

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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COMMUNICATION FROM OIE¹

OIE Contribution to the 39th Session (2016) of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) wishes to thank the Codex Alimentarius Commission for the opportunity to provide this update on relevant OIE activities.

The relationship between the OIE and the Codex is particularly important because risks to human health and food safety may arise at the farm and any subsequent stage in the food production continuum. Therefore, risk management must be tailored to detect and address risks at the appropriate stage(s). The OIE is responsible for setting standards in the domains of animal health and veterinary public health, including animal production food safety, to manage risks arising from the farm level through to primary processing, and the Codex from primary processing through to consumption. The OIE and Codex must therefore continue to collaborate closely in the development of standards relevant to the whole food production continuum, taking care to avoid gaps, duplications and contradictions.

The OIE appreciated the opportunity to participate in meetings of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Codex Committees and expert groups during the past year and to contribute to its standard development process. Since the 38th CAC Session, OIE representatives have contributed to, or attended the following Codex meetings:

- 22nd Session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (February 2016);
- 47th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (November 2015);
- Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Interventions for the control of nontyphoidal *Salmonella* spp. in beef and pork (October 2015);
- CCFH electronic and physical working groups on Establishment of CCFH Work Priorities (2015);
- CCFH electronic and physical working groups on Proposed Draft Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Foodborne Parasites (2015);
- CCFH electronic and physical working groups on Proposed Draft Guidelines for the Control of Nontyphoidal *Salmonella* spp. in Beef and Pork Meat (2015);

The OIE also appreciated the participation of representatives from the Codex in relevant OIE expert meetings and the OIE General Session.

Regular participation in each other's standard setting work improves the coverage by official standards of the whole food production continuum in the standards and guidelines of the two organisations. This is particularly evident in the recent standards developed by both organisations on *Salmonella* in poultry and chicken meat, *Trichinella* in pigs and pork, and the current work on *Salmonella* in pigs and pork, and cattle and beef, which are aligned and address all recognised risks to animal health, human health and food safety in the farm to fork food production continuum.

¹ Document prepared by and under the responsibility of the OIE.

Harmonisation of OIE and Codex approaches to standard setting in the food production continuum

The OIE Animal Production Food Safety (APFS) Working Group, established in 2002, functions as a steering committee for the OIE's work programme on standards to reduce foodborne risks to human health due to hazards arising during the animal production phase of the food chain and to strengthen the coordination of standard setting activities between the OIE and Codex. Membership includes high level experts from the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and Codex, and internationally recognised experts in animal production food safety from around the globe. The Working Group held its 15th meeting in November 2015. The report of this meeting is available on the OIE website at:

http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Food_Safety/docs/pdf/AFFS_reports/A_Report_Nov_2015.pdf

At the 84th OIE General Session in May 2016, the World Assembly of Delegates (Assembly) unanimously adopted Resolution No. 27 on APFS work priorities of the OIE: <http://www.oie.int/en/about-us/key-texts/resolutions-and-recommendations/resolutions-adopted-by-the-oie-international-committee/>

The OIE encourages its national Delegates to coordinate their national position with their national delegations to Codex to ensure, at national level, alignment of their national approach to standards developed by the OIE and Codex.

Collaboration

In addition to collaboration at the international level the OIE is taking steps to support collaboration at the national level, consistent with discussions within the SPS Committee. To this end, the OIE invites the participation of Codex representatives in seminars for OIE National Animal Production Food Safety Focal Points. Coordination at the regional and sub-regional level is also encouraged.

The list of OIE Permanent Delegates is available at: <http://www.oie.int/en/about-us/our-members/delegates/>. Contact details of OIE National Focal Points for animal production food safety and veterinary products are available on the Regional Representatives websites at: <http://www.oie.int/en/about-us/wo/regional-representations/>

Another example of further strengthening of cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation at national and global levels was the recommendation from the FAO/OIE/WHO Tripartite annual meeting that the OIE encourage its Delegates to designate the national OIE Focal Points for animal production food safety as the INFOSAN Focal Point or, depending on national administrative arrangements, as the INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point. In response to this request the INFOSAN membership now includes OIE Focal Points for animal production food safety in more than 50 countries.

