

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 9

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

13th Session

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 9-13 December 2002

INFORMATION AND REPORTS ON FOOD CONTROL AND FOOD SAFETY ISSUES INCLUDING CODEX STANDARDS

The following countries have sent comments: Brazil, Colombia and Panama

BRAZIL

I – FOOD CONTROL AND FOOD SAFETY ISSUES INCLUDING CODEX STANDARDS – AGENDA ITEM 9

A) OFFICIAL BODIES

NATIONAL BODIES FOR FOOD CONTROL, INCLUDING ASPECTS RELATING TO IMPORT AND EXPORT

In Brazil, the bodies responsible for food control are the **Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply**, with its **Secretariat for Agricultural Protection** and **Secretariat for Rural Support and Cooperatives**, and the **Ministry of Health** with its **National Agency for Disease Surveillance**.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK AND FOOD SUPPLY

The general structure of the **Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply (MAPA)** and information on its divisions, services and officers can be found on its Web page:

<http://www.agricultura.gov.br/Html/titulares.asp?nome=&sigla=&funcao=>

The MAPA body responsible for food control is the **Secretariat for Agricultural Protection (SDA)**, whose structure was established by Internal Regulation approved by Ordinance N° 319 of 6 May 1996.

The Internal Regulation can be consulted on the following Web page:

<ftp://ftp.agricultura.gov.br/regimento.doc>

The SDA has three departments: the **Department of Livestock Protection**, the **Department of Inspection of Animal Products (DIPOA)** and the **Department of Plant Protection and Inspection (DDIV)**.

The mandated functions of the Secretariat for Agricultural Protection include:

- I – helping formulate agricultural policy in so far as this concerns plant and livestock protection;
- II – regulating and applying specific legislation to supervise:
 - a) the protection of animal and plant health;
 - b) the inspection of animal products, beverages, vinegars, wines, and wine and grape products;
 - c) the control of production, marketing and use of veterinary products and pesticides, their compounds and related products;
 - d) laboratory analysis as an instrument of health protection, inspection of animal products and control of agricultural inputs and beverages, vinegars, wines, and wine and grape products;
- III – implementing actions resulting from the decisions of international organizations and agreements with foreign governments on matters falling within its field of competence.

In addition to the specific functions of the two departments directly associated with the control and inspection of plant and animal products, there are also three divisions in the Office of the SDA/MAPA that are charged with providing food safety information, analysis and support to the Secretary of State and the departments:

1. Division of WTO Health Matters.
2. Division of MERCOSUR Health Matters.
3. Division of Technical Cooperation and International Health Agreements.

The Secretariat for Rural Support and Cooperatives (SARC) has five departments: the Department of Promotion and Control of Animal Production; the Department of Promotion and Control of Plant Production; the Department of Agricultural Cooperatives and Associations; the Department of Agricultural Infrastructure and Extension; and the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

The mandated functions of the SARC include:

- I – helping formulate agricultural policy as regards the production and control of agricultural commodities, agricultural inputs, services to the agricultural sector and promotion of plant and animal production and fishery activities, cooperatives and agricultural infrastructure and extension;
- II – supervising the implementation of programmes and activities for the promotion of agricultural and fishery production, agricultural cooperatives and associations, agricultural infrastructure and extension, and the protection, management and conservation of land for renewed use under sustainable agriculture;
- III – regulating and applying specific legislation to supervise:
 - a) the protection and enhancement of animal and plant species of economic interest;
 - b) horse-racing and riding establishments;
 - c) the development and promotion of agricultural, livestock and fishery production;
 - d) the control of animal feed production and trade, animal reproduction materials, seeds and plants, adjuvants, fertilizers, inoculants and biofertilizers;
 - e) the classification of plant products, by-products and residues of economic value, and commercial animal breeding and agricultural mechanization and aviation operations;

- f) the protection of cropland and the national land register in accordance with Law N° 9 456 of 25 April 1997.

With this organizational structure, the MAPA oversees and implements programmes for the food industry under its institutional responsibility.

