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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 9 March 2023, is being circulated at the request of the Codex secretariat.

1 CODEX MEETINGS HELD SINCE THE LAST SESSION OF THE SPS COMMITTEE (9-11 NOVEMBER 2022)

1.1 CCEXEC and CAC

1.1.1 83rd Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, Italy, 14-18 November 2022)

1.1. Matters of relevance arising from CCEXEC83 are referred to in the decisions of CAC45 concerning the Statements of Principle Concerning the Role of Science in the Codex Decision-Making Process and the extent to which other factors are taken into account (SoP), the 60th Anniversary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025, New Food Sources and Production Systems and the Future of Codex.

1.1.2 45th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, Italy, 21 November 2022 – 6 February 2023)

1.1.2.1 Standards and related texts

1.2. CAC adopted more than 500 new and revised Codex standards and related texts, of which of relevance to SPS are as follows:

- 476 MRLs for different combinations of pesticides/commodity(ies);
- ML for cadmium in cocoa powder (100% cocoa solids on a dry matter basis);
- MLs for lead in cereal-based foods for infants and young children, white and refined sugar, corn and maple syrups, honey and sugar-based candies;
- MLs for methylmercury in orange roughy and pink cusk eel;
- MLs for total aflatoxins in maize grain, destined for further processing; flour meal, semolina and flakes derived from maize; husked rice; polished rice; sorghum grain, destined for further processing; cereal-based food for infants and young children (excluding foods for food aid programs); and cereal-based food for infants and young children for food aid programs;
- Code of practice for the prevention and reduction of cadmium contamination in cocoa beans;

- Guidelines for the recognition of active substances or authorized uses of active substances of low public health concern that are considered exempted from the establishment of maximum residue limits or do not give rise to residues;
- Guidelines for the management of biological foodborne outbreaks;
- General Principles of Food Hygiene (CXC 1-1969) (revision);
- Guidelines for Developing Harmonized Food Safety Legislation for the CCAFRICA Region (regional guidelines).

1.3. CAC approved new work items on food safety related texts:

- Development of principles and guidelines on the use of remote audit and verification in regulatory frameworks; and
- Alignment of food hygiene texts with the revised General Principles on Food Hygiene (CXC 1-1969).

1.1.2.2 Cross-cutting matters of general interest to the work of CAC and its subsidiary bodies

Application of the Statements of Principle Concerning the Role of Science in the Codex Decision-Making Process and the extent to which other factors are taken into account (SoP)

1.4. CAC agreed to refer the draft Guidance for Codex Chairpersons and members on the application of the SoP to the chairpersons of Codex subsidiary bodies to facilitate deliberations on matters that fell within the scope of the SoP and urged members to take account of the draft guidance as appropriate during the process of standards development and advancement.

1.5. CAC further requested the Codex secretariat to solicit the views of members and observers on specific suggestions to improve the draft guidance, its finalization and possible incorporation into guidance documents for chairpersons and members for discussion at CAC46 in 2023.

60th Anniversary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

1.6. CAC encouraged members and observers to fully engage in the celebrations and to share information on their plans and activities directly and through the Codex secretariat; and urged members to commit to advocacy at all levels to ensure both the widest possible participation in the celebrations and the widest possible promotion of the work of Codex.

Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 (SP) – Monitoring framework on the use and impact of Codex standards

1.7. CAC noted the continuing evolution of the Codex SP monitoring framework and requested the Codex secretariat to review it with the intent to focus on the indicators where the most useful information was collected.

1.8. CAC further noted that there would be benefit in undertaking the elaboration of the next Codex SP with the membership in parallel with the revision of the monitoring framework led by the Codex secretariat.

New food sources and production systems (NFPS)

1.9. CAC recognized the importance of Codex working in a flexible and timely manner to consider NFPS as an important topic in the development of international standards aimed at protecting consumer health and ensuring fair practices in the food trade.

1.10. CAC encouraged members to submit proposals related to NFPS using existing mechanisms and subsidiary bodies to consider NFPS in their deliberations and requested the Codex secretariat to solicit the views of members and observers on the identification of possible issues related to NFPS that the current structure and procedures could not address and options to address them for discussion at CAC46.

