

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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Agenda Item 8

ALINORM 05/28/8-Add.1  
June 2005

## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

*Twenty-eighth Session*  
*FAO Headquarters, Rome, 4 – 9 July 2005*

#### LIST OF PROPOSALS FOR THE ELABORATION OF NEW STANDARDS AND RELATED TEXTS AND FOR THE DISCONTINUATION OF WORK

#### CONSIDERATION OF THE NEED FOR A CODEX STANDARD FOR SOY SAUCE

#### BACKGROUND

#### THE COMMITTEE ON PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

#### 19<sup>th</sup> Session (March 1998)

1. The 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee considered a proposal for standardization of soy sauce as new work for the Committee. In this regard, it was stated that the decision of the Committee to elaborate more general standards should also be taken into consideration when elaborating a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce, for example, by including soy-sauce like products<sup>1</sup>.

2. The 45<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee (June 1998) approved the elaboration of a number of general standards for certain groups of products as new work for the CCPFV including the elaboration of a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce. In taking this decision, the CCEXEC noted that Codex committees should follow the instructions and guidance established by the Commission by giving preference to standards which were inclusive of all products traded rather than highly specific standards, in order to avoid problems of achieving consensus at the time of adopting the standards<sup>2</sup>.

#### 20<sup>th</sup> Session (September 2000)

3. In view of its extensive programme of work, the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee agreed to regulate new work to be undertaken by establishing a Priority List for the Standardization of Processed Fruits and Vegetables based on the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities applicable to commodities laid down in the Procedural Manual of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. This List would form the basis for the products to be standardized at its subsequent sessions<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> ALINORM 99/27, paras. 73-75

<sup>2</sup> ALINORM 99/3, paras. 26-27 and Appendix 3.

<sup>3</sup> ALINORM 01/27, paras. 9-14.

4. The 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the CCPFV dealt with the finalization of certain Codex standards for processed fruits and vegetables arising from Volume 5A and other Codex committees as priority. Due to time constraints, it could not discuss the remaining standards scheduled for consideration including soy sauce. In order to speed the process, it was agreed to set up working groups to revise these standards based on the comments submitted, for circulation, comments and consideration at its next Session<sup>4</sup>.

#### **21<sup>st</sup> Session (September 2002)**

5. The 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the Committee was mainly advocated to the finalization of certain Codex standards arising from other Codex Committees<sup>5</sup>. Due to time constraints, it could not discuss the remaining standards scheduled for consideration including soy sauce. In an effort to speed up the consideration of the remaining standards, which were the same as those not discussed at its previous Session, it agreed to reconvene the working groups to revise these standards based on the comments submitted, for circulation, comments and consideration at its next Session. In addition, the prioritization for discussion were rearranged in accordance with the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities applicable to commodities as follows: processed tomato concentrates; canned tomatoes; canned vegetables including packing media for canned vegetables; jams, jellies and marmalades; soy sauce and canned citrus fruits<sup>6</sup>.

#### **22<sup>nd</sup> Session (September 2004)**

6. The last Session of the CCPFV concentrated its efforts to the revision of those standards for processed fruits and vegetables scheduled for consideration since its 20<sup>th</sup> Session including discussion on soy sauce. Two out of the 6 standards on the Agenda were considered in the plenary session and forwarded to the 28<sup>th</sup> Session (July 2005) of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for preliminary adoption. In view of the few comments submitted on canned citrus fruits, the Committee also agreed to forward this Standard to the Commission for preliminary adoption. Two other standards were revised by “in session” working groups and returned for comments and consideration at its next Session<sup>7</sup>.

7. When considering the Standard for Soy Sauce, the Committee recalled its Terms of Reference while acknowledging the mandate of other Codex committees that might better cover the standardization of this product. The need for a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce was also considered in the light of the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities applicable to commodities. The Committee agreed to discontinue work on the standardization of this product although it could not reach consensus on discontinuation of work on soy sauce within Codex and therefore, it agreed to recommend development of this work to the Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes in view of the decision of the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission (July 2004) to allocate initial elaboration of Codex standards for fermented soybean paste (doenjang) and hot pepper fermented soybean paste (gochujang) to the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia and, if required, finalization by the Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes. The Committee also agreed that continuation of work in the CCCPL should begin only after a throughout discussion on the need for a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce<sup>8</sup>.

