



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE

Fifty-First Session

Cleveland, Ohio, United States of America

REPORT OF THE PHYSICAL WORKING GROUP ON CCFH WORK PRIORITIES (PROPOSALS FOR NEW WORK AND/OR REVISION OF EXISTING STANDARDS)

PREPARED BY THE UNITED STATES AS CHAIR OF THE WORKING GROUP

The physical working group (pWG) was chaired by Ms. Jenny Scott, the United States delegate to the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene. The chair welcomed the delegates and noted that the *Request for Proposals for New Work and/or Revision of Existing Standards* (CL 2019/50- FH) did not result in any proposal for new work. The chair indicated that at CCFH50 Honduras, with the support of Chile, EU, India and Denmark, agreed to prepare a discussion paper on *Principles for the Safe Use of Water in Food Processing*. A discussion paper and project document were submitted (CX/FH 19/51/9) and revised versions were provided in CRD 7 and CRD 15. The pWG discussed CRD15 and reviewed the CCFH Forward Workplan.

Discussion Paper and project document on Principles for the Safe Use of Water in Food Processing (CRD15)

1. Honduras thanked Chile, Demark, the EU and India for their support in developing the discussion paper and project document and discussed one key change made in the latest revision, i.e., the proposed structure of the document. The proposed format includes a general guidance document and three annexes addressing intervention strategies for water sourcing, use and reuse in the food chain, applicable microbiological criteria, and decision support system (DSS) tools for fresh produce, the fishery sector and the dairy sector.
2. Honduras also suggested that joint scientific advice from JEMRA and JECFA may be needed to cover both microbiological and chemical aspects of the safe use of water.
3. The JEMRA Secretariat indicated that they had recently completed an expert meeting on microbiological criteria for water and determined that such criteria would be dependent on the country/situation; some risk assessment guidance and case studies might be useful. It would be helpful to provide examples on how criteria had been developed in different countries around the world.
4. Given the conclusions of the expert meeting on microbiological criteria for water, it was suggested that rather than having the sector annexes focus on applicable microbiological criteria, the general section could address criteria for establishing applicable microbiological criteria, as such criteria could apply broadly to all the sectors.
5. Many delegations and organizations considered this work to be important and supported moving it forward as new work. Honduras confirmed that the new work was intended to cover reuse of water. It was agreed that the document would be titled "Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production."
6. Honduras agreed to work with the FAO/WHO JEMRA Secretariat, Chile, Demark, the EU and India to develop a revised project document to present to plenary for discussion.
7. The Chair suggested that the revision of the project document consider elaborating on the specific intended purposes for water use/reuse for each sector, as well as updating the section on the request for scientific advice, considering the recent FAO/WHO expert meeting. It was also noted that the document would not cover drinking water; this should be made clear in the project document.

CCFH Forward Workplan

8. The Chair indicated that the CCFH Forward Workplan was revised to reflect some of the earlier discussions at the CCFH51. The CCFH Forward Workplan was updated as follows:
 - Additional information was entered for "Guidelines for the Safe Use and Re-use of Water in Food Production"