Future of Codex

1.11. CAC considered a report to develop a blueprint for the future of Codex based on the experience gained and changes needed to remain active during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the timely opportunity of the 60th Anniversary to ensure that, in moving forward, Codex was fit for purpose. The work to date had focused on preparedness in terms of working modalities and the evolution of working practices within Codex related to meeting formats, meeting schedules and working groups, and other virtual informal working mechanisms.

1.12. CAC noted that the future of Codex was a work in progress and that there would be an opportunity in 2023 for all members and observers to engage on this topic and noted the need, in due course, to review the Procedural Manual to ensure that its provisions enabled and facilitated continued virtual and hybrid meetings.

1.13. Working documents, including the report, of CCEXEC and CAC sessions are available on the Codex website: [CCEXEC83](#), [CAC45](#).

2 INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

2.1 53rd Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (San Diego, United States of America, 29 November - 2 December 2022)

2.1. CCFH finalized the Guidelines for the control of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) in raw beef, fresh leafy vegetables, raw milk and raw milk cheeses, and sprouts (general section and annexes on raw beef and raw milk and raw milk cheeses) (work continues on annexes for fresh leafy vegetables and sprouts) and the Guidelines for the safe use and reuse of water in food production and processing (general section and annex on fresh produce) for adoption by CAC46 (2023).

2.2. CCFH agreed to start new work on Guidelines for food hygiene control measures in traditional markets for food and the revision of the General principles of food hygiene to the control of pathogenic *Vibrio* species in seafood (CXG 73-2010) subject to approval by CAC46 (2023).

2.3. CCFH continues work on Guidelines for the safe use and reuse of water in food production (annexes on fishery and dairy products).

2.2 26th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (Portland, United States of America, 13-17 February 2023)

2.4. CCRVDF finalized MRLs for thirteen compounds:

- Ivermectin for sheep, pigs, and goats – fat, kidney, liver and muscle;
- Nicarbazin for chicken;
- Extrapolated MRLs of ten veterinary drugs (amoxicillin, benzylpenicillin, cyhalothrin, cypermethrin, deltamethrin, levamisole, moxidectin, spectinomycin, tilmicosin, tetracyclines) for ruminants;
- Extrapolated MRLs of two veterinary drugs (deltamethrin, flumequine) for finfish.

2.5. CCRVDF continues work on the establishment of MRLs for veterinary drugs (regular and extrapolation procedures), criteria and procedures for the establishment of action levels arising from the unavoidable and intended carryover of veterinary drugs from feed to food of animal origin.

The Committee also continues coordination work with the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues on issues of common interest to both committees.

2.6. Further information on the work of these committees can be found in the report of the Session available on the Codex website: [CCFH53](#), [CCRVDf26](#).

3 FORTHCOMING CODEX MEETINGS OF SPS RELEVANCE (AS OF FEBRUARY 2023. SEE THE CODEX WEBSITE FOR THE FULL MEETING CALENDAR)

3.1 CCEXEC

- 84th Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC84, Geneva, Switzerland, 10-14 July 2023)

3.2 International committee meetings of relevance to SPS

- 16th Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF16, Utrecht, Netherlands, 18-21, 26 April) (physical plenary session with virtual adoption of the report, broadcasting available)
- 26th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS26, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 1-5 May 2023) (hybrid)
- 42nd Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS42, Budapest, Hungary, 12-16 June and 20 June 2023) (physical plenary session with virtual adoption of the report, broadcasting available)
- 54th Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR54, 26 June – 1 July 2023)

3.1. Regular updates on the status of work of these Committees are published on their dedicated webpages: [CCEXEC84](#), [CCFICS26](#), [CCMAS42](#), [CCPR54](#).

3.2. 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.

4 GENERAL

4.1. The Codex secretariat in collaboration with Host Country Secretariats are continuing to convene working group meetings and webinars and other events in advance of Codex subsidiary bodies' sessions to support delegations' preparations and facilitate discussions and consensus-building. Further information is available on the Committee webpages and the [Codex calendar](#).
