

# codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

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**Agenda Item 2**

**CX/AF 00/2  
April 2000**

## **JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

### **AD-HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL CODEX TASK FORCE ON ANIMAL FEEDING**

#### **First Session**

**Copenhagen, Denmark, 13 - 15 June 2000**

### **MATTERS REFERRED TO THE TASK FORCE FROM THE 23<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES**

#### **A. DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSION CONCERNING THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE**

##### **AD HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL CODEX TASK FORCE ON GOOD ANIMAL FEEDING<sup>1</sup>**

1. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission noted the recommendation of the 46<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee<sup>2</sup> concerning the urgent need for the Commission to develop international guidelines or recommendations which addressed all the issues relating to animal feeding and that the new mechanism of an ad hoc Intergovernmental Codex Task Force would be an appropriate means of achieving this goal. Several delegations supported the establishment of such a Task Force in view of the great importance attached to consumers' health and practices in international trade. In consequence, the Commission agreed to establish an *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Codex Task Force on Good Animal Feeding under Rule IX.1(b)(i) of its Procedure. The Secretariat presented draft Terms of Reference prepared by the Delegation of Denmark as set out in Appendix VI of the present Report. The Commission agreed to designate the Government of Denmark to be responsible for appointing the Chairperson of the Task Force in compliance with Rule IX.10 of its Rules of Procedure.

Its Terms of Reference are as follows :

##### **Terms of Reference**

- (a) To complete and extend the work already done by relevant Codex Committees on the Draft Code of Practice for Good Animal Feeding
- (b) To address other aspects which are important for food safety, such as problems related to toxic substances, pathogens, microbial resistance, new technologies, storage, control measures, traceability, etc.
- (c) To take full account of and collaborate with, as appropriate, work carried out by relevant Codex Committees, and other relevant international bodies, including FAO, WHO, OIE and IPPC.

<sup>1</sup> ALINORM 99/37, para. 230

<sup>2</sup> ALINORM 99/4, para. 5.

## **CRITERIA FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WORK PRIORITIES AND CRITERIA FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE COMMISSION<sup>3</sup>**

2. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission adopted amendments to the Codex Alimentarius Procedural Manual separating the criteria for work priorities from the criteria for establishing subsidiary bodies, which include provisions for the establishment of *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Task Forces operating for a limited period of time under closely defined terms of reference, but functioning in the same manner as established Codex Committees.

### **B. OTHER DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSION**

#### **PRINCIPLES OF RISK ANALYSIS<sup>4</sup>**

3. The Representative of WHO introduced the document (ALINORM 99/9), which presented a progress report on the work undertaken so far to implement the Action Plan approved by the 22nd Session of the Commission (ALINORM 97/37, para. 164). The Commission expressed its appreciation to FAO and WHO for the organization of expert consultations and noted that most of the recommendations included in the document had been developed by these expert consultations. The Commission considered the recommendations in the working paper as amended by the 46th Session of the Executive Committee (ALINORM 99/4, paras. 9-16).

4. The Commission adopted the following recommendations to be applied in the framework of Codex:
- (a) Programmes that contribute to risk analysis should have high priority;
  - (b) Relevant Codex Committees should continue to develop and to apply risk analysis principles and methodologies appropriate to their specific mandates within the framework of the Action Plan and report their progress to the Commission on a regular basis;
  - (c) Proposals for new or amended definitions for use within the framework of risk analysis, as appropriate, should be considered by the Codex Committee on General Principles;
  - (d) To overcome confusion about the usage of the terms “risk analysis” and “hazard analysis”, the Commission should reiterate its definitions for these concepts and explain how they apply in practice;
  - (e) The Commission should continue and expand its efforts to increase the participation of those national governments and NGOs that are members or observers but that are not presently active participants in Codex matters;
  - (f) Relevant Codex committees should appoint a co-author from a developing country for position papers, where the main author(s) is from a developed country;
  - (g) Relevant Codex committees should consider developing quality criteria for data used for risk assessment. To the extent possible such criteria should be consistent with one another, taking into account the technical differences in the disciplines covered;
  - (h) Relevant Codex committees should consider the acute aspects of dietary exposure to chemicals in food;
  - (i) Recognizing that primary production in developing countries is largely through small and medium enterprises, risk assessment should be based on global data, including that from developing countries. This data should particularly include epidemiological surveillance data and exposure studies;
  - (j) Risk management should take into account the economic consequences and the feasibility of risk management options in developing countries. Risk Management should also recognize the need for flexibility in the establishment of standards, guidelines and other recommendations, consistent with the protection of consumers’ health.