#### **THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

8. The 55<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee (February 2005) noted the decision of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables to discontinue work on the standardization of soy sauce while recommending the Executive Committee to entrust this work to the Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes following a discussion on the need for a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce vis-à-vis the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities applicable to commodities.

9. The Executive Committee acknowledged the the CCCPL had been adjourned *sine die* and was currently working by correspondence on the finalization of the draft Codex Standard for Instant Noodles and possibly on the finalization of some soybean-related products arising from the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia.

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<sup>4</sup> ALINORM 01/27, paras. 11, 29, 35, 56, 40, 51, 64, 78.

<sup>5</sup> ALINORM 03/27, paras. 25, 45, 52, 74.

<sup>6</sup> ALINORM 03/27, paras. 95-97.

<sup>7</sup> ALINORM 05/28/27, paras. 48, 76, 89, 80, 84.

<sup>8</sup> ALINORM 05/28/27, paras. 8, 85-87.

10. The Executive Committee agreed that consideration on the need for a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce should be held in the framework of the Critical Review Process carried out by the Executive Committee for final decision by the Commission. If the answer to this question was negative, work should be discontinued within the Codex system. If it was a positive answer, continuation of work should be considered on the basis of developing a regional or international standard and what should be the procedure applied in each case<sup>9</sup>.

11. Following the decision of the Executive Committee, a Circular Letter CL 2005/6-EXEC was issued to request comments from Codex Members and Observers on the need for the standardization of soy sauce in the light of the options mentioned in paragraph 10 including an assessment against the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities applicable to commodities.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF THE NEED FOR A CODEX STANDARD FOR SOY SAUCE**

12. Many Codex Members that have commented on CL 2005/6-EXEC are in favour of the standardization of soy sauce as an international standard. Other Codex Members and Observers do favour discontinuation of work on this matter within Codex. Part of them, however, agree that if work on standardization of soy sauce is to be continued, it should envisage the development of an international standard. In both cases, such international standard should cover all types of soy sauce traded internationally.

13. The majority of the comments do not question the standardization of safety matters (e.g. contaminants, additives), however, there is no consensus on the need for standardization of non-safety matters e.g. identity of the product vis-à-vis different methods of production (fermented - naturally and induced - and non-fermented - enzymatic/acid hydrolysis of vegetable proteins known as “hydrolyzed vegetable proteins” or the initials [acid-]HVPs - and their mixtures) and preparation (basic/optional ingredients, styles which varies widely according to consumers taste in importing/exporting countries). The identity (sections on the scope, definition, description) and the non-safety related provisions of the Standard (sections on styles, essential composition -basic/optional ingredients- and quality factors -allowances for defects, labelling - name of the product -, etc.) around the identity of the product are linked to “the authenticity of the product”. It is noted that different types of soy sauce is defined in the Food Category System of the General Standard of Food Additives in Food Categories 04.2.2.3 Vegetables (including mushrooms and fungi, roots and tubers, pulses and legumes, and aloe vera) and seaweeds in vinegar, oil, brine, or soy sauce; 12.9.1.3 Other soybean protein products (including non-fermented soy sauce) and 12.10.4 Fermented soy sauce.

14. Those Codex Members/Observers not favouring the setting of an international standard state that safety and relevant non-safety matters can be addressed in a horizontal manner through the relevant general subject committees and/or to leave the non-safety provisions up to national legislations in view of the difficulties in getting consensus due to the diversity of national legislations which accounts for national/regional preferences (different types of soy sauce due to different production technologies/preparations). Instead, those Codex Members supporting the elaboration of an international standard state that non-safety matters surrounded authenticity of the product and the diversity of national food regulations are a strong basis for the development of an international standard for soy sauce to ensure fair trade practices and protect consumers against fraudulent practices. The commodity standard can also cover safety matters by developing specific provisions subject to endorsement by the relevant horizontal committees.

15. Although the CCPFV has not discussed the proposed draft Codex Standard for Soy Sauce in plenary session due to time constraints, the non-safety matters surrounding standardization of soy sauce as an international commodity standard have always been a difficult point in revising the proposed draft Codex Standard for Soy Sauce presented three times to the Committee. This is demonstrated by the great dealt of comments on these provisions received at each session of the CCPFV.

