



The 50th Session Overview

The 50th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) will take place from November 12–16, 2018 in Panama City, Panama at Hotel Riu Plaza Panama.

The Plenary Session will open on Monday, November 12, at 09:30 and conclude after the report adoption on Friday, November 16. On Sunday, November 11, on-site registration (to collect your badges and other materials) will take place from 12:00 to 18:00.

A physical Working Group on the Proposed Draft Revision of the General Principles of Food Hygiene and its HACCP Annex will be held on Sunday, November 11 from 09:00 to 16:00 in the Plenary Room. Registration will be held on Saturday, November 16, from 14:00 to 18:00.



Agenda

SATURDAY

NOVEMBER 10

14:00 – 18:00 Registration

SUNDAY

NOVEMBER 11

12:00 – 18:00 Registration

09:00 – 16:00 Physical Working Group:
Proposed Draft Revision of the General Principles
of Food Hygiene and its HACCP Annex

MONDAY

NOVEMBER 12

08:00 – 16:00 Registration

09:00 – 09:30 New Delegate Training

09:30 – 10:00 Opening Ceremony

10:00 – 12:30 Plenary AM Session

12:30 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30 – 16:00 Plenary PM Session 1

16:00 – 16:30 Break

16:30 – 18:00 Plenary PM Session 2

19:00 – 21:00 Welcome Reception

TUESDAY

NOVEMBER 13

09:00 – 10:30 Plenary AM Session 1

10:30 – 11:00 Break

11:00 – 12:30 Plenary AM Session 2

12:30 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30 – 16:00 Plenary PM Session 1

16:00 – 16:30 Break

16:30 – 18:00 Plenary PM Session 2

WEDNESDAY

NOVEMBER 14

09:00 – 10:30 Plenary AM Session 1

10:30 – 11:00 Break

11:00 – 12:30 Plenary AM Session 2

12:30 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30 – 16:00 Plenary PM Session 1

16:00 – 16:30 Break

16:30 – 18:00 Plenary PM Session 2

THURSDAY

NOVEMBER 15

ALL DAY Report Writing Day

FRIDAY

NOVEMBER 16

08:00 Report Available

09:00–12:00 Report Adoption



Codex Online Registration System

The U.S. Codex Office is using the Codex Online Registration System (ORS) to register delegates for the CCFH meeting, via the following link: <http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/registration/en/>. If you need assistance with the ORS, please contact codex@fao.org.

Please note that the invitation to CCFH50, issued jointly by FAO and WHO, requests that delegates register by October 12, 2018.

We encourage all delegates who expect to attend CCFH 50 to register well in advance to ensure that appropriate seating arrangements will be available for them at the meeting.

Please note that the CCFH meeting registration process is separate from Hotel Riu Plaza Panama's reservation process for sleeping accommodations. Please refer to section "CCFH 50 Venue Hotel" below for more information.

