



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

37th Session, CIGG

Geneva, Switzerland, 14-18 July 2014

OIE CONTRIBUTION TO THE 37TH SESSION (2014) OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION¹

1. The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) wishes to thank the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) for the invitation to participate in meetings of its Commission, Committees and expert groups during the past year and appreciates the opportunity to contribute to its standard development process.
2. The relationship between the OIE and the CAC is particularly important because risks to human health and food safety may arise at the farm and any subsequent stage in the food production continuum. Therefore, risk management must be tailored to detect and address risks at the appropriate stage(s). The OIE is responsible for setting standards in the domain of animal health (including zoonotic diseases) including animal production food safety, i.e. the management of risks arising from the level of the farm through to primary processing, and the CAC in the domain of food safety. Therefore, for food safety and international trade, the standard setting activities of the OIE and the CAC are interdependent and complementary.
3. In the year since the 36th CAC Session, OIE representatives have contributed to, or attended the following Codex meetings:
 - Codex Committee on Residues of veterinary Drugs in Foods (August, 2013);
 - 45th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (November 2013);
 - 33rd Session Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (February, 2014);
 - CCFICS Regional Workshop on Burden of Multiple Questionnaires Directed at Exporting Countries for Initiating Market Access and Monitoring Regulatory Performance of National Food Control Systems (February 2014);
 - 28th session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (April, 2014);
 - CCFH electronic Working Group on draft Guidelines for Control of Specific Zoonotic Parasites in Meat: *Trichinella spiralis* and *Cysticercus bovis* (2013/2014);
 - CCGP electronic Working Group on Codex/OIE Cooperation (2013/2014);
 - CCFH electronic Working Group on proposed draft Guidelines for the Control of *Nontyphoidal Salmonella* spp. in Beef and Pork (2014);
 - Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Risk-based Examples for Control of *Trichinella* spp. and *Taenia saginata/Cysticercus bovis* (October 2013).

Harmonisation of OIE and CAC approaches to standard setting in the food production continuum

4. The OIE established the Animal Production Food Safety (APFS) Working Group in 2002, with the view of improving the coordination and harmonisation of standard setting activities of the OIE and CAC. The CAC Secretary or representatives and, on an observer basis, the Chair of the CAC, regularly attend the annual meeting of the APFS Working Group. Through this mechanism and through participation in each other's standard setting procedures, the OIE and CAC collaborate closely in the development of standards relevant to the whole food production continuum, taking care to avoid gaps, duplications and contradictions. OIE Members strongly support this collaboration.
5. Regular participation in each other's standard setting work has helped to improve the coverage by official standards of the whole food production continuum. A good example of this approach in action was the

¹ This document has been prepared by and under the responsibility of OIE.

development of our respective standards on salmonellosis in poultry, which are aligned standards and address all recognised risks to human health and food safety in the farm to fork food production continuum.

6. The OIE encourages its national Delegates to collaborate with national Delegates to the Codex, in particular to discuss at national level harmonisation of relevant standards under development by the respective organisations (e.g. each organisation's respective texts on *Trichinella*).

Collaboration

7. The OIE welcomed the decision of the 27th Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP), to establish an electronic working group (eWG) on Codex/OIE Cooperation, which has provided another opportunity to strengthen cooperation between the OIE and Codex. The OIE has actively participated in this eWG and was pleased to be able to provide the venue and interpretation for the physical Working Group meeting which was held at the OIE Headquarters prior to the 28th Session of the CCGP.

8. The OIE supported the guidance document for Codex/OIE Cooperation developed and believed that it would provide additional mechanisms for strengthening collaboration between the two organisations whilst at the same time ensuring that the standard setting mandates of the two organisations are respected. Whilst OIE was disappointed that the CCGP was unable to support significant sections of the text proposed by the eWG, we are pleased that the abbreviated guidance will be submitted to the 37th Session of the CAC for endorsement, to promote further collaboration between the CAC and OIE.

9. In addition to collaboration at the international level the OIE is taking steps to support collaboration at the national level, consistent with discussions within the SPS Committee. To this end, the OIE has invited the participation of Codex representatives in seminars for National Focal Points in animal production food safety. Coordination at the regional and sub-regional level is also encouraged.