IMPORT AND EXPORT

1. The sections of the **Secretariat for Agricultural Protection** that make up the overall system of registration, certification, control, accreditation and clearance of agricultural products for export and/or import, according to their specific areas, are:

In the Department of Animal Protection (DDA):

The Animal Laboratory Coordinating Unit (CLA/DDA) is responsible for providing laboratory support for the control of imported products. It has six laboratories and the following basic structure:

Service of Accreditation and Quality Control – **SCQ/CLA**
 Regional Animal Support Laboratory - **LARA/CLA**
 Biological Analysis Unit – **SAB/LARA**
 Physical and Chemical Analysis Unit – **SFQ/LARA**
 Animal Support Laboratory – **LAPA/CLA**

In the Department of Plant Protection and Inspection (DDIV):

International Affairs Division – **DAI/DDIV**
 Plant Protection Coordinating Unit – **CPP/DDIV**
 Plant Protection Division – **DPC/PPP**
 Plant Protection Service – **SVF/DPC**
 Division for the Control of Plant Transit and Quarantine - **DTQ/PPP**
 Service for the Analysis of Pest Risks – **SAR/DTQ**
 Service for the Regulation of Plant Transit
 Plant Inspection Coordinating Unit – **CIV/DDIV**
 Division of Wines and Wine Products – **DVIN/CIV**
 Division of Beverages and Vinegars – **DBVEN/CIV**
 Land Registration and Registry Service – **SRC/CIV**
 Plant Support Laboratory Coordinating Unit – **CLAV/DDIV**
 Regional Plant Support Laboratory – **LARV/CLAV**
 Biological Analysis Section – **SAB/LARV**
 Physical and Chemical Analysis Section – **SAF/LARV**
 Plant Support Laboratory – **LAV/CLAV**
 Biological Analysis Unit – **SAB/LAV**
 Physical and Chemical Analysis Unit – **SAF/LAV**

In the Department of Inspection of Animal Products (DIPOA):

Industrial Operations Division – **DOI/DIPOA**
 Meat and Meat Products Inspection Service – **SECAR/DOI**
 Milk and Milk Products Inspection Service – **SELEI/DOI**
 Fish and Fish Products Inspection Service – **SEPES/DOI**
 Technical Standards Division – **DNT/DIPOA**
 Product Standards Service – **SNP/DNT**
 Equipment Standards Service – **SNE/DNT**
 Installations Standards Service – **SNI/DNT**
 International Trade Division – **DCI/DIPOA**

Service for the Certification of Facilities – **SHE/DCI**
International Agreements Service – **SAI/DCI**
Service for the Control of Biological Residues – **SCR/DCI**

Alongside their routine control of production and production plants, the SDA's technical departments execute special control programmes to monitor the quality of agricultural products under their responsibility, notable among these being:

SAFETY AND QUALITY OF PRODUCTS, FOODS AND BEVERAGES (MULTI-ANNUAL PLAN FOR 2000-2004)

AGROFIT – Online database providing access to information on the correct and safe use of pesticides for plant protection. It provides information and directions on use, doses, crops, methods of application and safety intervals for the benefit of farmers, consumers and other interested parties.

URL: <http://www.agricultura.gov.br/agrofit/>

DATABASES ON ESTABLISHMENTS REGISTERED WITH THE FEDERAL INSPECTION NETWORK. System of information on all animal product establishments registered with the DIPOA/SDA/MAA.

URL: <http://www.agricultura.gov.br/sda/sif.asp>

NATIONAL PLAN OF CONTROL OF BIOLOGICAL RESIDUES IN ANIMAL PRODUCTS (PNCRB)

The plan covers activities to control biological residues in meat (PCRBC). Similar actions are envisaged for honey (PCRB), milk (PCRBL) and fish (PCRBP). This programme aims to inform interested parties of the annual programming of control of biological residues in the above-mentioned products, providing a summary of activities undertaken and reporting on any change in the PNCRB's sectoral programmes.

Modified by administrative order N° 42 of 20 December 1999.

<http://www.agricultura.gov.br/sda/dipoa/>

HACCP PROCEDURES IN THE ANIMAL PRODUCT INDUSTRY

The purpose of this programme is to provide industrial plants within the competence of the Federal Inspectorate with basic guidelines on the presentation, implementation, maintenance and verification of the Hazards Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system for the control of their products.