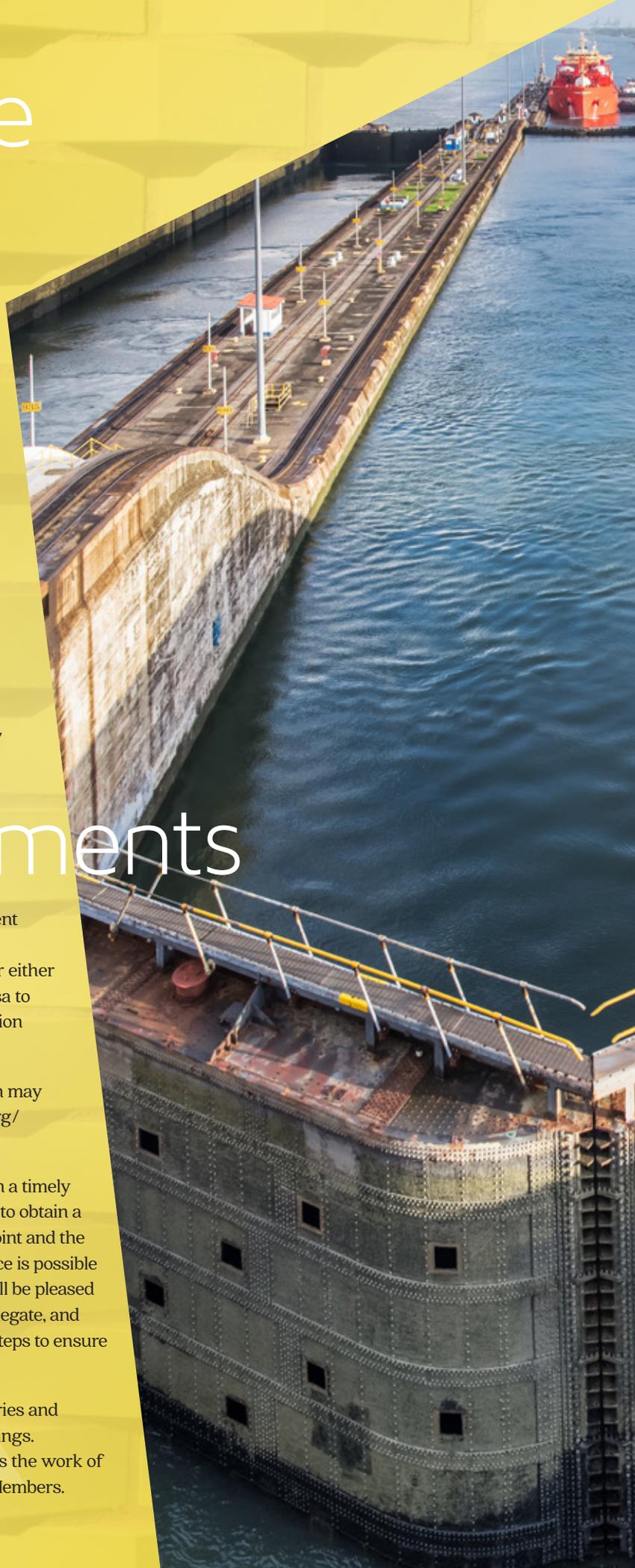
Visa Requirements

Most delegates will not require a visa, and will only need to present a passport that is valid for 3 months beyond their date of arrival. Delegates that will need a visa to enter Panama, need to apply for either a "stamped visa" or an "authorized visa." Those who require a visa to enter Panama are strongly encouraged to begin the visa application process as soon as possible.

A list of visa requirements by country and additional information may be found at the following site: <http://www.embassyofpanama.org/inmigration-and-visas/>.

It is the responsibility of delegates to apply for and obtain a visa in a timely manner. If this is not done well in advance, it may not be possible to obtain a visa in time to attend the meeting. Both the U.S. Codex Contact Point and the Panamanian Codex Contact Point will provide whatever assistance is possible in ensuring delegates obtain their visas. The U.S. Codex Office will be pleased to provide notification of registration letters to each registered delegate, and the Panamanian Codex Contact Point has taken the appropriate steps to ensure a smooth visa application process for Codex delegates.

We believe it is important that delegates from all Member Countries and Organizations have the opportunity to participate in Codex meetings. Completing and submitting the visa application promptly ensures the work of Codex accurately reflects the views and contributions of all its Members.





About Panama City, Panama

Panama City is located in the Gulf of Panama along the Pacific Coast. Founded in 1519, Panama City was a main point along one of the most important Spanish trade routes in America. Today, Panama City remains a dynamic hub that connects the history of Old City with the neighboring modern metropolis that offers commerce, culture, nightlife, leisure activities, city excursions, and tropical escapes.





Getting to Panama City

BY PLANE

The airport for Panama City is Tocumen International Airport (airport code: PTY). The airport is the main hub for Copa Airlines that services more than 90 cities, primarily in the Caribbean and the Americas, and also some European and Asian cities.