OIE work on animal production food safety

Salmonella in pigs and cattle

The OIE is developing recommendations for the pre-harvest management and control of *Salmonella* in pigs and cattle to complement the Codex draft 'Guidelines for the control of non-typhoidal *Salmonella* spp. in beef and pork meat' to ensure a whole food chain approach to *Salmonella* risk management in these species.

In 2014, the OIE convened two expert *ad hoc* Groups, which included a representative from the FAO and the Codex Secretary, to develop draft chapters on the 'Prevention and control of *Salmonella* in pig production systems (Chapter 6.Y.)' and 'Prevention and control of *Salmonella* in commercial cattle production systems' (Chapter 6.X.), respectively. The aim of these chapters is to prevent and control *Salmonella* in pigs and cattle and thereby reduce the burden of disease in these species, and the risk of human illness through food-borne contamination, as well as from direct or indirect contact with infected animals.

In December 2015, Member Countries' comments received on these draft chapters were reviewed by an *ad hoc* Group. The Code Commission, at its February 2016 meeting, reviewed the revised draft chapters, made some minor additional amendments and recirculated the revised draft chapters to OIE Member Countries for comment. The OIE also encourages OIE Delegates to collaborate with their national delegations to Codex to ensure alignment of *Salmonella* standards under development by both organisations.

The OIE acknowledges the high level of collaboration demonstrated between OIE and Codex during the development of each organisation's respective standard on *Salmonella* that will ensure an integrated food chain approach to the control of this pathogen in pigs and pork and cattle and beef.

The OIE draft chapters circulated for Member Countries' comments are available in [Annexes 30](#) and [31](#) and the report of the OIE *ad hoc* Group on *Salmonella* in pigs and cattle is available in [Annex 40](#) at:

http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Internationa_Standard_Setting/docs/pdf/A_TAHSC_Feb_2016_Part_B.pdf

Infection with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex

The OIE, with the approval of the Assembly, has developed a new draft chapter 'Infection with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex' (draft Chapter 8.X.) to provide risk management measures for all relevant species of the complex in bovids, cervids and goats. Once adopted, this draft chapter will replace the current chapters on bovine tuberculosis (Chapter 11.5.) and bovine tuberculosis of farmed cervidae (Chapter 11.6.).

The OIE draft chapter circulated for Member Countries' comments is available at: http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/International_Standard_Setting/docs/pdf/A_TAHSC_Feb_2016_Part_B.pdf (Annex 35).

The role of the Veterinary Services in food safety

The APFS Working Group, during its November 2015 meeting, agreed that there has been considerable development in the roles and responsibilities of veterinarians and Veterinary Services in food safety since the adoption of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code) Chapter 6.1. 'The role of the Veterinary Services in food safety' in 2008. Consequently they undertook to review and revise the chapter to include all the food safety areas that veterinarians are now involved in, as well as incorporating a farm-to-fork system approach to ensure food safety and suitability. The revised draft chapter also includes cross-references to relevant Codex standards. The Code Commission reviewed the revised draft chapter and made some additional amendments prior to circulating it for Member Countries' comments in its February 2016 report.

The OIE draft chapter circulated for Member Countries' comments is available at: http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/International_Standard_Setting/docs/pdf/A_TAHSC_Feb_2016_Part_B.pdf (Annex 32).

The APFSG Working Group also agreed to review and update Chapter 6.2. 'Control of biological hazards of animal health and public health importance through ante- and post-mortem meat inspection' given that it has not been reviewed since its adoption in 2006. They propose to undertake this work at their next meeting in 2016.