2. The sections of the **Secretariat for Rural Support and Cooperatives** that make up the overall system of registration, certification, control, accreditation and clearance of agricultural products for export and/or import, according to their specific areas, are:

The Department for the Promotion and Control of Animal Production and the Department for the Promotion and Control of Plant Production

Alongside their routine control of production and production plants, the SARC's technical departments execute special control programmes to monitor the quality of agricultural products under their responsibility, the following being particularly notable:

SAFETY AND QUALITY OF AGRICULTURAL INPUTS (MULTI-ANNUAL PLAN FOR 2000-2004)

HACCP PROCEDURES IN THE AGRICULTURAL INPUT INDUSTRY

The purpose of this programme is to provide industrial plants within the competence of the Federal Inspectorate with basic guidelines on the presentation, implementation, maintenance and verification of the Hazards Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system, as regards the control of their products.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH/NATIONAL HEALTH SURVEILLANCE AGENCY

The National Health Surveillance Agency was established by Law N° 9782 of 26 January 1999. This is an independent entity operating under special regime, i.e. a regulatory agency with administrative independence, financial autonomy and continuity of managerial staff. In the structure of the Federal Public Administration, the Agency operates under the Ministry of Health.

The Agency's institutional remit is to protect public health through the sanitary control of the production and marketing of selected goods and services, including surveillance of premises, processes, inputs and technologies. The Agency also controls ports, airports and borders posts and, together with the Ministry of External Relations, discusses international health control matters with corresponding foreign institutions.

The Agency is responsible for the regulation, control and inspection of products and services that present a risk to public health.

Its specific responsibilities regarding food are:

- to coordinate and supervise registration, information, inspection, risk control and the establishment of standards and guidelines, determining how best to organize technical and administrative procedures to ensure the health surveillance of food, beverages, bottled water, inputs, packaging, food additives, contaminants, and veterinary drug and pesticide residues.

With regard to food safety, the Brazilian Government has been pursuing activities and actions such as:

- establishing, with the creation of the National Health Surveillance Agency, a Directorate of Foods and Toxicology that is autonomous and sufficiently equipped with human and financial resources to improve the control and regulation of food products;
- strengthening the decentralized control actions of state and municipal governments operating under the national health system;
- prioritizing inspection within the food manufacturing process, encouraging application of Good Manufacturing Practices and the HACCP;
- participating actively in international technical committees and in the formulation of food safety standards and guidelines.

The organizational structure of the National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA) specifically related to the food sector can be consulted on Web page www.anvisa.gov.br

IMPORT AND EXPORT

The control of food imports into Brazil is centralized at each point of entry into the country: ports, airports and border posts.

The whole food import system is now computerized and can be accessed on the Web for information on forms of control for specific products and the relevant control authorities responsible for rejecting or admitting consignments.

ACTIVITIES OF THE CODEX CONTACT POINTS AND THE NATIONAL CODEX COMMITTEES IN THE REGION

The Codex Alimentarius Committee of Brazil (CCAB) was established in 1980 by Resolution Conmetro N° 01/80. Its key functions are to represent the country on the Codex Committees and defend its national interests and to promote the use of Codex standards as a reference for the formulation and updating of national food legislation and regulations.

The CCAB has 14 members representing the different sectors related to food matters: the government, industry, consumers and academia. It is coordinated by the National Institute of Metrology, Standardization and Industrial Quality (INMETRO) which also acts as its secretary.

The National Committee has a series of technical groups that follow the works of the Codex Committees and that are coordinated by the members of the National Committee. These groups are open to all sectors associated with their respective subject area.

As of October 2002, the CCAB had held 172 regular sessions and over 40 extraordinary sessions, their main objective being to follow up the work of the Codex Committees most relevant to the interests of Brazil. Since the 12th Session of the CCLAC in February 2001, the CCAB has participated in a variety of Codex activities, including replying to circular letters, preparing documents and declaring Brazil's views and position at sundry meetings. Brazil has recently participated in the following Codex meetings:

- Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems, Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, Codex Committee on Fats and Oils, Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants, Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues, Codex Committee on General Principles, Codex Committee on Food Labelling, Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Codex Committee on Food Hygiene, Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products, Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Food derived from Biotechnology, Codex Committee on Residues on Veterinary Drugs in Foods, Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products, Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Animal Feeding, Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses, Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Fruit and Vegetable Juices, Codex Committee on Cocoa Products and Chocolate.