TRANSPORTATION TO THE HOTEL RIU PLAZA

The hotel is approximately 21 km from the airport. Depending on traffic, the ride from the airport to the hotel is about 25-35 minutes.

TAXIS (approximately \$30)

The most traditional mode of transportation between the airport and Panama City is by taxi. This generally costs approximately \$30 for 1-2 people, and slightly higher for 3-4 people. Most taxi drivers only accept cash payments, so if you plan to use a taxi, you will want to access the ATMs in the airport before arranging for a taxi ride. After you retrieve your luggage from the baggage claim, exit the doors to the pickup area and proceed to the taxi stand located outside. Tipping the taxi drivers at the end of your ride is not necessary.

WARNINGS

- Upon first exiting the airport, you may encounter individuals asking if you need a taxi or need help with your bags in exchange for tips. It is not a requirement to accept their services.
- Avoid unmarked taxis and the potential for additional fees and charges by taking a marked taxi from the taxi pick-up line.

RIDESHARES: UBER & CABIFY (approximately \$15-\$25)

Ridesharing is available from the airport from both the Uber and Cabify apps. You will need to have a data connection.

RIDESHARING TIPS

- It is best to wait to request the pick-up only when you are ready to exit the airport.
- Follow signs for Passenger pick-ups or a designated area labeled, TNC/Rideshares. Exit on the arrivals level and cross the street to the parking area. Meet your driver at the Parking Row you select in the app, between Row 15-18.
- Look for your driver. If you are unable to locate him or her, contact him or her through the app.

For more information on how to download, additional fares, and first-time user promotion codes go to:

<https://www.uber.com/airports/pty/>

<https://cabify.com/en/panama/ciudad-de-panama>

PRIVATE AIRPORT SHUTTLE

There are a number of shuttle services that can be scheduled ahead of time to pick you up upon arrival and take you to the hotel. After clearing Customs, exit the airport and you will find the driver holding a sign with your name.

To determine which airport transfer is right for you, review any one of these services:

<http://pineappleshuttle.com/>

<http://www.panamayourway.com/panama-transfers/>

<https://www.ambermooncab.com/services>

<https://www.viator.com/Panama-City-tours/Transfers-and-Ground-Transport/d950-g15>

Prices may change depending on time of booking.



CCFH 50 VENUE HOTEL

HOTEL RIU PLAZA PANAMA

Calle 50 con 53 Panamá, Urb. Marbella, Panamá, Panama

Phone: +507 378-9000

<https://www.riu.com/en/hotel/panama/panama-city/hotel-riu-plaza-panama/index.jsp>

Hotel check-in: 15:00

Hotel check-out: 12:00

Riu Plaza Panama

Located in the heart of the financial district in Panama City, the Riu Plaza Panama Hotel offers a unique urban experience. This hotel has many amenities, such as a pool, a gym, conference rooms, and a spa to ensure an enjoyable stay at the Riu Plaza.



Hotel Reservations

Please **CLICK HERE** <https://www.riu.com/es/riuplaza/formularios/ccfh50-aupsa-2018.jsp> to book, modify and cancel your reservations online.

Delegates must book their reservations through the link to receive the CCFH special rate of \$115.50 per night (single or double occupancy), which includes a 10% sales tax and complimentary breakfast buffet. The CCFH group cutoff date is **October 20, 2018**. Any reservations requested after this date will be based on availability; please make your reservations early.

You will need to provide a credit card upon booking your room. If your plans change, you may cancel without penalty 72 hours prior to your arrival. We encourage all delegates to secure a reservation as early as possible. Your credit card will not be charged until check-in at the hotel.

The above link is not tablet or mobile friendly. The link automatically populates the contracted dates. Guest should click on "change search" to personalize their dates.



