

June 2006

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 14

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Twenty-ninth Session

International Conference Centre, Geneva (Switzerland), 3 - 7 July 2006

OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM FAO AND WHO

Prepared by FAO and WHO

Contents of paper

PART IV: OTHER FAO AND WHO MATTERS

N.B. This paper does not include information on capacity building activities carried out by FAO and WHO. Such information is provided in a separate paper (CAC/29 INF/3).

PART IV: OTHER FAO AND WHO MATTERS

Revision of WHO Guidelines for Drinking-Water Quality

1. In 2004, WHO issued its third edition of the Guidelines, which have been comprehensively updated to take account of developments in risk assessment and risk management. In addition to guideline values for chemicals in drinking water, the document describes a framework for drinking-water safety and discusses the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, including the complementary roles of national regulators, suppliers, communities and independent “surveillance” agencies. More information can be found at http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/gdwqrevision/en/index.html

2. The first and second editions of the WHO Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality were used by the Commission to develop the General Standard for Bottled/Packaged Drinking Waters (Other than Natural Mineral Waters) (CODEX STAN 227-2001). This Standard makes explicit reference to the WHO

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Guidelines and consequently, the health-related limits for certain substances in that standard are automatically updated.

3. On the other hand, the Codex Standard for Natural Mineral Waters (CODEX STAN 108-1981, Rev. 1-1997, Amend. 2001) lists health-related limits for certain substances, substance by substance, some of which have become inconsistent with those in the WHO Guidelines. A Circular Letter is currently in preparation by the Codex Secretariat in cooperation with the host government secretariat of the Committee on Natural Mineral Waters, in order to obtain views of members on the need to revise the Codex Standard.

4. The Commission is **invited** to note the information described above.