

INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES

Submission by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex)

The following communication, received on 16 June 2010, is being circulated at the request of the Codex secretariat.

I. CODEX SESSIONS SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE SPS COMMITTEE

- The 31st Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (Budapest, Hungary, 8-12 March 2010)
- The 42nd Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (Beijing, China, 15-19 March 2010)
- The 26th Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (Paris, France, 12-16 April 2010)
- The 42nd Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (Xian, China, 19-24 April 2010)
- The 4th Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (Izmir, Turkey, 26-30 April 2010)
- The 38th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (Quebeck City, Canada, 3-7 May 2009)

In particular, the SPS Committee may wish to draw its attention to the following:

1. The 31st session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling agreed to forward to the Codex Alimentarius Commission for adoption the *Proposed Draft Guidelines on Performance Criteria and Validation of Methods for Detection, Identification and Quantification of Specific DNA Sequences and Specific Proteins in Foods*, which is applicable, among other uses, to foods derived from biotechnology. The Committee also proceeded with its work on the revision of the *Guidelines on Measurement Uncertainty* and proposed methods of analysis for certain health related substances in natural mineral waters.

2. The 42nd session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives agreed to forward to the Commission for adoption: the proposed draft food additive provisions of the General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA); the proposed draft Guidelines on substances used as processing aids, proposed draft amendments to the *International numbering system for food additives* and the proposed draft *Specifications for the identity and purity of food additives* arising from the 71st Meeting of JECFA. The Committee endorsed the provisions for food additives and processing aids forwarded by

the Committees on Fish and Fishery Products and the Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products and made amendments to names and descriptors in a number of food categories and footnotes of the GSFA. The Committee also agreed to initiate new work on the revision of the Standard for Food Grade Salt and on the revision of the food category of the GSFA related to confectionary products.

3. The 26th Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles agreed to forward to the Commission for final adoption the Draft Revised *Code of ethics for international trade in food including concessional and food aid transactions*. The Committee completed its review of the risk principles developed by Codex committees regarding consistency with the *Working Principles for Risk Analysis*, which will be followed by a review by each committee of their risk analysis principles and policies. It also endorsed the *Proposed Draft Risk Analysis Principles and Procedures Applied by the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene* provided by the CCFH and the proposal for the amendment of the section on food additives in the *Format for Codex Commodity Standards*.

4. The 42nd session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues agreed to forward to the 33rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for final adoption 217 new and revised MRLs in specific commodities and 52 MRLs for adoption as draft MRLs; it identified 95 existing Codex MRLs for revocation and decided to discontinue work on 33 MRLs. The Committee continues work on the revision of the Codex Classification of Foods and Animal Feeds. Once completed, the Classification will assist in the Extrapolation of Maximum Residue Limits for Pesticide for Commodity Groups particularly in relation to the establishment of MRLs for minor use and specialty crops for MRL setting. The Committee also forwarded to the Commission the amended priority lists of chemicals scheduled for evaluation and re-evaluation by the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticides Residues from 2011 to 2017 for approval as new work. The Committee has also considered the need for the revision or setting of new extraneous maximum residue limits (EMRLs) for certain persistent organic pollutants (POPs), falling within the Stockholm Convention and within its mandate, particularly in view of the phase-out of some of these compounds by the Convention as significant residues are present in some commodities due to their historical use. Therefore, the Committee agreed to keep the existing EMRLs and to also set new EMRLs for certain other commodities in order to aid trade. The Committee agreed to ask the Commission to allow initiating the pilot project in which JMPR would conduct an independent, parallel review along with a global joint review team on sulfoxaflor and recommended MRLs before national governments establish MRLs in 2011.

