



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Forty-fifth Session

FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy

21-25 November and 12-13 December 2022

CRD from Codex Observers related to Agenda item 4

(submitted by HealthforAnimals, International Meat Secretariat (IMS), International Poultry Council (IPC), International Dairy Federation (IDF), CropLife International, Grain and Feed Trade Association (GAFTA), Global Pulse Confederation (GPC), La Federación Panamericana de Lechería (FEPALE))

Protecting the Scientific Integrity of Codex at CAC45

The cornerstone of Codex success is the scientific basis that underlies all its standards, and its adherence to the agreed 8-step Codex decision process. These have been applied successfully for thousands of standards over almost 60 years of Codex. We hope that at CAC45 these values are applied and urge members to support advancement of all standards that meet the scientific and procedural requirements for advancement.

- 1. Respecting differences whilst respecting process.** Codex standards ensure that food is safe and can be traded. The 189 Codex members have negotiated science-based recommendations, and usually take decisions by consensus. There should always be room for differences of opinion. Yet there can be no difference of opinion as to whether Codex should uphold its mandate to draft and advance standards that “*protect the health of consumers*” for products that could be in international trade. Codex provides for procedural options to not support or oppose standards - the rules allow members to issue reservations, regardless of rationale, to abstain from the decision-making process by formally recording their opposition. This is intended to allow objections without preventing or delaying standards that other countries need. Reservations are used routinely.
- 2. Codex standards are voluntary.** Codex standards are voluntary with no automatic process authorizing a standard (or the product it relates to) in a country simply because an ADI and MRL have been adopted by Codex. As pointed out in the General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius in the Procedural Manual “*Codex standards and related texts are not a substitute for, or alternative to national legislation.*” The Statements also say that “*Only those other factors which can be accepted on a worldwide basis or on a regional basis in the case of regional standards and related texts, should be taken into account in the framework of Codex.*”
- 3. Codex decisions have consequences.** Codex values are: the scientific risk assessments carried out by globally renowned experts, as well as respect for established procedures. Standards that have met procedural and scientific requirements should be adopted as foreseen in the Procedural Manual. Not adopting standards that have met scientific and procedural requirements, undermines and diminishes Codex and its role in international trade.
- 4. Sectors working together to strengthen Codex.** Codex observers from across different sectors issue this joint statement of support for Codex procedures, integrity and scientific process. We believe in a strong well-functioning Codex that respects these core values and principles.