16. Based on the comments submitted in response to CL 2005/6-EXEC, which are summarized and reproduced in Annexes II and III respectively, and the discussion to be held at the 56<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee (June 2005), the Commission may wish to consider the following options:

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<sup>9</sup> ALINORM 05/28/3, paras. 53-56.

**POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR STANDARDIZATION OF SOY SAUCE**

17. The procedural options for the standardization of soy sauce are as follows:

- I. Discontinuation of work on standardization of soy sauce within Codex.
- II. Continuation of work on an international standard for soy sauce:
  1. commodity committee adjourned *sine die* (work by correspondent)
  2. active commodity committee (working in physical meetings)

**DISCONTINUATION OF WORK ON A CODEX STANDARD FOR SOY SAUCE**

18. The Codex Alimentarius Commission decides to discontinue work on a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce from the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (Agenda Item 8, ALINORM 05/28/8) and within Codex.

19. A variation of this proposal may be to suspend consideration of a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce for the time-being and come back on this matter at a later stage e.g. 5 years to reconsider the need for the standardization of soy sauce in the light of the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities applicable to commodities.

20. In the meantime, specific trade issues surrounding safety matters can be addressed through the proper horizontal committees e.g. Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants.

**CONTINUATION OF WORK ON AN INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR SOY SAUCE:**

21. The standard should be developed through the Codex step procedure in accordance with the established procedures to for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts laid down in the Procedural Manual.

22. Based on their Terms of Reference (see Annex I), there are two potential commodity committees that may undertake standardization of soy sauce namely:

1. Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes (adjourned *sine die*, working by correspondence);
2. Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (active, meeting every two years).

23. The main difference between the standards developed by the CCCPL and the CCPFV is that in the committees adjourned *sine die* standards are developed by correspondence. The possibility of holding a physical meeting might be assessed against the difficulties to reach consensus on the Standard by correspondence. Such justification has to be provided by the host country Secretariat of the commodity committee, for instance, after preliminary adoption of the draft Standard and agreed to by the Codex Alimentarius Commission in the framework of the Critical Review Process carried out by the Executive Committee.

**II.1 Development by correspondence - Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes**

24. The Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes have mainly developed standards for cereals and certain pulses (beans, lentils, peas, chick peas, etc.) which are intended for direct human consumption and not for further industrial processing. However, its Terms of Reference also cover processed products.

25. There have been successful examples of revision of Codex standards elaborated by Codex committees adjourned *sine die* such as the revised Codex Standards Bouillons and Consommés (Codex Committee on Soups and Broths, currently abolished) and Wheat Gluten (Codex Committee on Vegetable Proteins).

26. However, as soy sauce has demonstrated to be a difficult item even if it was not discussed at plenary sessions of the CCPFV a long time may be required for completion.

## **II.2 Development through physical meetings - Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables**

27. Another Committee that may address standardization of soy sauce is the Codex Committee on Processed Vegetable which is meeting every two years since 1998 after its adjournment *sine die* by the Codex Alimentarius Commission in 1987.

28. The Executive Committee had entrusted the standardization of soy sauce to this Committee but, due to its workload, the Committee was up to date unable to discuss the standard in plenary session which results in 7 years of the standard waiting for discussion in the Committee.

29. It is worthwhile noting that the demonstrated difficulty for the CCPFV to carry out the standardization of soy sauce is mainly based on its workload due to: (i) the already long agenda for updating/making more inclusive (horizontal) standards for existing individual processed, dried and quick frozen fruits and vegetables; (ii) the finalization of standards arising from other Committees; and (iii) the continuous proposals for new work arising from Codex Members/Observers. Even with the decision of discontinuing consideration of a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce, and keeping the remaining items on the Agenda without introducing any products in the Priority List, the length of the meeting was extended for 6 days to cover discussion in the plenary of these products that have been waiting for discussion since its 20<sup>th</sup> Session (2000).