Along with its routine activities, the Committee organized an internal seminar in November 2001 to evaluate its operations, involving all members of the technical groups.

The CCAB is permanently active in publicizing its and Codex's activities, making presentations at food-sector-related courses, conferences and workshops and setting up a dedicated Web page:

CCAB/INMETRO – <http://www.inmetro.gov.br/qualidade/comites/ccab.asp>

This page provides the following information:

- structure and functioning of the Codex programme;
- structure and functioning of the CCAB;
- schedule of Codex and CCAB meetings;
- list of Codex standards on CD-ROM;
- locations in Brazil where Codex standards are available for consultation;
- summary reports of Codex Committee meetings;
- draft guidelines and standards under discussion in Codex Committees;
- list of circular letters under discussion in Codex Committees;

In addition to these activities, Brazil chairs the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Fruit and Vegetable Juices, whose mandate is to review fruit and vegetable juice standards and to update methods of analysis and sampling, a work to be concluded by 2005.

The CCAB continues to work closely with FAO in implementing technical cooperation projects and is currently negotiating a TCP on risk analysis, as well as conducting a case study on Salmonella in poultry.

In addition to these cooperation activities, the National Committee is also coordinating a discussion group on strategies to implement risk analysis in Brazil, involving the academic world and bodies representing the Government, industry and consumers.

The CCAB can be contacted at:

CCAB Coordinating Unit
INMETRO
W3 Norte – Quadra 511, Bloco B, 4º Andar
70750-527 – Brasília – DF – Brasil
Tel: (55 61) 340-2211, 347-7882
Fax: (55 61) 347-3284
E-mail: codexbrasil@persocom.com.br

B) FOOD LEGISLATION

FOOD LEGISLATION OF ANVISA

Before formulating and updating food legislation, ANVISA assembles all interested parties for prior discussions, and before passing a regulation, ANVISA submits the draft legislation to public consultation. Most regulatory proposals and suggestions are based on Codex Alimentarius or MERCOSUR decisions or, failing this, on those of other recognized economic groups and/or international bodies.

Further information on ANVISA legislation can be obtained from the following Web page: www.anvisa.gov.br

FOOD LEGISLATION OF MAPA

Legislation related to MAPA's responsibilities in the food domain can be consulted at the following addresses:

<http://www.agricultura.gov.br/das/dipoa/> for consultation of all legislation relating to the control of animal products (laws, decrees, ordinances, administrative orders, manuals, identification requirements, public consultations).

http://www.agricultura.gov.br/ddiv/fr_legis.html for consultation of all legislation concerning the control of beverages (laws, decrees, ordinances, administrative orders, manuals, identification requirements, public consultations).

<http://www.agricultura.gov.br/html/legislacao1.htm> for consultation of the general legislation of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply and specific legislation on plant protection.

C) COOPERATION ACTIVITIES ON FOOD CONTROL AND TRAINING

A national FAO/ILSI seminar on risk analysis in food control was held in Brasilia from 9-11 May 2001, while a project is ongoing for evaluation and strengthening of the System of Prevention of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) and the Control of Feed Quality. Negotiations are under way with FAO for a TCP on risk analysis, with the National Committee acting as focal point.

COLOMBIA

I. CONTROL AND SAFETY OF FOODS COVERED BY CODEX STANDARDS

A. OFFICIAL BODIES

The official bodies responsible for food legislation and control are the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The Ministry of Health has the National Institute of Food and Drug Surveillance (INVIMA), while the Ministry of Agriculture has the Colombian Institute of Agriculture (ICA). The organizational structures of these two bodies are given in Annex.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The control of food safety in the country operates on different legally recognized levels, each with clearly defined functions.

The central level with national jurisdiction is represented, in the first instance, by the Ministry of Health, whose primary function is to determine health policies and to enact standards and legislation.

There is also the Ministry of Health's INVIMA which is basically responsible for implementing its policies on health surveillance and food quality control at national level. It operates in particular at the interface with the provincial bodies and heads the National System of Food and Drug Surveillance and Control. It also serves as reference laboratory for the National Laboratory Network.