HOTEL SERVICES AND AMENITIES

- Close to entertainment and shopping centers
- 21 km/13 miles from Tocumen International Airport (PTY)
- Conference center
- Free Wi-Fi throughout hotel
- Awarded GOLD certification for the Travelife Sustainability System
- Several bars and restaurants
- Room service 24 hours a day and take away 24 hours a day
- Outdoor swimming pool
- Spa & Wellness Center, fully-equipped gym

GUEST ROOMS

Standard in-room features include:

- King-sized bed or two double beds
- A sofa in the lounge area
- Free Wi-Fi
- Satellite TV
- Air conditioning
- Mini-fridge
- Coffee maker

WEATHER

- November is the peak of Panama's rainy season and accumulations of 401mm/15in can occur during the month, with heavy downpours at times.
- Daytime temperatures remain consistent all year, around 26°C/79°F and reaching as high as 30°C/86°F. At night temperatures can drop to 22°C/72°F.
- Travelers are encouraged to pack wet weather gear for walking around the city. It is a good idea to layer clothing so that you can remove or add garments as needed for comfort when going in and out of air conditioning environments.

ELECTRICAL CURRENT

- Electrical appliances operate on 110 volts (60Hz)
- Power outlets accommodate two prong or three prong plugs

CURRENCY

- The Panamanian currency is the Balboa (B/.). It has parity with that of the United States dollar and the US Dollar (\$) circulates freely.
- ATM machines and currency exchanges are available at the airport upon arrival PTY
- Credit cards are often accepted in the cities. However, smaller stores, restaurants, and taxis will generally only take cash. Visa and MasterCard are the most widely accepted credit cards, although other cards can often be used in upscale establishments.
- You may use your bank or credit card as long as you have a 4-digit pin and/or a chip.

TIPS AND TAXES

- Taxes
 - A 10% tourism tax is added to the price of hotel rooms, as noted above
 - A 5% sales tax is added to all nonfood items
 - There is an airport departure tax of \$40, although this is generally included in the price of a flight.
- Tipping
 - In most restaurants, it is customary to tip 10%. Those who perform services – such as porters or private drivers – should also be tipped, although the amount can vary. Generally, anywhere between \$0.25 and \$1 is standard. You may also want to tip guides in more rural areas.
 - Taxi drivers do not expect to be tipped.

Local Attractions



Panama City has countless hidden spots waiting to be discovered, from the most historic to the most modern. In the new city, Ciudad Nueva, you can walk around skyscrapers, enjoy the famous Calzada de Amador causeway or visit the Parque Natural Metropolitano, for some spectacular views of the city, the bay and, of course, the famous canal. To experience the history of Panama, you can tour Old Town, Panamá Viejo, which has a colonial infrastructure with emblematic landmarks like Nuestra Señora de la Asunción Cathedral, Casa Alarcón, the Palacio Presidencial and the Iglesia de San José church.

A Tour Desk is available to assist guests at the RIU in booking a variety of sightseeing options, excursions, and activities.

Top Attractions

THE PANAMA CANAL

Since its completion in 1914, the Panama Canal remains one of the greatest works of engineering in the history of mankind. It joins the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans through an 80km (50mi) channel that divides the country in two. Its construction made it possible to open new and more agile trading routes. The canal is composed of three sets of double locks that open the way for more than 14,000 ships per year.

BIOMUSEO

Surprising for its original shapes and vibrant colors, this modern structure is the only work in America Latina designed by the renowned architect Frank Gehry. His exhibits tell how the Isthmus of Panama emerged 22 million years ago—linking 2 continents and allowing the migration of numerous species of animals.

PANAMÁ VIEJO

Founded in 1519 by Spanish conqueror Pedro Arias de Ávila, Panama was the first European settlement built on the Pacific coast. It flourished as transit point for Spanish exports of Peruvian gold and silver to Europe. In 1671, the city was sacked and destroyed by the famous pirate Henry Morgan. The historical ruins of cobbled streets, buildings, convents, and churches were declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

CASCO ANTIGUO

Casco Antiguo or Casco Viejo, marks the site where the new Panama City was founded in 1673 after the destruction of the original city in 1671. Today, the city's beautiful colonial architecture has undergone major renovation and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2003. It is now a lively destination for visitors to enjoy fun activities, magnificent views, restaurants, live shows, music, and other entertainment.