30. In this regard, it is also worthwhile noting that the next session will be discussing standards for processed tomato concentrates; preserved tomatoes; canned citrus fruits (comprising 3 individual standards for different canned citrus fruits from Volume 5A); canned vegetables (comprising 7 individual standards for various canned vegetables from Volume 5A); jams, jellies and marmalades and pickled fruits and vegetables. In addition, pending matters for discussion in the CCPFV arising from Volume 5A comprise 10 individual standards for processed fruits and vegetables, 8 individual standards for dried fruits and vegetables, 16 individual standards for quick frozen fruits and vegetables and 5 codes of practices.

### **Conclusion**

31. The Commission is invited to take a decision on the basis of the options mentioned above. Should the Commission decide to pursue with the elaboration of a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce a timeframe needs to be set (e.g. preliminary adoption in 2007 and final adoption in 2009) against which the progress of work will be monitored by the Commission.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF:**

<p><b>Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes</b>  adjourned <i>sine die</i><sup>10</sup>  (host country: United States of America)</p>
<p>To elaborate world wide standards and/or codes of practice as may be appropriate for cereals, pulses, legumes and their products.</p>
<p><b>Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables</b>  active<sup>11</sup>  (host country: United States of America)</p>
<p>To elaborate worldwide standards for all types of processed fruits and vegetables including dried products, canned dried peas and beans, jams and jellies, but no dried prunes, or fruit and vegetable juices. The Commission also allocated to this Committee the work of revision of standards for quick frozen fruits and vegetables.</p>

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<sup>10</sup> Some standards elaborated by this Committee include but are not restricted to: Standards for Wheat Flour, Maize, Certain Pulses, Sorghum Grains/Flour, Rice, Oats, Couscous, etc.

<sup>11</sup> Some standards elaborated by this Committee include but are not restricted to: Standards for canned applesauce, canned pears, canned stone fruits, aqueous coconut products, fungi and fungus products, dried apricots, dates, pistachio nuts, a number of quick frozen fruits/vegetables e.g. broccoli, cauliflower, french potatoes, strawberries, etc.

### SUMMARY OF THE COMMENTS SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO CL 2005/6-EXEC

Codex Members/Observers commenting in favour/against the standardization of soy sauce recognized the same factors of the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities as encouraging/descouraging the continuation of work on this commodity as follows:

Criteria	Continuation of work	Discontinuation of work
a. Consumer protection from the point of view of health and fraudulent practices	<p>Different types of soy sauce on the market need provisions for identity of the product vis-à-vis product technology (Scope, definition, styles), ingredients vis-à-vis different types of soy sauce traded internationally (Essential composition and quality factors), authenticity (definition, essential composition and quality factors, labelling). These factors qualified the quality of the product and were important to avoid fraudulent practices thus, misleading consumers.</p> <p>Food safety provisions can also be addressed in the commodity standard e.g. identification of additive provisions (technological need).</p>	<p>Key issues surrounding safety and non-safety provisions for soy sauce such as additives, contaminants, hygiene and labelling were already adequately addressed in the existing general Codex texts applying across commodities e.g. General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods, General Principles for Food Hygiene, etc.</p> <p>Non-safety and safety provisions for this commodity can be taken up in the horizontal committees without need to duplicate work between vertical/horizontal committees e.g. contamination of soy sauce with e.g. 3-monochloropropane-1,2-diol (3-MCPD = chloropropanol), establishment of additives provisions (safety/technological need) e.g. benzoic acid, etc., definition for different types of soy sauce, can be addressed by the Codex Committee on Food Additive and Contaminants in the respective General Standards for Food Additives and Contaminants &amp; Toxins in Foods.</p>
b. Volumes of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries	Codex Members/Observers favouring/opposing to the standardization of soy sauce recognized that it is a commodity traded internationally, with a growing/potential market for different types of soy sauces produced in various countries/regions.	
c. Diversification of national legislation and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade	Codex Members/Observers favouring/opposing to the standardization of soy sauce recognize that there are different types of sauce due to different production methods/technologies, different types of preparations due to a diversity of allowed ingredients to accommodate taste/cultural preferences, etc. This leads to a variety of national legislations of the product.	
	Therefore, there was a need to harmonize different national requirements at international level to avoid deceptive practices in international trade.	However, there are no records of international trade barriers resulting from these differences and consequently, due to the lack of an international Codex Standard for Soy Sauce.
d. International or regional market potential		Elaboration an international standard through the Codex setting process might inhibit rather than facilitating international trade. Consequently, regulation of soy sauce should be kept at national level to allow for flexibility to accommodate different industry practices in accordance with consumers preferences.
e. Amenability of the commodity to standardization		
f. Coverage of the main consumer protection and trade issues by existing or proposed general standards		
Miscellaneous	<p>Although most of the comments supported the development of an international standard for soy sauce, there have no been specific reference as to which subsidiary body of the Commission should undertake the standardization of this commodity except for one Member who supported its elaboration by the Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes.</p> <p>Some Codex Members acknowledged that standardization of soy sauce does not fall within the Terms of Reference of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables. Other Codex Members referred to the workload of this Committee and the difficulties facing to address the standardization of soy sauce due to lack of consensus on a number of issues e.g. nature of product and the related provisions in the commodity standard (scope, definition, basic/optional ingredients, etc.).</p> <p>Some Codex Members were of the view that work done by CCPFV in this matter should be not be lost.</p>	