10. The list of OIE Permanent Delegates is available at: <http://www.oie.int/en/about-us/our-members/delegates/>. Contact details of OIE National Focal Points for animal production food safety and veterinary products are available on the Regional Representatives websites at: <http://www.oie.int/en/about-us/wo/regional-representations/>.

11. An example of further strengthening of cross-sectorial coordination and cooperation at national and global levels was the recommendation from the FAO/OIE/WHO Tripartite that the OIE encourage its Delegates to designate the national OIE Focal Points for animal production food safety as the INFOSAN Focal Point or, depending on national administrative arrangements, as the INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point. In response to this request the INFOSAN membership now includes OIE Focal Points for animal production food safety in nearly 50 countries.

OIE work programme on animal production food safety

12. The OIE Animal Production Food Safety (APFS) Working Group functions as a steering committee for the OIE's work programme on standards to protect consumers from food-borne hazards arising at the production phase of the food chain. Current and former high level officials of the FAO, WHO and Codex are members of the Working Group. The Working Group held its 13th meeting in October 2013. The report of this meeting is available on the OIE website at: http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Food_Safety/docs/pdf/A_APFSWG_2013.pdf

13. At the OIE 82nd General Session in May 2014, the World Assembly of Delegates approved the revised membership of the APFS Working Group which will continue to be chaired by Dr Stuart Slorach. The World Assembly also unanimously adopted Resolution No. 25 on APFS work priorities of the OIE (<http://www.oie.int/en/about-us/key-texts/resolutions-and-recommendations/resolutions-adopted-by-the-oie-international-committee/>)

14. Since 2010, the OIE has been revising *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)* chapters on several zoonotic parasitic diseases, including Infection with *E. granulosus* (Chapter 8.4.), Infection with *E. multilocularis* (Chapter 8.4.) and Infection with *Trichinella* spp. (Chapter 8.11.), which were all adopted in May 2013.

15. An OIE representative participated in the 45th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH), in November 2013, where discussions were held on the Proposed Draft Guidelines for Control of Specific Zoonotic Parasites in Meat and the OIE has since submitted comments on the revised document. We believe it is important that Section 9 should focus on monitoring and review of the 'control measures to protect humans from consumption of meat of Suidae which may be infected with *Trichinella* spp.' and recognise that 'verification of a compartment with negligible risk' is addressed in the Terrestrial Code Chapter 8.14. Infection with *Trichinella* spp (specifically Article 8.14.5). In other words, the mandates of the OIE and the Codex must be respected.

16. The OIE has also commenced work on a new Chapter X.X. Infection with *Taenia solium* for the *Terrestrial Code*. The aim of this chapter is to reduce the risk of infection of humans and animals with *T. solium* and to minimise the international spread of *T. solium*. The chapter will provide recommendations for the prevention, control and surveillance of infection with *T. solium* in pigs along with recommendations for the importation of pig meat. The draft Chapter, developed by an *ad hoc* Group, has been circulated for Member Countries' comments in the Code Commission's February 2014 meeting report.

17. The OIE is aware of the new work on the occurrence and control of parasites in food by the CCFH and noted that four of the top ten food-borne parasites identified by the Joint FAO/WHO expert meeting on multicriteria-based ranking for risk management of food-borne parasites (2012) are pathogenic agents of animals: *Taenia solium*, *Echinococcus granulosus*, *Echinococcus multilocularis* and *Toxoplasma gondii*. The OIE will follow this work to ensure alignment of the two organisations work regarding relevant food-borne parasites.

18. With respect to the prioritisation of pathogens for future standard setting, OIE experts have reviewed the scientific literature on *Salmonella* spp. in food producing animals other than poultry (i.e. pigs, cattle, small ruminants) and on *verotoxigenic E.coli* (VTEC) in food-producing animals.

