



## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE

Fifty-fourth Session

Nairobi, Kenya

11 - 15 March 2024

### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

#### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 46<sup>th</sup> SESSIONS OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (CAC46) AND ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CCEXEC84 and CCEXEC85)

##### Standards and Related Texts adopted by the Commission<sup>1</sup>

1. CAC46 (2023) adopted the
  - i. Guidelines for the control of Shiga Toxin-Producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) in Raw Beef, Fresh Leafy Vegetables, Raw Milk and Raw Milk Cheeses, and Sprouts (General Section, Annex I on raw beef and Annex III on raw milk and raw milk cheeses), at Steps 5/8; and
  - ii. Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production and Processing (General Section and Annex I on Fresh Produce) with a minor correction, at Steps 5/8.

##### Approval of new work<sup>2</sup>

2. CAC46 approved the:
  - i. New work proposal on the development of Guidelines for food hygiene control measures in traditional markets for food; and
  - ii. Proposed Revision of the *Guidelines on the Application of the General Principles of food Hygiene to the control of Pathogenic Vibrio Species in Seafood* (CXG 73-2010).
3. In approving the new work on the development of Guidelines for food hygiene control measures in traditional markets for food, CAC46 also agreed to request CCFH to carefully consider the relationship between the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CXC 1-1969), the regional texts on street vended foods.

##### Application of the Statements of Principle concerning the role of science in the Codex decision-making process and the extent to which other factors are taken into account (SoP)<sup>3</sup>

4. CAC46 reiterated its previous conclusion that the draft "Guidance for Codex Chairpersons and Members on the application of the Statements of Principle concerning the role of Science in the Codex decision making process and the extent to which other factors are taken into account" remained serviceable and available as practical guidance for Chairpersons of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies and for Members in situations when there is agreement on science but differing views on other factors/considerations. CAC46 also agreed on the need to gain more experience on application of the draft guidance, and to revisit the draft guidance in the light of experience gained.

<sup>1</sup> REP23/CAC paragraph 31 and Appendix II

<sup>2</sup> REP23/CAC paragraph 32 and Appendix V

<sup>3</sup> REP23/CAC paragraph 194 (ii, vi, vii)

#### New Food Sources and Production Systems (NFPS)<sup>4</sup>

5. CAC46 highlighted the importance of addressing challenges posed by NFPS and the important role Codex could play in this, noted that the current working mechanisms were adequate to address any new work on NFPS that Members might propose, and encouraged Members to submit discussion papers or new work proposals, either to active Codex committees or to the Executive Committee through the Codex Secretariat.

#### Blueprint on the future of Codex<sup>5</sup>

6. CCEXEC85 (2023) agreed that rather than develop a blueprint for the future of Codex, it was more appropriate to use the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 to guide the future direction of Codex and to consider, in parallel, a working model for future Codex work; and that the document (i.e. CX/EXEC 23/85/3, Appendix II) describing the key elements of a model for future Codex work remained a living document that should be periodically reviewed in light of experiences and learnings.

7. CAC46 endorsed the conclusions of CCEXEC85 regarding matters pertaining to the blueprint on the future of Codex.

#### Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031<sup>6</sup>

8. CCEXEC85 discussed the first draft of the elements to be included in the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 and agreed to send a Circular Letter (CL) to Members and Observers requesting comments on these elements. CCEXEC85 further agreed that the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons should hold informal consultations with Members and Observers to encourage interaction, discussion and reflection, and to support Members and Observers in responding to the CL.

9. CAC46 endorsed the conclusions of CCEXEC85 regarding matters pertaining to the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM OTHER SUBSIDIARY BODIES**

#### **47<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL47)<sup>7</sup>**

10. CCFL47 (2023) considered the proposed draft revision to the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (XCS 1-1985): provisions relevant to allergen labelling. CCFL47 generally reached consensus on the following:

- i. The definition for food allergens;
- ii. Lists of allergens in 4.2.1.4 related to foods and ingredients known to trigger food allergy or coeliac disease, which must always be declared; and
- iii. Lists of allergens in 4.2.1.5 related to foods and ingredients that may be required for declaration based on available risk assessment data for the respective population(s), considering risk management considerations.