**COMMENTS SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO CL 2005/6-EXEC**  
**Original Language**

Comments in response to CL 2005/6-EXEC from Australia, Cuba, European Community, France, Indonesia, New Zealand, Paraguay, Thailand, United States of America, Venezuela, AIIBP/FAIBP, IHPC and WTO are annexed to this document in original language.

**AUSTRALIA**

Australia believes that while a standard for soy sauce could be justified in the context of the Codex *Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities*, as it appears to meet most requirements of the Criteria, a soy sauce standard is not necessary.

Justification for soy sauce against the Criteria includes addressing:

- Prevention of Fraud (Criterion A) – a definition for soy sauce could address deception around the trade of “soy sauces” from hydrolysed vegetable protein;
- Volume of Trade and Market Potential (Criterion B and D) – soy sauces are traded in significant quantities;
- Diversification of Legislation and Amenability to Standardisation (Criterion C and E) – standards for soy sauces vary and it would be generally a simple product to standardise;
- Coverage by Other Standards (Criterion F) – while Australia believes that Codex horizontal standards adequately address most issues pertinent to soy sauce, there could be value in a general definition of soy sauce being developed to assist the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants (CCFAC) in differentiating soy sauces in respect to chloropropanol contamination. However, such discrimination could also be left to CCFAC to determine.

However, Australia believes that like many other Codex commodity standards, the principles and provisions in Codex general standards for labelling, hygiene and additives and contaminants adequately address key issues around health and safety, and fair trade for foods such as soy sauce. A standard for soy sauce therefore is unnecessary in the context of Codex’s priority to address issues of food safety.

Australia would also like to note that if pursued, a Codex standard for soy sauce must ensure it captures all forms of soy sauce in international trade. Failure to do so could result in the Codex standard acting as a technical barrier to trade for legitimate products that are not captured by the standard.

Australia believes that Codex needs to provide greater guidance on the requirement for Codex commodity standards to be flexible and globally representative to ensure trade is not unfairly limited due to the adoption of restrictive technical regulations.

**CUBA**

Según las opciones que se indican en el párrafo 9 de la CL 2005/6-EXEC estamos a favor de continuar con los trabajos sobre la normalización de la Salsa de Soya como una norma internacional del Codex. (2 inciso b)

Consideramos también que el trabajo ya realizado no debe perderse y que debe continuar en el marco del Comité del Codex sobre Frutas y Hortalizas Elaboradas.

Teniendo en cuenta los criterios para el establecimiento de las prioridades de los trabajos aplicables a la salsa soya, consideramos que:

- a) Es importante considerar el aspecto de la Protección al Consumidor cuando se trate de la Salsa Soya ya que es un producto tradicional, conocido en todos los países y de amplio consumo en éstos. Por lo que, de no estar normalizado, pudieran existir prácticas fraudulentas que atenten contra la calidad y autenticidad del producto.



