

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

E

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy - Tel: (+39) 06 57051 - Fax: (+39) 06 5705 4593 - E-mail: codex@fao.org - www.codexalimentarius.org

CL 2012/28-NEA
October 2012

TO: Codex Contact Points
Interested International Organizations

FROM: Secretariat,
Codex Alimentarius Commission

SUBJECT: Request for comments and updated information on: national food control systems, Codex Contact Points and other national structures for Codex matters including consumer participation in food standards setting; use of Codex standards and related texts at national level; nutrition issues in the region; and participation in Codex work and in FAO/WHO activities on scientific advice.

DEADLINE: 15 December 2012

COMMENTS: To:
Secretariat,
Codex Alimentarius Commission,
Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards
Programme,
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153
Rome, Italy
E-mail: codex@fao.org

With a copy to:
Codex Contact Point for Lebanon,
Eng. Mariam Eid
Ministry of Agriculture
Embassies Street
Bir Hassan sector - Facing Henry Chehab
barrack
Beirut, Lebanon
E-mail: meid@agriculture.gov.lb

BACKGROUND

The present Circular Letter aims to collect information on developments since the 6th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East, in the countries of the Codex Near East region to facilitate discussion of related issues at the 7th Session of the CCNEA. The attached questionnaire gathers information on the status of food control systems development, current priorities and capacity development/training needs.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

In preparation of the 7th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNEA), members of the CCNEA region and relevant international organizations are requested to **provide updated information** since the 6th Session of the Committee, using the template for the submission of information, by e-mail, not later than **15 December 2012**.

**Template for the submission of information of CCNEA countries
(updated information since the 6th Session of the CCNEA)**

Question 1: Strengthening National Food Control Systems

1.1 Please describe any significant development/actions taken in your country to improve national food control systems. These may include actions relating to:

- 1.1.1 National food law and regulations;
- 1.1.2 Food safety policy/strategy (e.g. risk analysis);
- 1.1.3 Food control management (e.g. food control administration structures);
- 1.1.4 Inspection services;
- 1.1.5 Laboratory infrastructure and activities;
- 1.1.6 Trade facilitation agreements;
- 1.1.7 Information dissemination; and
- 1.1.8 Training/capacity building

1.2 Please describe recently established mechanisms/structures for inter-sectoral/multi-disciplinary collaboration for risk assessment, risk management and/or risk communication purposes at national level (including or other than National Codex Committee) as well as the effectiveness of these mechanisms/structures.

Question 2: Strengthening national Codex structures

Please describe:

2.1 Any significant actions that your country has taken to strengthen Codex structures at the national level and to promote more effective participation in Codex.

2.2 The structure, composition and operation of the National Codex Committee (or equivalent or similar structure), or plans for its establishment.

2.3 Any specific actions taken aimed at strengthening the Codex Contact Point (i.e. inter-sectoral consultative processes on Codex matters, including promoting increased involvement and participation of consumers and other stakeholders);

2.4 Current shortcomings identified for the Codex Contact Point and National Codex Committee (or equivalent or similar structure); and

2.5 Identified need for capacity development to strengthen the Codex Contact Point and National Codex Committee (or equivalent or similar structure).

Question 3: Priority areas for implementation and related training needs

Please describe:

3.1 Current priority food safety issues to be addressed nationally and regionally;

3.2 Current priority areas for training (ongoing and for future); and

3.3 What additional support through training and development is required.

Question 4: Use of Codex standards and national priorities and interests

Please describe:

4.1 Which specific Codex standards and related texts (currently under development or already existent) are currently of most importance and interest to your country;

4.2 What are the current priority areas for setting national standards; and

4.3 How Codex standards are currently being used and their relevance at national level.

Question 5: Scientific activities (risk-based approach) and data collection activities

Please describe:

- 5.1 Areas of risk-based approach application (e.g. monitoring programmes, sampling programmes, inspection, scientific basis of food safety decisions);
- 5.2 Key data collection activities ongoing to identify or monitor key food safety hazards and contaminants in the food supply and to identify or monitor foodborne disease and outbreaks;
- 5.3 Use of data collected through inspection and control or monitoring by institutions/agencies involved in food safety risk assessment and/or management;
- 5.4 Mechanisms for identifying national food consumption data in relation to consumer exposure assessment for food safety hazards; and
- 5.5 Ongoing activities or interests in relevant scientific advice on risk assessment, such as risk/benefit analysis (e.g. food safety risk vs nutritional benefit).

Question 6: Issues related to nutrition in the region

Please describe any issues related to nutrition, such as: obesity, overweight, underweight, micronutrient deficiencies and any public health-oriented actions undertaken, including nutrition education and the use of nutritional labelling and claims, and implementation of the WHO *Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health*.

Question 7: Cooperation with relevant international and regional organizations

Please provide information on initiatives at national and regional level to promote coordination of work on food standards with other international and regional organizations.

Question 8: Any other matters

Please provide any other comments you would like to make in any of the areas covered by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East.