INVIMA has a Subdirectorate of Foods and Alcoholic Beverages which is in turn made up of the Division for the Regulation and Control of Foods and Alcoholic Beverages and the Division of Food and Alcoholic Beverage Laboratories.

The provincial level is represented by the provincial health authorities which have jurisdiction over each of the departments making up the country. Their main function is to supervise and advise the local and municipal bodies.

The local or municipal level is covered by the local, municipal or district health authorities whose main function is to monitor or implement control activities, with regular visits to food processing plants, sample taking, product analysis, training, etc.

INVIMA therefore constitutes the health authority at national level. Inspection duties are carried out by units operating under the local health authorities, or where such duties have not been delegated, by units operating under the provincial health authorities.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

The functions of the Ministry of Agriculture include:

- Participating in the definition of macroeconomic and social policies and in the drafting of the National Development Plan in order to enhance the economic growth and social welfare of the agricultural, fisheries and rural development sector.
- Formulating agricultural, fishery and rural development policies, plans and programmes and strengthening processes of participation and planning, in accordance with macroeconomic policy orientation.
- Coordinating, promoting, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of national government policies relating to the agricultural, fishery and rural development sector.

- Setting policies and guidelines for agricultural and fishery research and technology transfer, and deciding general measures for technical assistance, quality, use and marketing relating to agricultural and animal and plant protection products and inputs.

The functions of the ICA include:

- Exercising technical control over imports of agricultural inputs and of livestock, crops and animal and crop products in order to prevent the introduction of diseases and pests that could affect the country's agriculture and livestock production, and certifying the safety of exports as and when required by the importing country.
- Exercising technical control over the production and marketing of agricultural inputs that present a risk to agricultural production and to plant and animal health.
- Adopting measures for the effective control of animal and plant health and for the prevention of biological and chemical risk.
- Applying measures for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Institute's strategies, plans and management.
- National Reference Laboratory

ACTIVITIES OF THE CONTACT POINTS

- Coordinating Codex Alimentarius activities at national level.
- Receiving final texts for transmittal to relevant bodies.
- Assembling comments on working documents for onforwarding to international committees and/or the Codex Secretariat.
- Supporting the subcommittees of the National Codex Committee of Colombia.
- Liaising with the members of Codex.
- Receiving and relaying invitations to Codex meetings and communicating the names of participants to chairpersons and the Codex Secretariat.
- Organizing the library of Codex Alimentarius documents.
- Organizing activities for the dissemination and promotion of Codex Alimentarius.
- Liaising between the Codex Secretariat and the National Codex Alimentarius Committee.

ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL CODEX ALIMENTARIUS SUBCOMMITTEES

- Meeting periodically to discuss Codex documents or proposals of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.
- Sending comments on Codex documents to the technical secretariat of the National Codex Alimentarius Committee and to the contact point for transmittal to countries and the Codex Secretariat.

B. FOOD LEGISLATION

In Colombia the Ministry of Health has been responsible for health regulation for approximately 50 years since the promulgation of the first National Health Code.

Food legislation is in the form of decrees and resolutions that have gradually been updated and harmonized with the provisions of the Codex Alimentarius since 1995, as, for example, Ministry of Health Decree 3075 of 1997 which was widely accepted by the producers and the surveillance authorities as it includes aspects relating to food safety:

- The consolidation of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs).
- The regulation of quality and safety systems such as the Hazards Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system.
- The obligation to set up an Epidemiological Surveillance System for Food-borne Diseases.
- The streamlining of procedures.
- The application of preventive and safety measures.
- An import and export regime.
- The tighter surveillance and control of fast food establishments and restaurants.

Another example is Resolution 730 of 1998 adopting the HACCP System in fishery and aquacultural products for human consumption, export and import, and Decree 60 of 2002 promoting application of the HACCP system in food manufacturing plants and regulating the certification process.