- b) La Salsa Soya que se consume en nuestro país se produce por la industria nacional y también se importa desde países asiáticos fundamentalmente.
- c) En el marco del Comité Técnico sobre Frutas y Hortalizas Elaboradas de Cuba, se ha incluido dentro de sus trabajos a corto plazo la redacción de un proyecto de norma cubana para la Salsa Soya.
- d) El avance en el trabajo realizado durante estos años en el marco del Comité del Codex sobre Frutas y Hortalizas Elaboradas, el proyecto de norma al que se ha arribado, demuestran las posibilidades objetivas de normalización del producto a nivel internacional.
- e) En la Norma del Codex para la Salsa Soya que se elabore se deberá tener en cuenta las cuestiones principales relativas a la Protección al Consumidor: la autenticidad de la tecnología de producción del producto, los aditivos alimentarios autorizados según los niveles máximos admitidos y el etiquetado del producto a través del cual se deberá informar, adecuada y convenientemente, al consumidor.

#### EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The development of a Codex standard for soy sauce is of real interest to the producing countries. However, as was specified at the 22nd session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables and confirmed by the Executive Committee, this work does not fall within the competence of this Committee, which is already in charge of numerous other files.

The continuation of the work in another Committee could be justified by the criteria for the establishment of work priorities: First of all, from the point of view of consumer protection and fraudulent practices (a): the consumer should be able to distinguish by means of a clear denomination, criteria of production and composition the traditional soy sauce ("Fermented *soy sauce* ") from other soy sauces ("not *fermented soy sauce* "and" Mixed *soy sauce* "). These products have different quality characteristics. Furthermore, confusion should be avoided between soy sauce and the hydrolyzed plant proteins.

The continuation of work is also justified in view of the volume and the regular consumption in many Asian countries (b), as well as the amenability of the product for standardization (e).

Concerning the choice between an international standard and a regional standard, only the examination of production statistics and worldwide exports and imports of this product will allow a decision on this question.

#### FRANCE

L'élaboration d'une norme Codex pour la sauce de soja présente un réel intérêt pour les pays producteurs. Cependant, comme cela a été précisé lors de la 22<sup>ème</sup> session du comité du Codex pour les fruits et légumes traités, et confirmé par le Comité exécutif, ce travail ne rentre pas dans les compétences de ce Comité déjà en charge de très nombreux dossiers.

La poursuite des travaux dans une autre instance se justifie, au regard des critères régissant l'établissement des priorités des travaux, tout d'abord, sous l'angle de la protection du consommateur et des pratiques frauduleuses ( a ) : le consommateur doit pouvoir distinguer par des dénominations et des critères d'élaboration et de composition clairs, la sauce de soja traditionnelle ( « *Fermented soy sauce* » ) des autres sauces de soja ( « *Non fermented soy sauce* » et « *Mixed soy sauce* » ), ces produits ayant des caractéristiques de qualité différentes ; de plus, il convient d'éviter toute confusion entre la sauce de soja et les protéines végétales hydrolysées.

La poursuite des travaux se justifie également sous l'angle du volume et de la régularité de consommation dans beaucoup de pays asiatiques (b), ainsi que l'aptitude du produit à la normalisation ( e).

Concernant le choix entre une norme internationale et une norme régionale, seul l'examen des statistiques de production, d'exportation et d'importation au niveau mondial pour ce produit pourront permettre de prendre une décision sur ce point

**INDONESIA**

We would like to refer our previous comments in the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the CCPFV as stated in the CX/PFV 04/22/8 Add.1. In Indonesia particularly, soy sauce has been known for more than one century with common name "Kecap" which famous as sweet soy sauce. Total production of sweet soy sauce in 2003 approximately 280.000 ton (90%), salty soy sauce approximately 31.200 ton (10%) and potential growth is about 3.6% per year. Because of the above reason, Indonesia is of the opinion that Codex should continue work on standardization of soy sauce as an international standard. We believe that standardization of soy sauce could assist in harmonizing national requirements and minimizing potential barriers to international trade.

We would appreciate it if our comments could be considered.

**NEW ZEALAND**

New Zealand supports option 1 of paragraph 9 (CL 2005/6-EXEC) that calls for the discontinuation of work on the standardisation of soy sauce. This work cannot be justified under the Codex Alimentarius Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities. The work of Codex should focus mainly on the horizontal issues that have a clear impact on the health of consumers and/or international trade.

The rationale behind the New Zealand position is:

- Products known as "soy sauce" differ among countries around the world based on regulatory definitions, as well as on taste and cultural expectations.
- We are not aware of any international trade barriers resulting from these differences.
- Issues related to chloropropanols in soy sauce, or in any other foods, should be dealt with by the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants with any limits set as part of a horizontal standard.
- We are also not aware of any health or safety issues due to the lack of an international standard for soy sauce.