19. Given the need for a whole food chain approach to salmonella risk management and the diversity of global animal production systems, the APFS Working Group recommended that a co-ordinated approach between OIE and Codex is essential for effective salmonella risk management in these animals. Given that the CCFH has proposed new work for the control of nontyphoidal *Salmonella* spp. in pork and beef meat respectively, the OIE has decided to commence parallel work on the prevention, detection and control of nontyphoidal *Salmonella* spp. in pigs and cattle to address pre-harvest management to complement the Codex guidelines. The OIE welcomes this opportunity to again work with the Codex in a similar manner to that successfully used for the development of companion standards on *Salmonella* in poultry and chicken meat.

20. The OIE, through the APFS Working Group has also discussed the need for and feasibility of developing OIE advice on the control of Shiga-like toxin producing *E. coli* (STEC) in food-producing animals with the purpose of reducing food-borne illness. Again, the OIE has decided that any new work on the control of STEC in cattle should be undertaken in coordination with Codex because a whole food chain approach to the risk management in cattle would be the most effective. The OIE will follow the outcomes of the future work programme of the CCFH to ensure alignment of the two organisations future work regarding STEC.

21. In the important field of biotechnology, an OIE *ad hoc* Group actively reviewed a number of chapters in the OIE *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals (Terrestrial Manual)*. It proposed splitting Chapter 1.1.7. 'Biotechnology in the diagnosis of infectious diseases and vaccine development' into two chapters, one on new and emerging diagnostic technologies and one on vaccines. To this end, Chapter 1.1.7a. 'The application of biotechnology to the development of veterinary vaccines' was adopted by the OIE World Assembly in May 2010. A new chapter 1.1.7. 'Biotechnology in the diagnosis of infectious diseases' was adopted in May 2012. For the 2012 edition of the *Terrestrial Manual*, these two chapters were included as guidelines. Chapter 1.1.6. 'Principles of veterinary vaccine production' will be revised to include information on benefit-risk assessment of veterinary vaccines, including biotechnology-derived vaccines, and a specific section on safety.

22. The OIE participated as an observer to the Codex *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance and collaborates with WHO and FAO, in the follow up of the work in accordance with the mandate of each organisation. The OIE *ad hoc* Group on Antimicrobial Resistance, convened in 2010 to update the existing chapters in the OIE *Terrestrial Code* and *Terrestrial Manual* related to antimicrobial resistance and the use of antimicrobial agents in animals, met 6 times from 2010 to 2013. Representatives from WHO and FAO were invited to participate at each meeting and a representative of the Codex secretariat attended the relevant meetings to ensure consistency with the most recent work done by CAC. The updated versions of the *Terrestrial Code* chapters 6.7. 'Harmonisation of national antimicrobial resistance surveillance and monitoring programmes' and 6.8. 'Monitoring of the quantities and usage patterns of antimicrobial agents used in food producing animals' as well as the *Terrestrial Manual* Guideline 3.1. 'Laboratory methodologies for bacterial antimicrobial susceptibility testing' were adopted in 2012 during the 80th General Session by the World Assembly of Delegates. Chapter 6.9. 'Responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in veterinary medicine' was adopted at the General Session in May 2013. Chapter 6.10. 'Risk assessment for antimicrobial resistance arising from the use of antimicrobials in animals' was adopted at the OIE General Session in May 2014.

23. The OIE List of antimicrobial agents of veterinary importance, which is published on the OIE Website, was updated by the OIE *ad hoc* Group on Antimicrobial Resistance taking into account the WHO lists of critically important antimicrobials for human medicine, and was adopted at the 81st General Session in May 2013. The OIE will continue and strengthen its collaboration on Antimicrobial Resistance with WHO and FAO through the Tripartite approach.

24. As a follow-up from the Global Conference on the Responsible and Prudent Use of Antimicrobial Agents for Animals, "International Solidarity to Fight against Antimicrobial Resistance", organised by the OIE, in Paris, France, from 13 to 15 March 2013 (recommendations available at: http://www.oie.int/eng/A_AMR2013/presentations.htm), an OIE *ad hoc* Group to set up a global database on the use of antimicrobial agents in animals was set up and met for the first time in January 2014.

25. The OIE's scientific work is supported by its worldwide network of 296 OIE Reference Centres. In the area of veterinary medicinal products, the OIE collaborates with four Reference Centres. For contact details refer to: <http://www.oie.int/en/our-scientific-expertise/collaborating-centres/introduction/>. From 14 to 16 October 2014, the OIE is organising the third Global Conference of the OIE Reference Centres in Incheon (Seoul), Korea (Rep. of).