<sup>3</sup> ALINORM 99/37, para. 67 and Appendix IV.

<sup>4</sup> ALINORM 99/37, paras. 47-58.

## C. MATTERS ARISING FROM OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES

### CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE

#### *ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE BACTERIA IN FOOD*<sup>5</sup>

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene discussed the following:

5. The Delegation of Denmark presented the discussion paper which had been prepared (with the assistance of other countries) as agreed by the last session of the Committee. The document considered all sources of antimicrobial resistance and referred to the work currently underway in WHO, OIE and FAO in their respective areas of competence. The Delegation highlighted the public health concerns related to the higher pathogenicity of resistant strains of Salmonella and Campylobacter in food, and proposed that a risk profile and risk assessment policy should be defined.

6. The Secretariat noted that consideration of this issue required a multidisciplinary approach and recalled that the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission had established an intergovernmental Task Force on Animal Feeding, the Terms of Reference of which included addressing “*aspects which are important for food safety, such as problems related to toxic substances, pathogens, microbial resistance, new technologies, storage, control, traceability, etc.*”.

7. The Representative of WHO informed the Committee of the work of WHO on antimicrobial resistance in livestock, including the organization of an expert Consultation on Global Principles for Containment of Antimicrobial Resistance in Foodborne Bacteria (in collaboration with OIE and FAO) scheduled for March 2000, and stressed the importance of establishing a risk profile within the Codex framework, including consideration of the factors which contribute to an increase in antimicrobial resistance.

8. The Delegation of the United States expressed the view that antimicrobial resistance was one of the factors taken into account in risk assessment and there was no need for additional work in this Committee in terms of hygienic control measures. The Delegation therefore proposed to discontinue work on this issue, as it was adequately addressed in the framework of WHO, OIE and FAO, while matters related to residues of pesticides and veterinary drugs in food were addressed in the relevant Codex Committees.

9. The Delegation of Denmark pointed out that the Task Force would consider only some limited aspects of antimicrobial resistance and that a multidisciplinary approach was essential. Some delegations pointed out that antimicrobial resistance was a matter for consideration by the Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods. Other delegations and the Observer from IDF stressed that the expertise on microbiological hazards rested with the CCFH and that it would be appropriate to consider this issue further insofar as it related to the microbiological safety of foods.

10. The Committee agreed that this issue should be considered further at the next session, on the basis of a revised discussion paper in the form of a risk profile, to be prepared by the Delegation of Denmark, with the assistance of interested countries. Recognizing the importance of the issue, the Committee also agreed to ask the advice of the Executive Committee and the Commission on how to proceed in order to ensure coordination of work between concerned Committees.

### CODEX COMMITTEE ON RESIDUES OF VETERINARY DRUGS IN FOODS

#### *ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE AND THE USE OF ANTIMICROBIALS IN ANIMAL PRODUCTION*<sup>6</sup>

The 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods discussed antimicrobial resistance and the use of antimicrobials in animal production as follows:

<sup>5</sup> ALINORM 00/13, paras. 127-132

<sup>6</sup> ALINORM 00/31, para. 21 and paras. 33-38

11. The Committee recalled that the issue of antimicrobial resistance had been considered at the last session as one of the matters arising from the activities of international organizations (WHO). The Committee had agreed that this question would require further consideration, taking into account the work of international organizations, which would be presented at its 12th session. The Committee was informed of the activities of OIE and WHO in this area and discussed the relevance of antimicrobial resistance to its work and the need for further action.

12. The Delegation of Portugal, speaking on behalf of the member countries of the European Union, supported a multidisciplinary approach to address this complex issue, which was also relevant to the work of the Committee on Food Hygiene and the Task Force on Animal Feeding. The Committee had an important role to play to ensure the prudent use of antimicrobials and should consider the revision of the existing code of practice to integrate concerns about antimicrobial resistance.

13. The Delegation of the United States proposed that the Committee should bear the main responsibility for considering all relevant aspects related to the use of veterinary drugs and offered to prepare a discussion paper to identify the priority areas for new work, such as the development of a code of practice.

