

**SUBMISSION TO THE 36TH MEETING OF THE SPS COMMITTEE
(GENEVA, 27-28 JUNE 2006)**

**INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF THE
CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**

Submission by the Codex Alimentarius Commission

The following communication, dated 13 June 2006, is being circulated at the request of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

I. CODEX SESSIONS SINCE THE THIRTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE SPS COMMITTEE (MARCH 2006)

- The 7th Session of the Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products (Queenstown, New Zealand, 27 March – 1 April 2006)
- The 38th Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (Fortaleza, Brazil, 3–8 April 2006)
- The 23rd Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (Paris, France, 10–14 April 2006)
- The 38th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants (The Hague, Netherlands, 24–28 April 2006)
- The 34th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (Ottawa, Canada, 1–5 May 2006)
- The 16th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (Cancun, Mexico, 8–12 May 2006)
- 27th Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (Budapest, Hungary, 15–19 May 2006)

In particular, the **Codex Alimentarius Commission** wishes to draw attention of the SPS Committee to the following.

1. The 7th Session of the **Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products** finalized several texts, including the amendment to the Codex General Standard for Cheese, the three standards for blends of milk products and vegetable fat, the revised standards for 16 individual cheeses, the revision of the Codex Standard for Whey Cheeses and the standard for Dairy Fat Spreads. These texts will be considered by the 29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for adoption, pending the endorsement of the food additive and labeling provisions and the methods of analysis by the relevant

Codex Committees. The Committee also forwarded the proposed draft Model Export Certificate for Milk and Milk Products to the 29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for preliminary adoption, agreed to discontinue consideration of the issue of naming non-standardized dairy products and to forward to the 29th Session of the Commission a proposal for new work on the amendment to the list of additives of the Code Standard for Creams and Prepared Creams.

2. The 38th Session of the **Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues** had considered and proposed for adoption by the 29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Geneva, 3-7 July 2006) the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for Pesticides in Foods and Feeds, including dried Chili peppers for a number of pesticides. It also established MRLs for five new pesticides (dimethenamid-P, fenhexamin, indoxacarb, novaluron and sulfuryl fluoride). The Committee finalized the Risk Analysis Principles Applied by the Committee on Pesticide Residues and the Guidelines on the Estimation of Uncertainty of Results. The Committee agreed to discontinue the Pilot Project for Estimation of National MRLs as Interim Codex MRLs for Safer Replacement Pesticides with the understanding that for new MRLs proposed by JMPR, for which there would be no intake concerns identified by JMPR and on condition that relevant JMPR reports were available by early February, the Steps 5/8 Procedure would be used. The Committee will continue work on the following issues: on the extended revision of the Codex Classification of Foods and Animal Feeds; the List of Methods for Pesticide Residue Analysis; and the Establishment of MRLs for Processed and Ready-to-Eat Foods. The Committee also agreed to consider a paper on how Codex MRLs are used at national level.

3. The 23rd Session of the **Codex Committee on General Principles** agreed on several proposed amendments to the Procedural Manual, especially the Procedures for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts and the review of the General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius.

4. The 38th Session of the **Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants** continued work on the General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA). The Committee forwarded to the 29th Session of the Commission for final adoption: the revised Preamble of the GSFA; the Codex General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins and Foods, including Schedule I; maximum levels for total aflatoxins in almonds, hazelnuts and pistachios "ready-to-eat" for preliminary adoption; the Appendix to the Codex Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Tree Nuts (CAC/RCP 55-2004) to address additional measures for the prevention and reduction of aflatoxin contamination in Brazil nuts for adoption; the maximum levels for lead in fish and for cadmium in polished rice and marine molluscs; the Code of Practice for the prevention and reduction of dioxin and dioxin-like PCB contamination in food and feeds; and the revised guideline levels for radionuclides in foods contaminated following a nuclear or radiological emergency for use in international trade. Proposals for new work being submitted to the Commission for approval include: Guidelines for the Use of Flavourings; Codes of Practice for the prevention and control of ochratoxin A contamination in wine; for the reduction of acrylamide in food; and for the reduction of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) contamination in food. The Committee agreed to request FAO/WHO to convene an expert consultation on the health risks associated with methylmercury and dioxin and dioxin-like PCBs in fish and the health benefits of fish consumption and to postpone consideration on the need to revise the guideline levels for methylmercury in fish pending the outcome of the consultation and to retain the current Codex guideline levels for the time being.

5. Following the request of the chairman of the **SPS Committee** regarding the establishment of maximum levels (ML) for sulphur dioxide in Food Category 12.2.1 (Herbs and Spices), the Committee forwarded a ML for the use of sulphites (including sulphur dioxide) of (150mg/kg) for Food Category 12.2.1 "Herbs and Spices" for adoption by the 29th Session of the Commission.

6. The 34th Session of the **Codex Committee on Food Labelling** finalized the Draft Revised List of Permitted Substances in the Guidelines for the Production, Processing, Labelling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods, and the Proposed Draft Definition of Trans-Fatty Acids, for inclusion in the Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling, both for adoption by the 29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. It considered the Labelling of Foods and Food Ingredients Obtained through Certain Techniques of Genetic Modification/Genetic Engineering and the Quantitative Declaration of Ingredients, and provided its views on the implementation of the WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health in the framework of Codex.

7. The 16th Session of the **Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods** continued its work on the elaboration of maximum residue limits (MRLs), sending MRLs for five substances to the 29th Session of the Commission for adoption and finalised the Risk Analysis Principles applied by the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods and the Risk Assessment Policy for the Setting of the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) in Foods for inclusion in the Codex Procedural Manual. It further sent the renamed Codex Guidelines for the Design and Implementation of National Regulatory Food Safety Assurance Programme Associated with the Use of Veterinary Drugs in Food Producing Animals to the Commission for preliminary adoption.

8. The 27th Session of the **Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling** forwarded the Proposed Draft Guidelines for Settling Disputes on Analytical (Test) Results and Analytical Terminology for Codex Use to the 29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for adoption as Draft Guidelines; agreed to ask for further comments on the Draft Guidelines for Evaluating Acceptable Methods of Analysis; and endorsed the methods of analysis and sampling in several Draft Codex standards. It agreed to continue its work on recommendations and criteria for methods of analysis for the detection and identification of foods derived from biotechnology; the revision and harmonisation of analytical terminology; and uncertainty in sampling.

II. FORTHCOMING CODEX MEETINGS

- The 58th Session Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Geneva, Switzerland, 29 June – 1 July 2006);
- The 29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Geneva, Switzerland, 3–7 July 2006);
- The 28th Session of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (Beijing, China, 18–22 September 2006).

III. ABOLITION OF ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURES OF CODEX STANDARDS

9. The 33rd Session of the FAO Conference (November 2005) and the 59th World Health Assembly (May 2006) approved the amendments to the Statutes of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, thereby completing the abolition process of the acceptance procedures.

IV. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

10. The membership currently comprises 173 countries and the European Community.
