



INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (CODEX)

The following communication, received on 13 November 2023, is being circulated at the request of the Codex secretariat.

1 INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1.1 42nd Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (Budapest, Hungary, 13–16 June 2023)

1.1. The work of CCMAS is important for conformity assessment or compliance with Codex standards or national regulations/regulations.

1.2. CCMAS42 completed work on the revision of the *General Guidelines on Sampling* (CXG 50-2004) which it has forwarded to CAC46 for adoption. The revised Guidelines follow a more innovative and statistical approach to sampling and will be supported by an information document comprising an e-book and sampling plan apps which is intended to be completed by the next session of CCMAS in 2024. These revised Guidelines will provide guidance to regulators who need to develop sampling plans for conformity assessment purposes that are easily understood and useable.

1.3. CCMAS42 finalized an information document, Procedures for the estimation of measurement uncertainty, to support the implementation of the Guidelines on measurement uncertainty, which will be published on the Codex website.

1.4. In addition, CCMAS is continuing to update methods of analysis in its single reference standard, the *General Standard for Methods of Analysis and Sampling* (XCS 234-1999) and has advanced several updated methods, in particular, for the following commodities: fats and oils, cereals, pulses and legumes, processed fruits and vegetables and milk and milk products, infant formula, amongst others.

1.2 54th Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR54, Beijing, China, 26 June – 1 July 2023)

1.5. CCPR54 recommended several new and revised maximum residue limits (MRLs) for pesticide/commodity combinations in food/feed for adoption by CAC46 with the subsequent revocation of associated MRLs previously adopted by CAC.

1.6. In particular, several MRLs for the group peppers have been revised to include okra, martynia and roselle, minor crops commodities that necessitate MRLs to facilitate international trade. These MRLs will remain in place until further data can be generated for review by the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticides (JMPR) to determine whether single MRLs for these commodities can be established or whether a separate or the same group (peppers) can accommodate MRLs for okra, martynia and roselle. CCPR will monitor progress on data generation in order to make sure data is timely submitted to JMPR for review in the near future.

1.7. CCPR54 continues work on establishment of MRLs for pesticides for new and existing compounds through the submission of the priority list of pesticides for evaluation by JMPR for approval as new work by CAC46.

1.8. CCPR54 also completed work on the revision of the *Classification of Foods and Animal Feed* (CXA 4-1989) with the finalization of groups related to animal commodities and the corresponding table of representative commodities for the establishment of group MRLs using extrapolation approach. These groups and the corresponding tables, including other revisions to facilitate understanding of the Classification to establish MRLs for pesticides are for final adoption by CAC46.

1.9. CCPR54 recommended new work to provide guidance for monitoring the purity and stability of reference materials and related stock solutions of pesticides during prolonged storage to allow the extended use of the RMs which are stable with acceptable purity beyond their expiry dates specified for robust pesticide residue analysis.

1.3 33rd Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (Bordeaux, France, 2-6 October 2023)

1.10. The Codex Procedural Manual (PM) provides the framework within which Codex undertakes its work and the Codex secretariat has developed a new format and layout of the PM which was presented at CCGP33. The aim is to improve accessibility and usability. Among the new features introduced, were a foreword to give more visibility to the major additions/changes included in the latest version of the PM, and additional front and end matter sections, e.g., list of abbreviations, to facilitate easier navigation and usability.

1.11. In considering further recommendations on possible improvements CCGP33 also agreed to recommend that CAC46 approved the move of Section 6 (Membership of the Codex Alimentarius Commission) of the PM to the Codex website with a link to the list provided in the PM, thereby ensuring that the list could be updated without issuing new editions of the PM.

1.12. The Codex PM has evolved since the first edition was published in 1968 and additions over time have led to inconsistencies as well as some content being superseded. Continuing with the aim of improving usability CCGP33 discussed inconsistencies and superseded text in the PM and agreed to forward to CAC46 for approval changes to the PM to align with modern technologies and current practices, and a request to members to identify any other such areas that may need to be addressed.

2 CROSS-CUTTING MATTERS OF GENERAL INTEREST TO THE WORK OF CAC AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

2.1 84th Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Geneva, Switzerland, 10-14 July 2023)

2.1. Matters of relevance arising from CCEXEC84 concerning horizontal discussions in Codex that may be of relevance to the SPS Committee are summarized below Codex.

2.2 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)

2.2. CAC45 (2022) 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. CAC further requested the Codex secretariat to invite members and observers to provide specific suggestions to improve the draft guidance, its finalization and possible incorporation into guidance documents for Chairpersons and members. The updated draft guidance will be discussed at CAC46 in late November 2023.

2.3 60th Anniversary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

2.3. CAC45 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.

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

2.4. CAC45 noted the continuing evolution of the Codex SP monitoring framework and requested the Codex secretariat to review it.

2.5. CCEXEC84 considered a proposed revision to the monitoring framework and recommended that lessons learnt from the development and implementation of the monitoring framework for the Strategic Plan 2020-25 be taken into account when developing the monitoring framework for the Strategic Plan 2026-2031. CCEXEC noting the report of the survey on the use and impact of Codex texts and its recommendations confirmed that the survey approach, piloted in 2022, should be used as part of the mechanism to monitor the use and impact of Codex texts.

2.5 Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031

2.6. CAC45 noted that there would be benefit in undertaking the elaboration of the next Strategic Plan with the membership in parallel with the development of the monitoring framework led by the Codex secretariat.

2.7. CCEXEC84 began work on developing the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 and considered a possible structure together with a timetable and process for its elaboration. In agreeing on an approach to move forward, CCEXEC84 recognized the value of immediate and ongoing engagement with the Codex membership on the process of drafting the Strategic Plan 2026-2031 using a range of modalities; the key role of CCEXEC on providing strategic direction to the Commission, and the importance of its involvement throughout the drafting of the Strategic Plan 2026-2031. CCEXEC85 will review intersessional work and discuss the next steps regarding the development of the Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

2.6 New food sources and production systems (NFPS)

2.8. CAC45 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.

2.9. CAC45 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 invite comments from members and observers for 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.

2.7 Future of Codex

2.10. CAC45 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 context in which Codex will be working in the future has been one of the areas of discussion and if feeding into the development of the Codex Strategic plan 2026-2031. In the course of the work note has been taken of the 12th Ministerial Conference of the WTO and its acknowledgement of the centrality of Codex standard setting in the multilateral system in the context of emerging global challenges.

2.11. The discussions on the future of Codex have had a particular focus 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.

2.12. CAC45 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 PM to ensure that its provisions enabled and facilitated continued virtual and hybrid meetings.

2.8 Other matters

2.13. Further information on the work of these committees can be found in the report of the Session available on the Codex website [CAC45](#), [CCMAS42](#), [CCPR54](#), [CCEXEC84](#) and [CCGP33](#).

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

3.1 CCEXEC

3.1. 85th Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC85, Rome, Italy, 20-24 November 2023) (physical)

3.2 CAC

3.2. 46th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC46, Rome, Italy, 27 November – 2 December 2023) (physical with possibility of remote participation)

3.3. Regular updates on the status of work of [CCEXEC85](#) and [CAC46](#) are published on their dedicated webpages.

3.4. 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 virtual and physical working group meetings and webinars in advance of Codex subsidiary sessions to support delegations' preparations and facilitate discussions and consensus-building in plenary. Further information is available on the Committee webpages and the [Codex calendar](#).