26. The OIE continued to be active in assisting Member Countries to build and implement effective legislation to assure the quality, safety and efficiency of veterinary medicinal products. The OIE is an associate Member of VICH (the International Co-operation on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Registration of Veterinary Medicinal Products). The OIE has supported the formation of a VICH Outreach Forum for non-VICH countries meeting certain criteria. This Forum has now met three times (by June 2014 four times), back to back with the VICH Steering Committee meeting.

SPS Capacity Building for OIE Members

The OIE PVS Pathway

27. As part of the OIE global initiative for Good Governance of National Veterinary Services, and at specific Member's request, the OIE conducts assessments of the quality of Veterinary Services and Aquatic Animal Health Services using the OIE *PVS Tool*. Subsequent steps in the PVS Pathway include PVS Gap Analysis, Veterinary Legislation missions and PVS follow up missions, to help improve compliance of the veterinary infrastructure with the OIE quality standards set out in the *Terrestrial Code* and *Aquatic Code*.

28. The PVS Tool has been revised and in the latest edition (2013) the critical competency on food safety was expanded to include points that address the standards of food producing premises. In addition, the first edition of the *PVS Tool: Aquatic* was published in 2013 for the evaluation of Aquatic Animal Health Services and also includes a critical competency on food safety.

29. To date the OIE has received 128 national requests and 117 missions have been completed for the evaluation of the terrestrial sector and 9 national requests and 6 missions have been completed for the evaluation of the aquatic sector. Relevant information may be found at: <http://www.oie.int/support-to-oie-members/pvs-pathway/>

30. OIE Members that have received an OIE PVS Evaluation may benefit from a follow-up mission to provide advice and assistance in modernising their national veterinary legislation. To date the OIE has received 51 official requests for missions and 35 have been completed.

The Global Food Safety Partnership (GFSP)

31. The OIE has been engaged in the new Global Food Safety Partnership (GFSP), a World Bank initiative, which is a Public-Private Partnership for capacity building to support better food safety practices across the global agri-food sector. Of particular interest is the key objective to help both public and private sectors at country level seeking to meet international standards.

32. The OIE continues to support FAO and WHO, in the development of the food safety capacity building assessment tool and participated in the first food safety capacity building needs assessment conducted in Zambia in 2013. The OIE will continue to emphasise the importance of referencing and complementing relevant aspects of already completed assessments when undertaking new needs assessments.

33. The OIE will continue to engage actively on this project.

National focal points

34. The OIE encourages all Member countries to nominate National Focal Points, under the authority of the OIE Delegate, for eight strategic issues, including animal production food safety and veterinary products. The creation of the OIE National Focal Point for animal production food safety and veterinary products aims to improve communication between the OIE, Delegates and all agencies responsible for food safety, veterinary products, and SPS matters at the national level.

35. A series of specific training workshops for OIE Focal Points for Member Countries has been conducted worldwide and this is continuing, on a region by region basis. To date, APFS Focal Point seminars have been held in all OIE regions of the world (Europe, the Middle East, Africa, the Americas, and Asia the Far East and Oceania). Since November 2012, all seminars for APFS Focal Points have included a session on OIE/Codex cooperation and have included speakers from the Codex Secretary and FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees who have made presentations on the Codex, current issues, standard setting and collaboration. Some Focal Points have also delivered country presentations on their experiences of collaboration at the national level between the veterinary authority and the food safety authority, including collaboration between OIE and Codex activities.

36. The OIE is also actively promoting the need for harmonisation in the approval and registration process for veterinary medicinal products and has implemented a global programme for capacity building for OIE Focal Points for Veterinary Products to enhance awareness and to improve the governance related to veterinary medicinal products covering registration, production, distribution, use and control methods, adapted to the needs of Member Countries. Training workshops for Focal Points on veterinary products have been held in Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia the Far East and Oceania. In line with the 'One Health' concept, WHO and FAO have been invited to participate in these training activities and are also involved in the third cycle of training that started in late 2013.