Future standard development in animal production food safety

Shiga-like toxin producing *E. coli*

The OIE, through the APFS Working Group, recognises that Shiga-like toxin producing *E. coli* (STEC) is an important pathogen in cattle and potentially other species for both public health and trade reasons. The APFS Working Group agreed that work on this pathogen will require a coordinated approach by the OIE and Codex to ensure an integrated food chain approach for its control. They will commence relevant work at the animal production phase of the food chain when Codex starts its new work on this pathogen.

The OIE will continue to address food safety-related issues as a high priority in its standard-setting work and will work closely with CAC and its Committees, and with other international bodies in promoting safe international trade in animals and animal products.

OIE work on antimicrobial resistance

Taking forward Resolution No. 26 Combating Antimicrobial Resistance and Promoting the Prudent Use of Antimicrobial Agents in Animals, adopted by the Assembly in May 2015, the OIE launched, in the last trimester of 2015, an annual collection of data on the use of antimicrobial agents in animals in OIE Member Countries. The template and guidance documents to complete this template were developed by the OIE *ad hoc* Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), endorsed by the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases and tested by the Member Countries through the training seminars for OIE National Focal Points for Veterinary Products, as well as through a regional survey. The ultimate aim is to publish annually a report on the worldwide distribution and use of antimicrobial agents in animals. The report and analysis of this first year of data collection were presented at the Assembly in May 2016.

In May 2015, an updated version of the OIE List of Antimicrobial Agents of Veterinary Importance was adopted by the Assembly, and included recommendations on the use of Fluoroquinolones and third and fourth generation Cephalosporins. This List is available at:

http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our_scientific_expertise/docs/pdf/Eng_OIE_List_antimicrobials_May2015.pdf

The OIE *ad hoc* Group continues to work in support of the global efforts to prevent and combat AMR, in particular on the OIE collection of data on the use of antimicrobial agents in animals worldwide and on updating Chapter 6.7 of the Terrestrial Code: Harmonisation of national antimicrobial resistance surveillance and monitoring programmes. The aim of this revision is to define criteria for selection of animal pathogens for AMR surveillance and also to include a table providing examples of target animal species and animal bacterial

pathogens that may be included in resistance surveillance and monitoring programmes. The Group met last from 19 to 21 January 2016. The next meeting will be from 21 to 23 June 2016.

The OIE continues to collaborate with WHO and FAO on AMR in particular through the development of common documents and through the participation of representatives of these two organisations on the OIE *ad hoc* Group on AMR. The OIE also closely collaborated with WHO on the development of the Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance and the Manual for implementation of National Action Plans. OIE Member Countries are encouraged to follow the guidance of the WHO Global Action Plan, which was developed with the support of the OIE in the spirit of the “One Health” approach.

Collaboration is also growing at the level of the Directors General, and the three organisations hosted a High Level Dialogue on AMR in April at the United Nations in New York to raise awareness on AMR with the aim of raising the topic at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2016. It may be of interest to Codex to note that the new Terrestrial Manual chapters 3.7.1 Minimum requirements for the organisation and management of a vaccine manufacturing facility, 3.7.2 Minimum requirements for the production and quality control of vaccines, and 3.7.3 Minimum requirements for aseptic production in vaccine manufacture, after consultation of the OIE Member Countries and revision by the Biological Standards Commission, were adopted at the Assembly in May 2016.

The OIE continues to be active in assisting Member Countries to build and implement effective legislation to assure the quality, safety and efficiency of veterinary medicinal products, particularly antimicrobial agents. The OIE, as an associate Member of VICH (the International Co-operation on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Registration of Veterinary Medicinal Products), provides support and encourages its Member Countries to take the VICH guidelines into consideration. The OIE considers that the international harmonisation of technical requirements for the pre- and post-marketing authorisation of veterinary medicines is a necessity for animal health, public health and the facilitation of international trade, and that VICH provides the forum to achieve these aims. In order to provide OIE Member Countries with full information about efforts to harmonise requirements, the OIE circulates VICH draft guidelines and other relevant VICH documents to Member Countries for comment, and then distributes the finalised guidelines.

