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Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

Original: English

### **CODEX UPDATE TO THE TBT COMMITTEE**

#### **INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (CODEX)**

This document contains information provided by CODEX at the TBT Committee meeting of 8-10 March 2023 under Agenda Item 5 (Update by Observers).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In original language only.

**INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION****Codex meetings held since the last session of the TBT Committee (16-18 November 2022)****CAC AND OTHER SUBSIDIARY BODIES****83<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission  
(Rome, Italy, 14 - 18 November 2022)**

Matters of relevance arising from CCEXEC83 are referred to in the decisions of CAC45 related to 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 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025, New Food Sources and Production Systems and the Future of Codex.

Working documents, including the report, of CCEXEC sessions are available on the Codex website:

<https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/executive-committee/meetings/en/>

**45<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission  
(Rome, Italy, 21 November – 6 February 2023)**Standards and related texts

*Final adoption of more than 500 new and revised Codex standards (including regional standards), guidelines and codes of practice of which relevant to TBT:*

- Guidelines for Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF)
- New/revised worldwide standards for onions and shallots; berry fruits; several spices i.e. dried floral parts (saffron), dried seeds (nutmeg), dried or dehydrated chilli peppers and paprika; and named vegetable oils (revision of the essential composition of sunflower seed oil)
- Revised labelling provisions for non-retail containers in several regional and worldwide standards.

Commodity standards generally refer to product description and essential composition and quality factors to ensure fair practices in trade while protecting consumers against misleading practices. Revisions to labelling provisions for non-retail containers will ensure consistency across the application of such provisions in commodity standards while considering the overarching guidance provided in the *General Standard for the labelling of non-retail containers of foods* (CXS 346-2021)

*Several new work items approved of which relevant to TBT:*

- Development of principles and guidelines on the use of remote audit and verification in regulatory frameworks.

- Revision to the *Standard for Named Vegetable Oils* (CXS 210-1999) inclusion of other oils i.e. Camellia seed oil; Sacha inchi oil; and High oleic acid soya bean oil.
- Development of a new worldwide standard for fresh curry leaves.

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)*

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.

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.

60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

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 for the use and impact of Codex standards

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.

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)

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.

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*

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.

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.

Working documents, including the report, of CAC sessions are available on the Codex website: <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/cac/meetings/en/>

#### **16<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific (CCNASWP16, Nadi, Fiji, 30 January – 3 February 2023)**

CCNASWP agreed to forward a regional standard for fermented noni fruit juice to CAC46 for final adoption.

Further information on the discussion of this standard can be found in the report of the Session available on the Codex website: <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/meetings/detail/en/?meeting=CCNASWP&session=16>

#### **FORTHCOMING CODEX MEETINGS OF TBT RELEVANCE (As of February 2023. See the Codex website for the full meeting calendar)**

##### **CCEXEC and CAC**

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

##### **Subsidiary committee meetings**

- 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU43, Duesseldorf, Germany, 7 – 10 and 15 March 2023)

- 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS26, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 1 – 5 May 2023)
- 47<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL47, Ottawa, Canada, 15 – 19 May 2023)
- 42<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS42, Budapest, Hungary, 12 – 16 June and 20 June 2023)

Regular updates on the status of work of these Committees are published on their dedicated webpages: [CCEXEC84](#), [CCNFSDU43](#), [CCFICS26](#), [CCFL47](#) and [CCMAS42](#).

For specific questions on the status of work in Codex committees of interest to TBT delegates please check the dedicated webpages or send an email to [codex@fao.org](mailto:codex@fao.org).

#### **GENERAL**

The Codex Secretariat in collaboration with Host Country Secretariats are 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](#).