Technological innovations have allowed for improvements in production techniques and time. There is no rationale for defining or naming soy sauce products based on such factors.

Given the apparent absence of justification for the standard based on safety or trade, continued work would not represent an efficient use of limited Codex resources.

**PARAGUAY**

Paraguay considera pertinente continuar con los trabajos sobre la normalización de la salsa de soja, en virtud a que es un producto ampliamente difundido y utilizado por un gran número de consumidores, en algunos casos sustituyendo al aceite y la sal, por consiguiente existe un volumen de producción también muy importante. Estos factores relacionados con el volumen de producción, consumo y las relaciones comerciales emergentes, en consecuencia hacen necesario el establecimiento de estándares que protejan la salud y eviten prácticas fraudulentas.

Igualmente PARAGUAY considera que, en el caso que se decidiera continuar con los trabajos, esta Norma debe ser Internacional a fin de garantizar que el documento esté acorde a las necesidades y parámetros de todos los miembros de la Comisión y no solo limitada a los Miembros pertenecientes a una determinada región, mas aún teniendo en cuenta la diversidad de la normativas o lo criterios de los diversos países al respecto.

Asimismo, cabe señalar que resulta bastante difícil y confuso que la tarea sea encomendada al Comité del Codex sobre Cereales, Legumbres y Leguminosas, que si bien se encuentra trabajando actualmente por correspondencia, había sido suspendido sine die.

**THAILAND**

We support the continuation of work on the standardization of soy sauce as an international standard.

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States supports option 1 in paragraph 9 of the CL that calls for the discontinuation of work on the standardization of soy sauce. The development of a Codex standard for soy sauce has been under consideration since 1998 and has not progressed beyond Step 3: no consensus on this work has been achieved within the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV).

The United States has considered the *Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities* in relation to this work and notes the following:

Consumer protection from the point of view of health. While chloropropanols in some soy sauces may be a consumer health issue, the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants is addressing this issue. There is no need to duplicate the work of a horizontal committee.

Apparent or potential impediment to international trade. We are aware of no trade barriers resulting from differences between countries.

Amenability of the commodity to standardization: Countries around the world label products as “soy sauce” that differ significantly in allowed ingredients and production methods. These differences did not allow the CCPFV to make progress on developing a standard.

Therefore, the United States believes that this work can not be justified under the Criteria.

### VENEZUELA

Venezuela está de acuerdo con la elaboración de la norma sobre el mencionado producto, por el comité del Codex sobre Cereales, Legumbres y Leguminosas (CCCPL).

Para Venezuela, los criterios aplicables para el desarrollo de la norma sobre “Salsa de Soya”, son:

- Protección al consumidor desde el punto de vista de la salud y de las prácticas fraudulentas.
- Comercialización, uso y consumo del producto.

### AIIBP

ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'INDUSTRIE DES BOUILLONS ET POTAGES

### FAIBP

FEDERATION DES ASSOCIATIONS DE L'INDUSTRIE DES BOUILLONS ET POTAGES DE LA CEE

Our position is as follows:

- (1) AIIBP/FAIBP will not actively ask for continuation of work on a Codex Standard for Soy Sauce.
- (2) However: if work on the Codex Standard for Soy Sauce continues, AIIBP/FAIBP will actively contribute to its wording, with special emphasis on hydrolyzed vegetable protein (HVP):

### IHPC

INTERNATIONAL HYDROLYZED PROTEIN COUNCIL

IHPC is a non-profit association of manufacturers and users of hydrolyzed proteins, such as hydrolyzed vegetable proteins (HVPs), autolyzed yeasts, and yeast extracts, that are used in the manufacture of a variety of food products, including soy sauce. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., we are an international association representing companies that manufacture, use, and sell hydrolyzed proteins throughout the world. IHPC and its member companies would be directly affected by the establishment of a Codex standard for soy sauce.

IHPC has been an active participant in the discussions of a standard for soy sauce since the matter was first raised by Codex several years ago, and, during these discussions, we submitted several rounds of extensive comments for ultimate review by the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV). We have advocated and continue to advocate that a Codex standard for soy sauce is unnecessary. Therefore, we recommend that Codex discontinue work on the standardization of soy sauce.