11. CCFL47 agreed to forward the proposed draft revision to CAC46 for adoption at Step 5<sup>8</sup>. This work will be further considered at CCFL48.

12. CCFL47 noted that the work on the development of proposed draft guidelines on the use of precautionary allergen labelling would be continued in CCFL48.

13. CCFL47 further agreed to inform CCFH of all the aforementioned matters and suggested that CCFH ensures the relevant provisions in the *Code of Practice on Allergen Management for Food Business Operators* (CXC 80-2020) remain consistent with these new texts in the future.

#### **42<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS42)<sup>9</sup>**

14. CCMAS42 (2023) reviewed the methods of analysis for irradiated foods in the *General Standard for Methods for the Detection of Irradiated Foods* (XCS 231-2001) submitted by CCFH53 for their incorporation into the *Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling* (XCS 234-1999).

<sup>4</sup> REP23/CAC paragraph 206 (I, ii, iii))

<sup>5</sup> REP23/EXEC2 paragraph 38; REP23/CAC paragraph 16

<sup>6</sup> REP23/EXEC2 paragraphs 40-47, 54 (i(a), ii); REP23/CAC paragraph 16

<sup>7</sup> REP23/FL paragraph 53 (iv) and Appendix II

<sup>8</sup> CAC46 adopted the revisions at Step 5

<sup>9</sup> REP23/MAS paragraphs 12 and 81

15. CCMAS42 agreed:
- i. that the methods listed in CXS 231 should not be endorsed at this time due to insufficient information available on the methods and their application and as a consequence to maintain the methods in CXS 231;
  - ii. to gather additional information on the methods through a CL; and
  - iii. that the information and methods would be submitted for additional review by CCMAS43.

16. In addition, CCMAS42 agreed to inform relevant Codex committees of the revised *General Guidelines on Sampling* (CXG 50-2004) and request these committees to review their sampling plans in light of the revised Guidelines; and to remind Committees that sampling plans should be developed as needed in compliance with the *General Guidelines on Sampling* and not by a reference to CXG 50. CCMAS will continue working on the information document comprising an e-book with the sampling plans applications for consideration by CCMAS43, to support implementation of CXG-50-2004.

17. CCFH50<sup>10</sup> agreed to postpone consideration of its work on sampling plans for histamine until such time as CCMAS had completed its amendments to the *General Guidelines on Sampling* (CXG 50-2004). While this work is now complete, it may be useful to await completion of the tools to support implementation of the guidelines before reopening this issue. Nevertheless, it may be appropriate to consider this work in the context of the forward work plan (Agenda Item 13) and initiating consideration of how this might be addressed in the future.

#### **26<sup>th</sup> Session of Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and certification (CCFICS26)<sup>11</sup>**

18. CCFICS26 (2023) agreed to inform other Codex Committees about the review and update of the *Principles for Traceability / Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System* (CXG 60-2006)<sup>12</sup>.

#### **33<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP33)<sup>13</sup>**

19. CCGP33 (2023) following its discussion on update to the Guide to the procedures for the amendment and revision of Codex standards and related texts in the Procedural Manual, agreed to inform other Codex committees of the ongoing work in this regard to better align with current practices in Codex and international publishing standards.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

20. CCFH54 is invited to:
- i. note the information presented in the relevant paragraphs above;
  - ii. encourage Members and Observers to actively contribute to the discussions in CCEXEC and CAC (e.g. sharing experience on application of the draft guidance on SoP and providing inputs on the development of Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031) and to note the encouragement to submit discussion papers or new work proposals on NFPS using existing mechanisms;
  - iii. consider the request from CCMAS42 in paragraph 16 when applicable in the future and in light of completion of CXG-50-2004, initiate consideration on how work on sampling plans for histamine in fish and fishery products might be addressed in the future; and
  - iv. take note of the matters from CCFL47 with regard to food allergens and consider these further under Agenda Item 13 New Work/Forward Workplan.

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<sup>10</sup> REP19/FH paragraphs 40-47

<sup>11</sup> REP23/FICS paragraph 117 (c); REP23/CAC paragraph 87

<sup>12</sup> This proposal for new work was approved by CAC46.

<sup>13</sup> REP23/GP paragraphs 36 (ii) and 69 (iv)