

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
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Agenda Item 3(a)

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ORIGINAL LANGUAGE ONLY

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Fifteenth Session

Mexico City, Mexico, 19 – 23 October 2009

DRAFT STANDARD FOR BITTER CASSAVA SECTION 6 “MARKING OR LABELLING”

Comments at Step 6 in response to CL 2008/17-FFV
(European Community and Philippines)

European Community

The European Community and its Member States (ECMS) support the proposal made by Kenya to clarify and supplement paragraph 6.1.2 of the draft standard for bitter cassava and support finalising the standard with this amendment.

The ECMS take note that CCCF has asked JECFA to review data available on occurrence of cyanogenic glycosides in foods and feeds, the mechanisms of releasing hydrogen cyanide in the human body and the effects of processing on reducing levels of hydrogen cyanide in the final product. On the basis of the JECFA evaluation, CCCF will consider possible risk management options. The outcome of that process could have implications also on the draft standard on bitter cassava. However, in view of the ECMS this does not prevent finalising the standard with the text proposed by Kenya. The provisions on the reduction of hydrogen cyanide can be amended at a later stage in the light of new information.

Philippines

Philippines notes that the revised draft standard for bitter cassava included in preparation instruction that *cassava must be peeled and fully cooked before consumption and cooking or rinsing water must not be consumed or used for other preparation purposes*. However, no scientific evidences are available to support that indeed these instructions will safely reduce the amount of hydrogen cyanide.

Consequently, the Philippines suggests that satisfactory scientific evidence be made available to support the adequacy of processing required to minimize the cyanogenic glycoside level of bitter cassava to ensure public health and safety. Therefore, Philippines would recommend to defer the advancement of the draft until CCCF affirm its assessment on cyanogenic glycosides has been finalized. Likewise, the Philippines will support any move or recommendation to add cyanogenic glycosides to priority list of JECFA.

Moreover, the Philippines suggest an additional statement to the 6.1.2 Preparation Instructions as follows:

- **Cassava should not be eaten raw;**
- Cassava shall be peeled, **washed** and fully cooked before consumption; and
- Cooking or rinsing water must not be consumed or used for other food preparation purposes.

The Committee should ensure that any approval for changes to section 6. **Marking and Labelling** should be referred to CCFL for endorsement.