- The *Code of Practice on Food Allergen Management for Food Business Operators* was added to the Forward Workplan in anticipation of a need to update this document in the future based on new information from FAO/WHO and the Codex Committee on Food Labelling related to precautionary allergen labeling.
 - Three possible areas for new work were suggested for the workplan:
 - Updating the *Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Pathogenic Vibrio Species in Seafood* (CXG 73-2010)
 - Development of Guidelines for Developing Performance-Based Microbiological Methods
 - Updating the *Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Viruses in Food* (CXG 79-2012)
9. The Chair discussed the updated entries for the “Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production;” but the pWG did not make changes with respect to the ranking criteria.
10. Delegations were asked to review and determine whether the three areas for new work should be kept on the work plan.
11. One delegation commented on the need to develop a discussion paper on the revision to *Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Pathogenic Vibrio Species in Seafood* (CXG 73-2010). Although FAO/WHO are still working on the report of its recent expert consultation on *Vibrio* species, FAO/WHO are willing to share the conclusions ahead of its publication with those interested in developing the discussion paper for updating the existing guidelines.
12. Several delegations sought clarification on the work “Guidelines for Developing Performance-Based Microbiological Methods.” The title was subsequently revised to “Guidelines for Developing Performance-Based Criteria for Microbiological Methods.” Delegations were supportive of keeping this potential new work in the workplan.
13. The chair indicated that new information coming out for norovirus might lead to the need to update the *Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Viruses in Food* (CXG 79-2012); this was added to the Forward Workplan.
14. The revised Forward Work Plan is shown in Appendix 1
- The pWG on New Work recommendations:
15. Agree to new work on “Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production;” review the revised project document updated with input from FAO/WHO for submission to the Commission for approval as new work.
16. Solicit the development of a discussion paper on the new information from FAO/WHO on *Vibrio*; the discussion paper would address the need for new work to update CXG 73-2010.
17. Adopt the Forward Work Plan and request delegations to rank the added areas of potential new work before the CCFH52 meeting.

CCFH FORWARD WORKPLAN

Title of Work	Last Revision	Information to Update (Yes/No) ¹	Impact to Public Health (20/14/8)	Trade Impact (10/5/4/2/0)	Project document/discussion paper (Yes/No)	FAO/WHO assistance needed? (Yes/No)	Comments	Total
Guidelines for the Safe Use and Re-use of Water in Food Production	N/A	Yes	20	5	yes	Yes JEMRA has already provided recommendations which will serve as basis for the Guidelines, but it is anticipated that additional advice might be needed	See CX/FH 19/51/9	25
Code of Practice on Food Allergen Management for Food Business Operators	2019	No						
<i>Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Pathogenic Vibrio Species in Seafood (CXG 73-2010)</i>	2010	Yes						
Guidelines for Developing Performance Based Criteria for Microbiological Methods	N/A	Yes						
<i>Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Viruses in Food (CXG 79-2012)</i>	2012	Yes						

¹ Information to Update (Currency of information): Is there new information/data that would justify the need to review the existing code(s) or establish a new one? Are there new technologies that would justify the need to review existing codes or establish a new one? Is there duplication or inconsistency with existing codes that should be addressed? If there is an existing code in place and a determination is made that the code is sufficient, no new work should proceed.

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Code of Hygienic Practice for the Storage of Cereals	N/A	Yes	8	5	Yes ²			13
<i>Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Listeria Monocytogenes in Foods (CXG 61-2007)</i>	2009	No						
<i>Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat (CXC 58-2005)</i>	2005	No						
<i>Code of Hygienic Practice for Milk and Milk Products (CXC 57-2004)</i>	2009	No						
<i>Code of Hygienic Practice for Eggs and Egg Products (CXC 5-1976)</i>	2007	No						
<i>Code of Hygienic Practice for Precooked and Cooked Foods in Mass Catering (CXC 39-1993)</i>	1993	No						
<i>Code of Hygienic Practice for the Transport of Food in Bulk and Semi-packed Food (CXC 47-2001)</i>	2001	No						

² Discussion paper on development of Code of Hygienic Practice for the storage of cereals (prepared by India) FH/44 CRD 9, included in the Forward Workplan by the 44th session of the CCFH, 12-16 November 2012

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<i>Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-acid and Acidified Low-acid Canned Foods (CXC 23-1979)</i> <i>Code of Hygienic Practice for Aseptically Processed and Packaged Low-acid Foods (CXC 40-1993)</i> <i>Guideline Procedures for the Visual Inspection of Lots of Canned Foods for Unacceptable Defects (CXG 17-1993)</i> <i>Code of Hygienic Practice for Canned Fruit and Vegetable Products (CXC 2-1969)</i>	1993 1993 1993 1969	No						
<i>Code of Hygienic Practice for Bottled/Packaged Drinking Waters (other than natural mineral waters) (CXC 48-2001)</i>	2001	No						
<i>Code of Hygienic Practice for Refrigerated Packaged Foods with Extended Shelf-life (CXC 46-1999)</i>	1999	No						