

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

Agenda Item 9

CX/FL 04/9

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING

Thirty-second Session
Montréal, Canada, 10 – 14 May 2004

CONSIDERATION OF FOOD LABELLING AND TRACEABILITY/PRODUCT TRACING

BACKGROUND

The 30th session of the Committee on Food Labelling had an extensive discussion on whether or not and if so how the Committee would proceed with work on traceability under the Agenda Item *Matters Referred from the Commission and other Codex Committees*, based on a background document prepared by Canada presenting current discussions in various Codex Committees. As no consensus was reached in the session, the Committee had decided to discuss this item further in the next session.

The 31st Session considered the comments received in reply to CL 2002/24-FL that asked for comments on the need for specific work on traceability and labelling, and especially how this could be addressed through the development of specific texts or the amendment of current labelling texts.

The Committee was updated on discussions of traceability/product tracing underway in various Codex Committees and had an extensive debate on the need for new work on traceability in relation to food labelling but did not come to a conclusion. The Committee agreed to continue the discussion on traceability/product tracing at the next session taking into account the progress made by other Committees (ALINORM 03/22A, paras. 120-125).

The present document provides an update of the various aspects of traceability/product tracing under discussion in other Codex Committees since the last session of the Committee.

CONSIDERATION OF TRACEABILITY/PRODUCT TRACING IN OTHER COMMITTEES

1. Committee on General Principles

The 18th Session of the Committee on General Principles (April 2003) resumed its discussion on "traceability/product tracing", on the basis of a paper prepared by the secretariat to report the views expressed during the sessions of the Regional coordinating Committees (CX/GP 03/7). The Committee concluded that there was sufficient support only to proceed with the development of a definition of "traceability/product tracing" for Codex purposes and agreed to establish an open-ended electronic working group under the direction of the Delegation of France to develop a draft for the consideration of the next regular session of the Committee.

The proposed definition was circulated for comments in document CX/GP 04/20/6 that will be considered by the 20th (regular) Session of the Committee on General Principles, that will be held the week preceding the CCFL. Information on the results of the discussion will be presented during the CCFL Session.

2. Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems

The 12th Session of the Committee (December 2003) agreed to continue its discussion on traceability/product tracing in the context of food inspection and certification systems at its next meeting. It was agreed that the

¹ ALINORM 03/33A para.97

Australian Secretariat would prepare a document containing a preliminary set of “principles on traceability/product tracing”, based on the discussion that has occurred over the past two years in the Regional Coordinating Committees, and this document will be circulated for comment through a Circular Letter to all Member countries and international organizations with observer status in Codex. Furthermore, the Committee agreed that the Australian Secretariat would prepare a discussion paper, based on the above document, together with the comments received, the outputs and recommendations from seminars and workshops (as appropriate), discussions in the Codex Committee on General Principles and other relevant Codex Committees and Regional Coordinating Committees, and other relevant documents, for circulation and discussion at its next meeting (ALINORM 04/27/30, paras. 72-74).

The Preliminary Set of Principles on Traceability/Product Tracing was circulated for comments in Circular Letter CL 2004/6-FICS in April 2004.

3. Ad hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Animal Feeding

Proposed Draft Code of Practice on Good Animal Feeding

The Commission noted the lack of consensus on the following controversial issues: the definition of a “feed additive”; the labelling of feeds containing foods derived from biotechnology; and the requirements for traceability/product tracing of animal feeds and feed ingredients. The Commission adopted the proposed draft Code on Good Animal Feeding at Step 5 and advanced the text to Step 8 (with the omission of Steps 6 and 7), with the exception of the definition of “feed additive” and paragraphs 11, 12 and 13 that were advanced to Step 6 only for further consideration by an additional session of the *ad hoc* Task Force on Animal Feeding (to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 17 to 20 May 2004) (ALINORM 03/41, paras. 40-41).

The text of the relevant sections of the *Draft Code of Practice on Good Animal Feeding* (ALINORM 03/38A, Appendix II) is attached for information:

4.3 Labelling

11. Competent authorities may decide that feed and feed ingredients consisting, containing or produced from GMOs should be labelled with references to the genetic modification as a risk management measure.

4.3 TRACEABILITY/PRODUCT TRACING AND RECORD KEEPING OF FEED AND FEED INGREDIENTS

12. Traceability/product tracing of feed and feed ingredients, including additives, should be enabled by proper labelling and record keeping at all stages of production and distribution. This should facilitate the prompt trace-back or trace-forward of materials and products if any actual or potential health risks are identified, and prompt and complete withdrawal or recall of products where necessary. Records should be maintained and readily available regarding the production, distribution and use of feed and feed ingredients for as long as appropriate to enable trace-back should a safety problem emerge, and representative samples of feed and feed ingredients should be kept where applicable for a suitable period of time.

13. Feed manufacturers should keep records containing full details of the supplier and date of receipt of feed ingredients, of the manufacturing process and the destination of all feed. These records could include:

- *inventory records (including labels and invoices on received goods), actual formulae, mixing sheets, daily production logs, files of complaints, files on manufacturing errors and corrective actions taken, analytical results and investigations of out-of-tolerance sample results, records respecting the disposition of returned and recalled feeds and feed ingredients, records of the disposition of flushed or recovered material, records of mixer validation and scale/metering device verification, etc.*