The VICH Outreach Forum meets regularly, back to back with each VICH Steering Committee meeting, and the next meeting will be held from 20 to 23 June 2016 in Brussels.

In 2015 there was an opportunity for countries to learn more about the work of VICH, the role of its guidelines in the regulation of veterinary medicines and the VICH Outreach Forum at the public VICH 5 Conference, which took place in Tokyo from 27 to 29 October. The theme of the 5th VICH Conference was ‘Reaching Out to the World’. During the Conference, the debate focused on the benefits of VICH Guidelines for non-VICH countries, their needs and priorities regarding the technical requirements for the registration of veterinary medicinal products, and the contribution of the VICH to the global ‘One Health’ approach. The conference documents from the 5th Public VICH Conference are available on the VICH public website.

SPS Capacity Building for OIE Members

The OIE PVS Pathway

As part of the OIE global initiative for Good Governance of National Veterinary Services, and at specific Member’s request, the OIE conducts assessments of the quality of Veterinary Services and Aquatic Animal Health Services using the OIE PVS Tool. Subsequent steps in the PVS Pathway include PVS Gap Analysis, Veterinary Legislation missions and PVS follow up missions, to help improve compliance of the veterinary infrastructure with the OIE quality standards set out in the *Terrestrial Code* and *Aquatic Code*.

To date the OIE has received 135 national requests for evaluation of the terrestrial sector with 129 missions completed, and 17 national requests for evaluation of the aquatic sector with 11 missions completed. In addition, the OIE has received 66 official requests for veterinary legislation missions and 48 of these have been completed. Relevant information may be found at: <http://www.oie.int/support-to-oie-members/pvs-pathway/>

OIE National focal points

The OIE encourages all Member Countries to nominate National Focal Points, under the authority of the OIE Delegate, in a range of subjects including Animal Production Food Safety (APFS) and Veterinary Products. Currently the OIE has 172 nominated Focal Points for APFS and 173 for Veterinary Products. The purpose of creating these OIE National Focal Points is to improve communication between the OIE, Delegates and all agencies responsible for food safety, veterinary products, and SPS matters at the national level. A series of training seminars for OIE Focal Points continues to be conducted worldwide, on a region-by-region basis. Since November 2012, all seminars for Focal Points for APFS have included sessions on the importance of cooperation with Codex and WHO and have often included representatives from these organisations.

The 4th cycle training seminar for Focal Points for Veterinary Product aims in particular to broaden the understanding of key issues: 1) AMR, including the Global Action Plan (developed by WHO with the support of the OIE and FAO) and other Tripartite activities, the OIE database on the use of antimicrobial agents in animals, and the situation in the aquatic sector; 2) the quality of veterinary products, including the issue of counterfeit medicines, an overview of the registration/authorisation system in the region, implementation of VICH guidelines and good governance; and 3) anti-parasitic drugs and challenges (resistance and management of resistance).

The seminars allow for experience sharing and discussion among countries in the regions. They have highlighted the fact that participating countries have diverse regulatory mechanisms on veterinary medicinal products, reflecting their different situations. Some countries have no legislative framework or domestic production, while others have a consolidated system for both human and veterinary medicinal products.

The seminars also include working group exercises on completing the OIE data collection templates for antimicrobial agent use in animals. They also allow time to discuss technical priorities, and Member Countries' needs.

The 4th cycle of Regional Seminars for OIE National Focal Points for Veterinary Products will be completed by the end of 2016.

The Global Food Safety Partnership (GFSP)

The OIE continues to follow the work of the Global Food Safety Partnership (GFSP), a World Bank initiative, which is a Public-Private Partnership for capacity building to support better food safety practices across the global agri-food sector. Of particular interest is the key objective to help both public and private sectors at country level meet international standards. The OIE, together with our Tripartite partners WHO and FAO, have contributed to the recent updating of the GFSP Strategic Plan and will continue to engage in this work.