

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 05/33/11

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

Thirty-third Session
Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia, 9 – 13 May 2005

CONSIDERATION OF THE DEFINITION OF TRANS-FATTY ACIDS

Background

The 31st Session of the Committee on Food Labelling discussed the question of the declaration of trans-fatty acids, while finalizing the Draft Amendment to the Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling, but could not come to a conclusion and agreed to leave such declaration to national legislation. The Committee also asked the Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) to provide a definition for the purposes of the Guidelines and to consider this question further when such advice became available (ALINORM 03/22A, paras. 34-35).

The 26th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission discussed the Draft Amendment to the Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling at Step 8 and had an extensive discussion on the declaration and definition of trans-fatty acids. The Commission adopted the Draft Amendment to the Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling as proposed by the Committee on Food Labelling and requested the Committee to continue its work on trans-fatty acids in cooperation with the CCNFSDU, and asked FAO and WHO to provide advice on the available scientific data, as required, in order to facilitate the resolution of this complex issue (ALINORM 03/41, paras. 69-73).

Proposed Definition of Trans Fatty Acids

The 25th Session of the Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (2003) considered this question and agreed to consider a discussion paper prepared by the Delegation of Malaysia in cooperation with Denmark and other interested parties.

The 26th Session of the Committee (2004) considered the proposed definition of trans-fatty acids presented in document CX/NFSDU 04/11, based on their chemical structure and the AOCS method of determination, and agreed on the following definition of trans-fatty acids:

For the purpose of the Codex Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling and other related Codex Standards and Guidelines, trans fatty acids are defined as all the geometrical isomers of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids having non-conjugated interrupted by at least one methylene group (-CH₂-CH₂-) carbon-carbon double bonds in the trans configuration.

The Committee agreed to send this definition to the Committee on Food Labelling for use in the Codex Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling and other related Codex Standards and Guidelines (ALINORM 05/28/26, paras. 143-147).

The Committee on Food Labelling is invited to consider the definition proposed and to decide how to proceed, and in particular whether the definition should be included in the Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling or other labelling standards or guidelines.