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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (CODEX)

The following communication, received on 27 February 2022, is being circulated at the request of the Codex secretariat.

1 CODEX MEETINGS HELD SINCE THE LAST SESSION OF THE SPS COMMITTEE (3-5 NOVEMBER 2021)

1.1 44th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC44, 8 November – 14 December 2021)

1.1.1 Final adoption of more than 900 new and revised Codex standards (including numerical standards), guidelines and codes of practice (of SPS relevance)

- Guidance on paperless use of electronic certificates (Revised Guidelines for Design, Production, Issuance and Use of Generic Official Certificates, CXG 38-2001);
- General standard for the labelling of non-retail containers of foods;
- Guidelines on front-of-pack nutrition labelling (Annex to the Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling, CXG 2-1985);
- Revision to the Code of practice to minimize and contain foodborne antimicrobial resistance (CXC 61-2005);
- Guidelines on integrated monitoring and surveillance of foodborne antimicrobial resistance;
- Maximum levels for cadmium in chocolates containing or declaring <30% or ≥30% to <50% total cocoa solid on a dry matter basis;
- Amendment to the maximum levels for lead in fruit juices and grape juice;
- Revision of the Code of practice for the prevention and reduction of lead contamination in foods (CXC 56-2004);
- Revision to the Guidelines on Measurement Uncertainty (CXG 54-2004);
- New and revised methods of analysis and performance criteria for essential composition and quality factors for various commodities or commodity groups including foods for special dietary uses (i.e., infant formula and follow up formula) (CXS 234-1999);
- Approximately 400 maximum residue limits for 43 different pesticides in various foods and feeds;
- Six maximum residue limits for three veterinary drugs in foods;
- More than 500 food additive provisions;
- *Principles and guidelines for the assessment and use of voluntary third-party assurance (vTPA) programs* and revised *Guidelines for Design, Production, Issuance and use of Generic Official Certificates*, which include guidance on paperless use of electronic certificates. These texts are of particular importance in the current situation of the pandemic and its impact on trade. They can contribute to more resilient inspection and certification systems in emergency situations, and to new/emerging approaches to food export/import inspection and certification mechanisms.

1.1.2 Intermediate adoption of SPS relevance

- Code of practice for the prevention and reduction of cadmium contamination in cocoa beans;

- Revision to the General Guidelines on Sampling (CXG 50-2004);
- Maximum residue limits for ivermectin;
- Guidelines for compounds of low public health concerns that may be exempted from the establishment of Codex maximum residue limits or do not give rise to residues.

1.1. New work on SPS relevant items and priority lists approved:

- Maximum levels for methylmercury in orange roughy and pink cusk eel;
- Code of practice for the prevention and reduction of mycotoxins contamination in cassava and cassava-based products;
- Guidance on the prevention and control of food fraud;
- Labelling information provided through technology;
- Priority lists of: food additive substances proposed for evaluation by JECFA; veterinary drugs for evaluation/re-evaluation by JECFA; and pesticides for evaluation by JMPR.

1.1.3 Codex Ad hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (TFAMR) dissolved

1.2. Further information on the above can be found in the report of CAC44 and relevant subsidiary bodies.

1.1.4 Codex and the pandemic

1.3. CAC44 recommended that Rule XI (7) and (8) of the Procedural Manual continue to be interpreted in a manner that includes a virtual setting with respect to sessions of Codex Subsidiary Bodies. Thus, CAC and its subsidiary bodies will continue to meet in a virtual setting in 2022.

1.1.5 60th Anniversary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (1963-2023)

1.4. CAC44 agreed that the celebration of the Codex 60th Anniversary would be a wonderful occasion to raise awareness about food safety and quality and encouraged all Members and Observers to use the opportunity of the Codex 60th Anniversary to plan and implement activities to build awareness of Codex and to engage high level political support for Codex work.

1.1.6 Monitoring the use and impact of Codex standards

1.5. In line with Goal 3 of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 (Increase recognition and use of Codex Standards), the Codex secretariat in consultation with the FAO and WHO Evaluation Offices has initiated a project to identify, and in due course implement, an approach to monitor the use and impact of Codex standards. Following the initial review and analysis phase, a proposal for a phased approach will be presented for consideration by CCEXEC82.

2 FORTHCOMING CODEX MEETINGS OF SPS RELEVANCE (AS OF FEBRUARY 2022. SEE THE CODEX WEBSITE FOR THE FULL MEETING CALENDAR)

- 52nd Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH52, Virtual, 28 February-9 March 2022);
- 15th Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF15, Virtual, 9-24 May 2022);
- 32nd Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO32, TBD, 16-22 May 2022)
CCEURO will not discuss any standards however it will discuss issues related to the use of Codex standards in the region and other issues important to the region in all Codex committees which may also include SPS-related matters. More information will become available on the Committee homepage.

2.1. Regular updates on the status of work of these Committees are published on their dedicated webpages on the [Codex website](#). For specific questions on the status of work in Codex committees of interest to SPS delegates, please check the dedicated webpages or send an email to codex@fao.org.

2.2. The Codex secretariat, in collaboration with host secretariats, is continuing to convene working group meetings and webinars in advance of Codex subsidiary sessions to support delegations' preparations, and facilitate discussions and consensus-building. Further information is available on the Committee webpages and the [Codex calendar](#).