14. Several delegations stressed the importance of this issue and the need to take into account the ongoing work of the international organizations on antimicrobial resistance, especially OIE and WHO, in order to coordinate activities and avoid duplication. It was also proposed to establish a specific risk assessment policy for hazards associated with antimicrobial resistance.

15. The Observer from Consumers International stressed the importance of this issue for consumer protection and proposed that the Committee should endorse the recommendation of WHO to discontinue the use of antimicrobials in livestock as growth promoters and take into account the work of WHO to develop guidelines for the containment of antimicrobial resistance.

16. The Observer from COMISA expressed the view that some clarification would be needed on the exact responsibility of the Committee in this area since other international organizations were already working on this subject.

17. The Committee agreed that the Delegation of the United States, with the assistance of a drafting group (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States, OIE, WHO, European Community, COMISA, Consumers International) would prepare a discussion paper for consideration by the next session taking into account work of other international organizations and Codex Committees in this area. The paper would consider all aspects of antimicrobial resistance relevant to the work of the Committee and identify specific areas for further action, as required. The Committee also agreed that the drafting group would consider development of a code of practice for the containment of antimicrobial resistance in the discussion paper.

## **CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES AND CONTAMINANTS<sup>7</sup>**

### ***DISCUSSION PAPER ON DIOXINS***

18. The 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the CCFAC requested the Netherlands to revise the Discussion Paper on Dioxins for circulation, comment and consideration at its current meeting.<sup>8</sup> The 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission noted that work on dioxins had recommenced at the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the CCFAC, and data was being sought to allow the establishment of an appropriate guideline or maximum level.<sup>9</sup> The Committee noted that dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs were on the CCFAC Priority List for JECFA evaluation.

19. Some delegations noted the absence of data on levels from many regions and rapid, cheap and reliable methods of analysis for dioxins and therefore, felt that it was premature to establish maximum levels.

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<sup>7</sup> ALINORM 00/12A, paras. 126-132

<sup>8</sup> ALINORM 99/12A, para. 139

<sup>9</sup> ALINORM 99/37, para. 236

These delegations also noted that a reliable method of exposure assessment as well as the results of the JECFA evaluation were needed before proceeding further.

20. Other delegations, the representative of Consumers International and JECFA pointed out that WHO had undertaken a risk assessment in 1998 and that this could provide the basis for the elaboration of maximum levels and would provide industry and governments with a strong incentive to enforce source directed measures for the control of dioxins.

21. The JECFA Secretariat encouraged the submission of data on the types of foods and range of levels found in foods to allow the potential consideration of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs at the 57<sup>th</sup> JECFA meeting in June 2001.

22. The Committee agreed that the delegation of the Netherlands would finalize the Discussion Paper and use it as a basis for the elaboration of a Position Paper on Dioxins and Dioxin-like PCBs. The Position Paper would include the potential range of levels in the commodities of interest (including feedingstuffs), explore the arguments for and against setting maximum limits and information on available methods of analyses, for consideration by the next Session of the CCFAC.

23. The Committee further agreed that Germany, in collaboration with Belgium, Japan, the Netherlands and the United States, would develop a Code of Practice for Source Directed Measures to Reduce Dioxin Contamination of Foods for circulation, comment and further consideration at its next meeting.

24. The Committee agreed to inform the *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Codex Task Force on Animal Feeding and the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling of the above discussions as a matter of interest. It also requested the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling to provide information on methods of analysis for dioxins.

## **PRIOR WORK DONE ON THE DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE FOR GOOD ANIMAL FEEDING BY SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**

25. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (June 1997) noted the outcome of the FAO Consultation on Animal Feeding and Food Safety<sup>10</sup>, and agreed to consider the Draft Code of Practice on Good Animal Feeding. It assigned this work to the Committees on Food Hygiene, Food Additives and Contaminants, Pesticide Residues, and Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods, with the co-ordinating role to be taken by the Executive Committee.

### **CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE**

26. At the 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (October 1997), some delegations stressed the need for close collaboration with other Codex committees to expedite work in this area. Other delegations recognized the importance of globally applying control measures to the total food chain in collaboration with the OIE. The Committee agreed to remain involved in close cooperation with other Codex committees. The Committee also agreed that a circular letter be prepared to invite additional government comments to the proposed draft Code. The Committee further agreed to consider this issue again at its next session (ALINORM 99/13, paras. 96-99).

