication of the benefits of the Codex standards to the country on the part of the political decision maker is required in order to increase participation in the development of international standards by various Codex Committees, reflect the national interest and guarantee the benefits of implementing Codex standards.