

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
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ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 4

CX/FICS/07/16/4

September 2007

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

Sixteenth Session

Surfers Paradise, Australia, 26 – 30 November 2006

DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE NEED TO REVISE CAC/GL 20-1995 AND CAC/GL 26-1997

(Prepared by New Zealand)

1. The Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) at its 15th Session (2006) noted the two proposals for new work presented by the delegation of New Zealand on the revision of the *Principles for Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification* (CAC/GL 20-1995); and the *Guidelines for the Design, Operation, Assessment and Accreditation of Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems* (CAC/GL 26-1997)¹. Following discussion there was no consensus to start new work, however the Committee agreed to request the delegation of New Zealand to prepare a comprehensive discussion paper to justify the need for the revision of the two documents and to identify the elements of the two documents to be revised. It was also agreed that the discussion paper could address the Committees' discussion on the Code of Ethics which also occurred during the 15th Session².

2. In proposing the review of these two documents, New Zealand noted their importance as foundation texts for CCFICS, as they were the first two documents recommended to the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) by CCFICS and they provide essential guidance for member governments. It was also noted that since their adoption by the CAC, Codex has made significant advances in thinking in a number of areas including risk analysis; equivalence; and the importance of placing 'systems and requirements' within the context of a risk management framework. Furthermore, the way in which terms such as 'inspection' are used and understood and the role of 'certification' in providing assurances in respect of food safety and ensuring fair practices in food trade have also changed over time. The advent of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and its associated agreements has also had an impact on how Codex guidelines are interpreted.

3. New Zealand still believes that these two documents would benefit from a review and where relevant an update to take account of these changes and to ensure that these important texts provide a strong foundation for CCFICS into the future. However, we recognise that the Committee is still considering documents relating to equivalence and has before it proposals relating to other new work that could have a significant impact on other CCFICS texts. Until these other areas of work are completed or significantly progressed, New Zealand does not believe that proposals relating to the

¹ CCFICS 15, CRD 3

² ALINORM 07/30/30, paras 68-70.

revision of CAC/GL 20-1995 and CAC/GL 26-1997 can be articulated to the level of detail that the Committee requested at its 15th Session.

4. New Zealand is therefore not proposing to further develop the new work proposals relating to CAC/GL 20-1995 AND CAC/GL 26-1997 at this time.

Recommendation

5. That CCFICS defer consideration of the need to revise CAC/GL 20-1995 and CAC/GL 26-1997 until further notice.