27. The 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the CCFH (October 1998) noted that comments received in reply to Circular Letter 1997/43-FH could not be discussed in view of time constraints (ALINORM 99/13A, para. 110).

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<sup>10</sup> Annex 2 of FAO Food and Nutrition Paper 69, Report of an FAO Expert Consultation on Animal Feeding and Food Safety, Rome, 10-14 March 1997.

## **CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES AND CONTAMINANTS**

28. The 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants (CCFAC, March 1998) decided to forward the following comments of delegations on the proposed draft Code for further consideration by the Executive Committee:

- In general, the control procedures in the document were supported;
- A significant concern existed about the wide scope of the code of practice;
- Improvements were advocated, especially the further elaboration of codes of practice directed towards specific commodities;
- Possible conflicts with other international bodies;
- Special attention was focused on the carry-over of additives/contaminants; and,
- Some delegations expressed their concerns about antibiotics and the potential hazards of antibiotic resistance.

29. The Committee noted that the Codex Code of Practice for the Reduction of Aflatoxins in Raw Materials and Supplementary Feeding Stuffs for Milk Producing Animals addressed many of the issues in the Consultation report, and agreed to elaborate additional codes of practice related to specific commodities in the future if necessary. It was also noted that the CCFAC could elaborate maximum levels for animal feeding stuffs or their raw materials where necessary due to problems in international trade (ALINORM 99/12, paras. 89-91).

## **CODEX COMMITTEE ON PESTICIDE RESIDUES**

30. The 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR, April 1998) agreed to forward the following comments to the Executive Committee for consideration:

- The scope of the Code should be clarified as it was not clear from the current draft whether feed items prepared at the farm level were to be covered by the Code in addition to commercially available feeds; and,
- The term “herbicides” should be deleted from Section 3.1 as the “pesticides” covers herbicides.

## **CODEX COMMITTEE ON RESIDUES OF VETERINARY DRUGS IN FOODS**

31. The 11<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF, September 1998) identified which might require further attention, specifically:

- Quality control of feeds, especially medicated feeds, at manufacture (e.g., dose control);
- Procedures for handling complaints and managing product recalls;
- Requirements for treatment and/or exclusion of specific types of meat/fish meals as components of animal feeds;
- Inclusion of a section on good feeding practices;
- Inclusion of specific elements of the Code into industry quality assurance (QA) programs; and,
- Inclusion of appropriate QA procedures to ensure adequate pathogen controls and control of contamination of feeds, including carry-over contamination.

32. With regard to medicated feed, some delegations suggested the inclusion of appropriate antimicrobial resistance-related recommendations of the Report of the WHO Meeting on the Medical Impact of the Use of Antimicrobial Drugs in Food Animals (Berlin, 13-17 October 1997, WHO/EMC/ZOO/97.4). The Committee expressed divergent opinions on the use of antibiotics in medicated feeds, including substances used for growth promotion, and a final decision was not reached. With regard to treatment and/or exclusion of specific types of components in animal feed, some delegations suggested the inclusion of more specific recommendations relating to transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) as made by expert Consultations addressing this issue. It was also suggested the Executive Committee should clearly identify

the role of each Codex committee, or assign the continued consideration of the Code to one specific Committee ALINORM 99/31, paras. 45-49).

#### **Executive COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**

33. The 46<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee recalled that the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission had approved the elaboration of a Code of Practice on Good Animal Feeding and had assigned this work to the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene, Food Additives and Contaminants, Pesticide Residues, and Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods, with the co-ordinating role to be taken by the Executive Committee (ALINORM 97/37, para. 129). However, progress on the draft Code had been slow because of the split responsibilities. Moreover, the technical need for the Code had evolved and greater emphasis needed to be placed on the appropriate use and control of antimicrobial substances.

34. The Executive Committee had an exchange of views on how to proceed with the elaboration of the Code. It was felt that the current draft was too general and that there was a need for a more complete text which addressed all the issues relating to animal feed. The Executive Committee was of the opinion that the Commission should proceed urgently with the development of international guidelines or recommendations on animal feeding that would provide more explicit advice than was contained in the present Draft Code. It proposed that the new mechanism of an ad hoc Intergovernmental Task Force would be an appropriate means of achieving this goal. It was noted that the establishment of such a task force would depend on the identification of a Host Government consistent with the Rules of Procedure.