FOR THINGS TO DO AROUND PANAMA, VISIT:

<http://www.visitpanama.com>

PANAMA ATTRACTIONS

Approximate distance from the hotels
(click on destinations to open websites)

1. The Panama Canal from the miraflores visitor center <https://visitcanaldepanama.com/en/centro-de-visitantes-de-miraflores/> (12km/8mi)
2. Mercado Artesanias de 5 de Mayo (Artisan Market) (5km/6mi)
3. Attend a soccer / football / fútbol game at Estadio Rommel Fernández Gutiérrez (10km/7mi)
4. Panama Viejo, <http://panamaviejo.org/> (7km/4mi)
5. Casco Viejo <http://cascoviejo.org/> (5km/3mi)
6. Panama sign, (5km/3mi)
7. Mercado de Mariscos (Fish Market) (5km/3mi)
8. Taboga Island <https://tabogaexpress.com/>
9. Cinta Costera Waterfront Park <https://www.panamaequity.com/blog/cinta-costera-best-place-get-active-panama-city/> (3.5km/2mi)
10. The Monkey Island & An Indigenous Village Tour <https://www.barefootpanama.com/panama-tours/day-tours/indian-village-monkey-island/> (6km/3.5mi)
11. Avenida Central (5km/mi)
12. Biomuseo Museum <http://www.biomuseopanama.org/> (10km/7mi)
13. Panaviera <http://oceansuncasino.com/panaviera-rest.php> (2.5km/1.5mi)
14. Parque Metropolitano <http://www.parquemropolitano.org/> (6km/3.5mi)
15. Pedro Mandinga <http://pedromandinga.com/> (6km/3.5mi)

Panamanian Culture

The Panamanian identity is a mixture of cultures from various points in their rich history and include Spanish, American Indian, and African influence.

Present day Panama was colonized by Spain in 1510 and remained a part of the Spanish Empire for more than 300 years. The Hispanic heritage is prominent in the regions of Azuero and Coclé, where the national costume, the Pollera, is a very valued tradition. This delicate garment is made by hand and can take up to a year to complete. The Panamanian Pollera is worn for various dances, festivals and celebrations.

African influence came to Panama in various waves throughout history; West Africa during Spanish colonization, and Caribbean and West Indies during

the construction of the Panama Canal, railroads, and general infrastructure as Panama became a booming trade port. The African legacy has been passed down over generations through the colorful Congo Dance of Panama, a tradition settled in the province of Colon, where the native people keep their roots alive with traditional dances accompanied with handmade instruments.

Today, national pride runs deep in Panamanians—and they are quick to tell you what they love about Panama. This feeling is best summed up in the Panamanian phrase, puente del mundo, corazón del universo, which means “bridge of the world, heart of the universe.”



Panamanian Cuisine

The Panamanian cuisine is a reflection of its rich history and culture. With more than 2,000km (1,243mi) of coastline, fish, seafood and Caribbean flavors are predominant in many Panamanian dishes. Spanish and other European influences came when the Spaniards first arrived on the Caribbean coast. Shortly after, Africans were brought over and adapted their recipes into local food. Over time, with the construction of the Panama Canal, workers from India, China, and the Middle East added their influences to the cuisine as well.

Popular dishes for breakfast include hojaldas, or fried dough; tortillas deep fried with eggs, cheese and beans; and empanadas. For main meals, local favorites includes sancocho, a national chicken stew;

Carimañola, fried yucca filled with ground meat; and Lechona suckling pig. For dessert, you can expect tropical fruits or delicacies like 'sopa de borracha', a vanilla sponge cake with raisins and liquor; Masamorra, a hominy soup cooked with milk and sugar; and Rosquietas, Panamanian doughnuts.





We look forward to seeing you in Panama!

CCFH Secretariat

For additional information or questions about the upcoming session, please contact Barbara McNiff and Marie Maratos of the CCFH Secretariat: CCFH@OSEC.USDA.GOV.