IHPC believes that Codex should not dedicate its limited time and resources to the development of a standard for soy sauce. In reaching this recommendation, IHPC considered many factors outlined in the “Criteria Applicable to Commodities” as set out in the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities in the Codex Alimentarius Procedural Manual. For the reasons discussed below, these criteria are not met by soy sauce.

First, soy sauce is manufactured in numerous countries throughout the world according to the taste preferences and cultural expectations of regional or country-specific populations. Examples of these preferences and expectations include the addition of certain sweeteners and spices in the soy sauce product known as “Kecap” in Indonesia and the specificity of certain soy sauces used for certain foods in Japan. Likely as a result of this worldwide variety, there was an obvious lack of consensus within the country delegations that commented on the proposed draft Codex standard for soy sauce or participated in the soy sauce discussion at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the CCPFV last fall as to how soy sauces should be identified in a standard, the optional ingredients that could be used in the products, and the proposed terminology used in labeling the products for retail sale. Thus, the worldwide variety of soy sauces and the lack of consensus among Codex delegations for the identity, labeling, and optional ingredients in soy sauce appear to preclude the amenability of the commodity to standardization.

Second, while many countries, including Japan, China, and Indonesia, have national legislations and other production requirements for soy sauce that are tailored to the taste and cultural preferences of their domestic markets, there is no evidence that these national legislations have hindered the international trade of soy sauce. Furthermore, none of the discussions leading up to or at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of CCPFV ever attributed the absence of a Codex standard for soy sauce as inhibiting international trade in any regard. We believe the regulation of soy sauce would be handled more effectively through national legislations in countries where the distinctions between types of soy sauce are more relevant to industry and consumers than through the Codex standard-setting process. Thus, as opposed to a uniform, Codex standard that soy sauces produced worldwide must meet to enter the international marketplace, the flexibility of national legislations governing the production of soy sauce are poised to play a positive role without hindering international trade.

Third, most countries that produce or consume soy sauce have national legislation that governs the quality of the ingredients used in the production of soy sauce, the safety of the manufacturing process and both the quality and safety of the final soy sauce product. As such, IHPC is not aware of any data indicating that a Codex standard is needed for consumer protection for reasons of health or fraud.

IHPC appreciates the time and resources CCPFV has invested in the consideration of a standard for soy sauce. However, for the reasons stated herein, we recommend the discontinuation of work on this standard. We thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

**WTO**  
WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

In response to the circular letter requesting comments on the need for a Codex standard for soy sauce (CL 2005/6-EXEC), I wish to bring to the attention of the Codex Executive Committee the fact that on two occasions WTO Members have raised concerns in the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the “SPS Committee”) regarding the lack of an international standard for soy sauce.

In 1998, the Philippines raised the concern that the lack of an international standard on the recommended level of benzoic acid in soy sauce allowed countries to discriminate in the use of the preservative, thus significantly affecting international trade in soy sauce. The SPS Committee was subsequently informed that the Codex General Standard for Food Additives was revised in 2004 to include, *inter alia*, a standard on benzoic acid levels in soy sauce.

In 2001, members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations<sup>12</sup> (ASEAN) and Korea raised concerns that, in the absence of an international standard on the level of the chemical contaminant 3-MCPD in soy sauce, the limits applied by WTO Members differed widely. ASEAN specifically complained that new maximum authorized level of 3-MCPD in soy sauce established at that time by the European Communities was too low to be practicable, thus restricting exports of soy sauce to the European Communities. Following further tests, the European Communities informed the SPS Committee that it had increased its tolerable daily intake level for 3-MCPD. The SPS Committee was also informed that the CCFAC was developing maximum residue levels for 3-MCPD for commodities of major interest, on the basis of recommended maximum daily intake levels for 3-MCPD developed by the JECFA.

Should the Codex Alimentarius Commission decide to develop a standard for soy sauce, it would be more beneficial for international trade if an international as opposed to a regional standard were adopted, given that the concerns previously raised in the SPS Committee related to global trade, and were not limited to trade within a single region.

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<sup>12</sup> ASEAN includes Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. All except Cambodia and Viet Nam were WTO Members at the time this issue was raised in 2001.