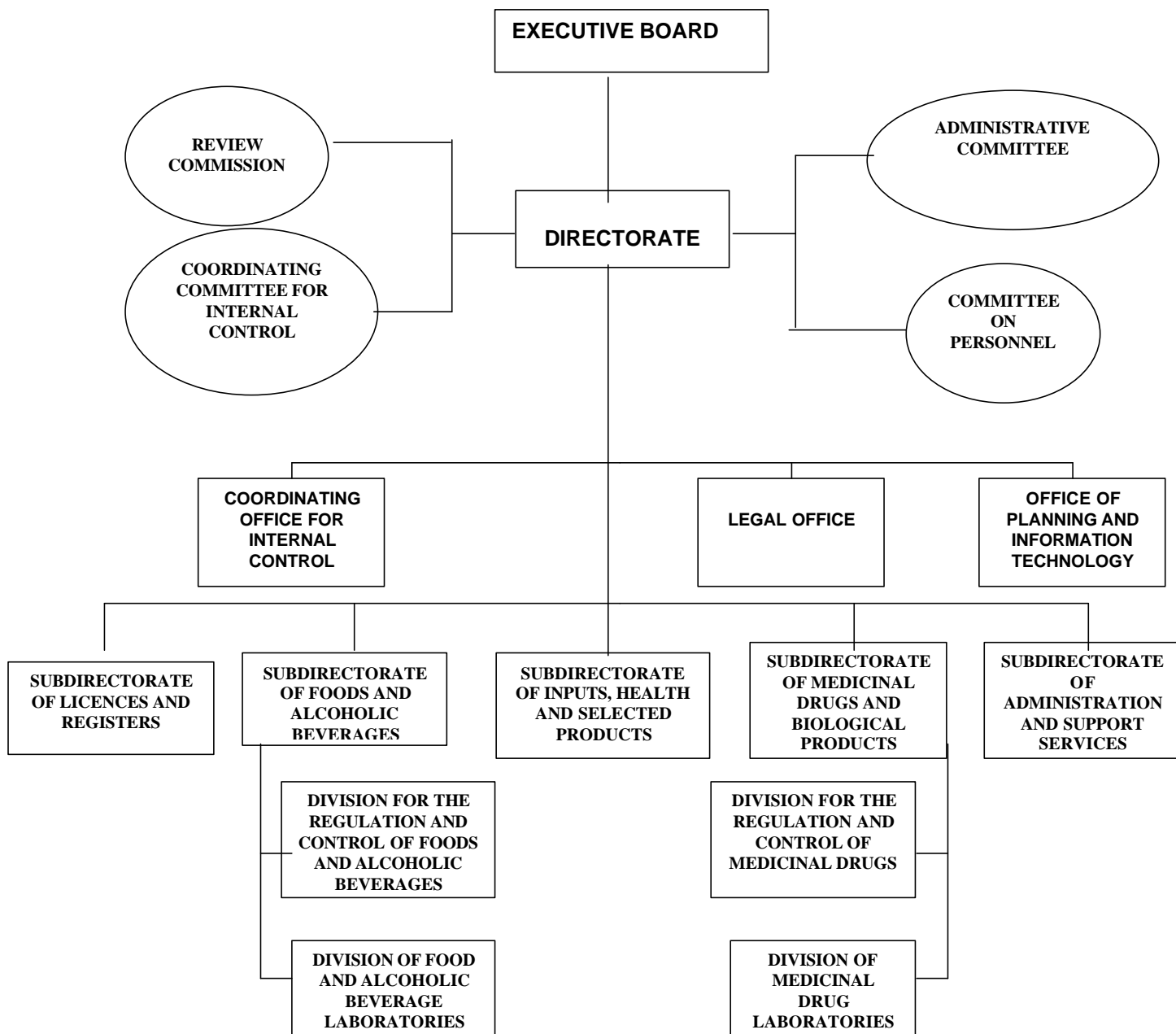
There are continuing efforts to update standards to reflect the standards, codes and texts of the Codex Alimentarius and, in recent years, the Ministry of Agriculture and ICA have been aligning their legislation to Codex guidelines.

C. COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

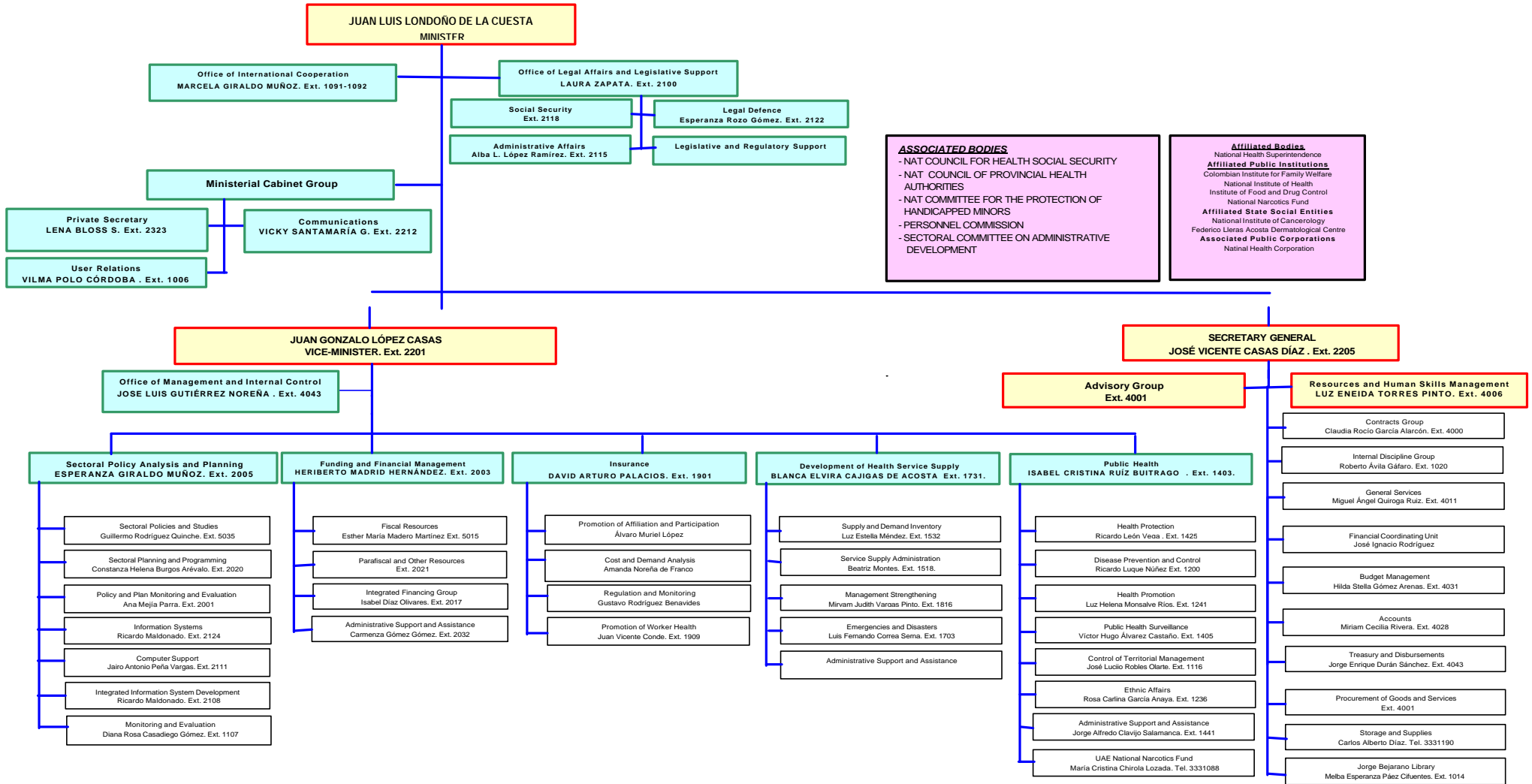
- PAHO/WHO: Training and coordination of food control activities, including safety policy orientations and travel to Inter-American Ministerial Meetings on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA).
 - American Embassy USDA/FSIS: Training in the inspection of meat products.
 - American Embassy: Laboratory methodology.
 - Spanish Embassy and Spanish Agency for International Cooperation: Training in official food control.
 - FAO: Execution of project "MODERNIZATION OF ANIMAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY CONTROL SYSTEMS" in coordination with the Ministry of Health and ICA.
 - FAO: Start of project "STRENGTHENING THE CONTACT POINT".
 - FAO: Formulation of project for the strengthening of genetically modified organisms.

INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF INVIMA

Decree 123 of 13 January 1995



MINISTRY OF HEALTH



PANAMA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD PROTECTION

I. Structure and Organization of the Food Protection Programme

Within the organizational structure of the Ministry of Health, the Department of Food Protection reports to the Directorate of Public Health (institutional authority at central level) which carries out normative (guidelines), regulatory (supervision/accreditation), official control and surveillance, sanitary inspection and advisory functions regarding food, food safety and food quality.

It is also responsible for developing the basic principles of food hygiene (prevention, protection, safety and promotion), as well as ensuring that existing regulations are effectively complied with.

The central organization has four services to help it with this task:

Food Analysis and Health Registration Service (ARSA)

- Training and analysis of all foods, beverages and detergents that enter the national market or are meant for export. These must comply with technical standards and have been properly registered. The service also runs a database with information for the Official Health Control and Vigilance Authority.

Hygiene and Control Service (HCA)

- This is responsible for checking the sanitary conditions of food retail stores, issuing notifications of infringement where appropriate, and for monitoring and analysing food under the official safety and quality control programme.

National Inspectorate of Food Processing Plants Service (INPLA)

- This is responsible for checking and evaluating food quality assurance systems in processing plants and establishments.

Food-borne Disease Service (ETA)

- This service is responsible for surveying, reporting and monitoring cases and outbreaks of food-borne disease occurring in Panama because of shortcomings of preventive control in the food chain.

The department also has twelve regional branches, implementing decisions or reporting information, so the programme has national coverage and responsibilities are discharged effectively in a coordinated and ongoing manner.

Each unit has professional officers and technical staff specialized in different disciplines and trained in checking the validity of food production, processing, packing, packaging, conservation, management and retailing controls.

This structure makes it possible to identify problems of control and prevention of food-borne disease (tourism and food safety), to address important issues of public health, to strengthen official checks and to verify prerequisites (GMPs, SSOPs, HACCP), all aspects that relate to food import and export, operating procedures and decision-making criteria.

II. Legal Framework

Health legislation concerns a variety of topic areas and includes:

- The Constitution of the Republic of Panama
- The Sanitary Code, Law N° 66 of 10 November 1947
- Decree 256 of 13 June 1962
- Law 60 of 2 December 1977
- Executive Decree 1195 of 3 December 1992
- Executive Decree 423 of 15 July 1993
- Executive Decree 65 of 9 June 1998
- Executive Decree 352 of 10 October 2001
- Resolution 468 of 2 November 1997
- Resolution 81 of 3 June 2002

Ministry of Trade and Industry
Directorate of Standards and Industrial Technology
Structure and Organization of the Directorate of Standards and Industrial Technology (DGNTI)

The Ministry of Trade and Industry's Directorate of Standards and Industrial Technology is answerable to the National Department of Business Development.

The DGNTI is the national standards agency charged by the State with implementing technical standardization, evaluating conformity and converting to the international system of units (SI). It has three departments: the Department of Standards, the Department of Quality Certification and the Department of Metrology.

The DGNTI's mission is to constantly promote and develop technical standards, quality management and certification of conformity as mechanisms that will ensure that the goods and services produced in, or imported into, the country comply with the quality standards of international trade, thus enabling Panama to participate in the processes of trade liberalization and market globalization.

Principal Functions

The principal functions of the Directorate include:

- **Standards function**
- **Certification function**
- **Supervisory function: technical standards and regulations**
- **Coordinating function: sectoral committees on standardization and metrological activities**

Legal Framework

The DGNTI is legally established under Section II of Law 23 of 15 July 1997, which sets out provisions for technical standardization, conformity evaluation, quality certification, metrology and conversion to the international system of units.

Technical Standards

Standards that need to be revised and harmonized with those of the Codex Alimentarius or where equivalence needs to be established include:

- Food labelling
- Genetically modified foods
- Maximum permitted pesticide residue limits in food.

Cooperation activities

FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme TCP/RLA/0065 "Strengthening of National Codex Committees and Application of Codex Alimentarius Standards" provided training to the Government, private, university, student and consumer sectors in the main areas of work of the Codex Alimentarius.