5. The Fourth Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods agreed to advance to the Commission for adoption: Proposed Draft Maximum Levels for Melamine in Food (*powdered infant formula and foods other than infant formula*) and Feed; Proposed Draft Maximum Levels for Total Aflatoxins in Shelled, Ready-to-Eat Brazil Nuts and Shelled, Destined for Further Processing Brazil Nuts (including sampling plans); Proposed Draft Revision of the Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin in Tree Nuts (additional measures for Brazil nuts); Proposed Maximum Level for Tin in Canned Food (excluding beverages) to various general standards for canned fruits and vegetables in the Codex Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed. The Committee endorsed the sections on contaminants in standards for milk and milk products as proposed by the Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products and decided to initiate new work on Maximum Levels for Deoxynivalenol (DON) and its Acetylated Derivatives in Cereals and Cereal-based Products and on Maximum Levels for Total Aflatoxins in Dried Figs.

II. FORTHCOMING CODEX MEETINGS

- The 64th Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Geneva, Switzerland, 29 June – 2 July 2010)

- The 33rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Geneva, Switzerland, 5-9 July 2010)
- The 19th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (Burlington (Vermont), United States of America, 30 August - 3 September 2010)
- The FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and South West Pacific (Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 28- September – 1 October 2010)
- The FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (Warsaw, Poland, 5 – 8 October 2010)
- The 4th Session of the *Ad hoc* Codex Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (Muju), Republic of Korea, 18-22 October 2010)
- Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (Bali, Indonesia, 25-29 October 2010).

6. The Thirty-third Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission will conduct its deliberations on the basis of the report of the 64th Session of the Executive Committee and other subsidiary bodies which have met since the 32nd Session of the Commission (Rome, July 2009). It will consider a number of draft and proposed draft standards and related texts for adoption at Steps 5 or 8. The Commission is expected to adopt several Codex standards and related text, including the Draft Standard for Apples, Proposed Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Pathogenic *Vibrio* spp. in Seafood, Proposed Draft Guidelines on performance Criteria and Validation of Methods for Detection, Identification and Quantification of Specific DNA Sequences and Specific Proteins in Foods, Proposed Draft Guidelines on substances used as processing aids, Proposed Draft Maximum Levels for total aflatoxins in shelled, ready-to-eat Brazil nuts and shell, destined for further processing Brazil nuts and a number of other texts. The Commission will also discuss financial and budgetary matters; strategic planning; relations between Codex and other international organizations such as OIE and ISO; private standards; the developing country participation in the Codex process, including the operation of the FAO/WHO Project and trust Fund for Enhanced Participation in Codex.

7. The 19th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods will proceed with its work on Maximum Residues Limits (MRLs) for Veterinary Drugs, i.e. narasin (in cattle and sheep tissues) and tilmicosin (in chicken and turkey tissues), based on the recommendations of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Food Additives (JECFA). The Committee will consider: amendments and/or addition to the priority list of veterinary drugs requiring JECFA evaluation or re-evaluation; the report of the electronic working group on risk management topics and options for the CCRVDF on factors related to the establishment of ADI and process of recommending MRLs; and new work and procedures for the development of risk management recommendation for veterinary drugs for which no ADI and MRLs have been recommended by JECFA. The Committee will also consider methods of analysis and sampling, and discussion papers on veterinary drugs in honey production and on sampling plan for residue control for aquatic animal products.

8. The 11th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees for North America and South West Pacific will consider matters arising from FAO, WHO, the Codex Alimentarius Commission and other Codex Committees, including the outcomes of the Codex Trust Fund mid-term review and activities of other international and regional organizations. The Committee will be discussing the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Coordination Committee North America South West Pacific (CCNASWP) 2008-2013, the information submitted by countries of the region on consumer participation in food standard setting activities and on the use of Codex standards and related texts at the national and regional levels. The Committee will also be considering a discussion paper on kava.

9. FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe will consider Implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2008 – 2013; problems with the implementation of Codex standards and other texts at national and regional level; food control situation and participation of consumers in the Codex standards setting; Nutritional Issues within the Region and also other issues that are important to the Regions.

10. The 4th Session of the *Ad hoc* Codex Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance will continue the elaboration of the proposed draft Guidelines for the Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance. According to the mandate received by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the Task Force should complete its work by this session.

III. CODEX MEMBERSHIP

11. Codex membership stands at 182 member countries and one member organization (the European Union).
