



Codex News – August 11, 2020

Confirmation of Virtual Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) Meeting

Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)

The Codex Secretariat recently circulated a letter to members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission to confirm their endorsement of the plan to hold the 43rd Session of the Commission (CAC43) virtually and suspend the rules requiring an in-person meeting of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The proposed CAC43 meeting would take place in the format of five one-hour sessions from September 24-26 and again on October 12 and October 19. Members can confirm their endorsement via the Codex website until August 23, 2020.

Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC)

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The 79th Session of CCEXEC, originally scheduled for a physical meeting from June 29 to July 3, 2020, was held as a virtual meeting on July 13, 14, 17, and 20, 2020. During the streamlined meeting, CCEXEC went through the critical review agenda for each committee. Also covered was the discussion paper titled *Codex and the pandemic - Strategic challenges and opportunities*, which examines how to continue Codex work during the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting report and other documents related to the 79th Session of the CCEXEC are available at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/meetings/detail/en/?meeting=CCEXEC&session=79.

Requests for Comments

Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF)

Methylmercury in Fish Species: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/52-OCS-CF) requesting comments on Maximum Levels (MLs) for methylmercury in additional fish species, including sampling plans and other risk management recommendations. The CL is available in English at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circular-letters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Doreen Chen-Moulec (doreen.chenmoulec@usda.gov) by October 1, 2020. Comments by other observers and countries should be submitted via their Codex Contact Point (CCP) using the Codex Online Commenting System (OCS) (<https://ocs.codexalimentarius.org>) by October 15, 2020.

Cadmium in Chocolates: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/50-OCS-CF) requesting comments for work on MLs for cadmium in chocolates and cocoa-derived products. The CL is available in English at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circular-letters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Doreen Chen-Moulec (doreen.chenmoulec@usda.gov) by September 16, 2020. Comments by other observers and countries should be submitted via their CCP using the OCS (<https://ocs.codexalimentarius.org>) by September 30, 2020.

Mycotoxins in Cassava: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/51-OCS-CF) requesting comments for work related to mycotoxins contamination in cassava and cassava-based products. The CL is available in English at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circular-letters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Doreen Chen-Moulec (doreen.chenmoulec@usda.gov) by September 16, 2020. Comments by other observers and countries should be submitted via their CCP using the OCS (<https://ocs.codexalimentarius.org>) by September 30, 2020.

Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH)

New Work: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/32-FH) requesting proposals for new work and/or revision of existing standards. The CL is currently available in English, French, and Spanish at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circular-letters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Jenny Scott (jenny.scott@fda.hhs.gov) by May 17, 2021. Comments by other countries and observers should be submitted via their CCP to the CCFH Host Secretariat (CCFH@usda.gov) with a copy to the Codex Secretariat (codex@fao.org) by May 31, 2021.

Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)

Extension of Deadline: The Codex Secretariat extended the deadline for comments on a Circular Letter (CL 2020/30/NFSDU) requesting proposals for new work and emerging issues. The CL is currently available in English, French, and Spanish at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circular-letters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Kristen Hendricks (Kristen.hendricks@usda.gov) by November 17, 2020. Comments by other countries and observers should be submitted via their CCP to Alina Steinert, CCNFSDU Host Secretariat (Alina.Steinert@bmel.bund.de) with a copy to the Codex Secretariat (codex@fao.org) by December 1, 2020.

Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF)

Extrapolation of MRLs: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/42-RVDF) requesting comments on the approach for the extrapolation of maximum residue limits (MRLs) for veterinary drugs to one or more species and proposals for MRLs based on the approach proposed for extrapolation of MRLs to one or more species. The CL is available in English, French, and Spanish at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circular-letters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Ken Lowery (ken.lowery@usda.gov) by October 16, 2020. Comments by other observers and countries should be submitted via their CCP to the CCRVDF Secretariat (CCRVDF-USSEC@fsis.usda.gov) with a copy to the Codex Secretariat (codex@fao.org) by October 31, 2020.

Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV)

Gochujang: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/43/OCS-PFV) requesting comments at Step 5/8 on the proposed draft standard for gochujang. The CL can be found in English, French, and Spanish at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circularletters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Doreen Chen-Moulec (doreen.chenmoulec@usda.gov) by August 27, 2020. Comments by other observers and countries should be submitted via their CCP using the OCS (ocs.codexalimentarius.org) by September 10, 2020.

Chili Sauce: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/44/OCS-PFV) requesting comments at Step 5/8 on the proposed draft standard for chili sauce. The CL can be found in English, French, and Spanish at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circularletters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Doreen Chen-Moulec (doreen.chenmoulec@usda.gov) by August 27, 2020. Comments by other observers and countries should be submitted via their CCP using the OCS (ocs.codexalimentarius.org) by September 10, 2020.

Mango Chutney: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/45/OCS-PFV) requesting comments at Step 5/8 on the proposed draft standard for mango chutney. The CL can be found in English, French, and Spanish at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circularletters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Doreen Chen-Moulec (doreen.chenmoulec@usda.gov) by August 27, 2020. Comments by other observers and countries should be submitted via their CCP using the OCS (ocs.codexalimentarius.org) by September 10, 2020.

Dried Fruits: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/46/OCS-PFV) requesting comments at Step 5/8 on the proposed draft standard for dried fruits. The CL can be found in English, French, and Spanish at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circularletters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Doreen Chen-Moulec (doreen.chenmoulec@usda.gov) by August 27, 2020. Comments by other observers and countries should be submitted via their CCP using the OCS (ocs.codexalimentarius.org) by September 10, 2020.

Canned Mixed Fruits: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/47/OCS-PFV) requesting comments at Step 5/8 on the proposed draft standard for canned mixed fruits. The CL can be found in English, French, and Spanish at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circularletters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Doreen Chen-Moulec (doreen.chenmoulec@usda.gov) by August 27, 2020. Comments by other observers and countries should be submitted via their CCP using the OCS (ocs.codexalimentarius.org) by September 10, 2020.

Pickled Cucumbers, Canned Bamboo Shoots, and Jams, Jellies, and Marmalades: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/48/OCS-PFV) requesting comments on the revised food additive provisions of the Standard for Pickled Cucumbers (CXS 115-1981), Canned Bamboo Shoots (CXS 241-2003), and Jams, Jellies and Marmalades (CXS 296-2009). The CL can be found in English, French and Spanish at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circularletters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Doreen Chen-Moulec (doreen.chenmoulec@usda.gov) by August 27, 2020. Comments by other observers and countries should be submitted via their CCP using the OCS (ocs.codexalimentarius.org) by September 10, 2020.

French Fried Potatoes: The Codex Secretariat issued a Circular Letter (CL 2020/49/OCS-PFV) requesting comments on the proposed amendment to annex on French Fried Potatoes of the Standard for Quick Frozen Vegetables (CXS 320-2015). The CL can be found in English, French, and Spanish at the following link: www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circularletters. If you are interested in having your comments considered in the U.S. response, please send them to Doreen Chen-Moulec (doreen.chenmoulec@usda.gov) by August 27, 2020. Comments by other observers and countries should be submitted via their CCP using the OCS (ocs.codexalimentarius.org) by September 10, 2020.

Electronic Working Groups

Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)

Continuation of Work on Note 161: The Chair of CCFA and the Codex Secretariat have agreed that the EWG should continue to work on Note 161 relating to the use of sweeteners and report to CCFA52. All Codex Members and Observers that are not already registered for this EWG are invited to register their experts for this EWG, which will be working through the Codex Forum. Individuals in the U.S. interested in working on U.S. contributions to the EWG should contact Ken Lowery (ken.lowery@usda.gov) as soon as possible. Other countries and observers should send their full contact details, including participant's name, official title or position, organization or country, and email address, via their CCP to the CCP of the United States (CFSAN-CCFA@fda.hhs.gov) and the CCP of the EU (Sante-Codex@ec.europa.eu) by August 19, 2020. Please note that when there is more than one expert, each country or observer organization shall designate one as the official representative to participate in the EWG.

Continuation of Work on Alignment: The Chair of CCFA and the Codex Secretariat have agreed that the EWG on should continue to work on alignment of commodity standards in the GSFA (milk and milk products) and report to CCFA52. All Codex Members and Observers that are not already registered for this EWG are invited to register their experts for this EWG, which will be working through the Codex Forum. Individuals in the U.S. interested in working on U.S. contributions to the EWG should contact Ken Lowery (ken.lowery@usda.gov) as soon as possible. Other countries and observers should send their full contact details, including participant's name, official title or position, organization or country, and email address, via their CCP to the CCP of Australia (international@foodstandards.gov.au) by August 21, 2020. Please note that when there is more than one expert, each country or observer organization shall designate one as the official representative to participate in the EWG.

Continuation of Work on GSFA: The Chair of CCFA and the Codex Secretariat have agreed that the Electronic Working Groups should continue to work on General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) and report to CCFA52. All Codex Members and Observers that are not already registered for this EWG are invited to register their experts for this EWG, which will be working through the Codex Forum. Individuals in the U.S. interested in working on U.S. contributions to the EWG should contact Ken Lowery (ken.lowery@usda.gov) as soon as possible. Other countries and observers should send their full contact details, including participant's name, official title or position, organization or country, and email address, via their CCP to the CCP of the United States (CFSAN-CCFA@fda.hhs.gov) by August 19, 2020. Please note that when there is more than one expert, each country or observer organization shall designate one as the official representative to participate in the EWG.

Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO)

Work Not Being Initiated: At CCFO26, the Committee agreed to establish an EWG on the List of Acceptable Previous Cargos. The Codex Secretariat recently sent an email and stated that since there were no proposals for new substances or removal of substances, the Chair of the EWG decided not to initiate an EWG for work ahead of CCFO27.

Other

Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA)

JECFA published its monograph on the residue evaluation of certain veterinary drugs created at the 88th meeting of JECFA, which took place in Rome from October 22-31, 2019. JECFA specifically considered residues of veterinary drugs in food at this meeting. The tasks before the Committee were to further elaborate principles for evaluating the safety of residues of veterinary drugs in food, establishing acceptable daily intakes (ADIs) and acute reference doses (ARfDs), and recommending maximum residue limits (MRLs) for such residues when the drugs under consideration are administered to food-producing animals in accordance with good practice in the use of veterinary drugs (GVP); to evaluate the safety of residues of certain veterinary drugs; and to respond to specific requests from the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF). The monograph can be found at the following link: <http://www.fao.org/3/ca9918en/ca9918en.pdf>.

WHO Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on Food Safety

The WHO Department of Nutrition and Food Safety has established a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on Food Safety. This TAG will advise WHO on current and future challenges along the agri-food supply chain, directions to be prioritized to improve national food safety systems and interventions and activities to improve food safety. The TAG will also advise on the Global Strategy for Food Safety. The TAG has issued a call for experts which can be found at the following link: <https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/call-for-experts-who-technical-advisory-group-on-food-safety-safer-food-for-better-health>.