



Delegate's Report, 17th Session, Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

The [Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables](#) (CCFFV) held its 17th session in Mexico City, Mexico, Sept. 3-7, 2012. The Session was attended by 39 Member countries, 1 Member Organization, and an observer from 1 international organization. The United States was represented by Dorian Lafond, USDA Agriculture Marketing Service, Delegate; and Dongmin Mu, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Alternate Delegate.

Key Issues

Revised Draft Codex Standard for Avocados

Changes were made to the Minimum Maturity Requirements clarifying that Antillean/Guatemalan/Florida avocado varieties are excluded from the "Dry Matter Content requirement" and to the Uniformity sections to reflect trading practices in large avocado varieties.

The Committee agreed to include "Tolerances for Decay and Internal Breakdown" of one percent in Class I and two percent in Class II for avocados. There was no consensus on inserting such tolerances for Extra Class, so the U.S. expressed its reservation to that section of the standard.

This standard was forwarded to the 36th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for adoption at step 8.

Draft Codex Standard for Pomegranate

The outstanding sections on Sizing and Presentation of the standard were completed. Since there are several methods of sizing used in the international trade of pomegranates it was agreed that sizing of pomegranate can be done by count, diameter, or weight, or in accordance with current trading practices. The method used must be labeled accordingly. The Committee decided that the sizing tables in the standard were to be used as a guide only and were therefore optional. The Committee also agreed to allow different varieties/colors of pomegranate in the same package provided that the pomegranates that are visible to the consumer are representative of the contents of the entire package.

The standard was forwarded to the 36th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for adoption at step 8 and the sizing (section 3) and uniformity (section 5.1) provisions for adoption at steps 5/8.

Draft Standard for Golden Passion Fruit

Many delegations felt that the majority of the text in the draft standard could be applied to other major passion fruit varieties; therefore, the standard should be expanded to include all passion fruit varieties traded internationally and not be limited to golden passion fruit as currently drafted. However, as the Codex Alimentarius Commission had approved new work on Golden passion only, it was agreed to advance the draft standard to Step 5 with the understanding that members could submit comments and information on the economic importance of other species of passion fruit, which could possibly allow the enlargement of the scope. This could be achieved by having specific annexes attached to common provisions in the main body of the standard.

Proposals for New Work on CCFFV Standards

The delegation of India presented a project document proposing that new work be started on a Codex standard for okra. Many delegations supported this proposal due to the need to protect consumers and to promote fair practices in trade. The Committee agreed to forward the project document on okra to the Executive Committee and the Commission as proposed new work. The Committee also agreed to establish an electronic working group working in English only to prepare a proposed draft standard for attachment to the project document.

The delegation of India also presented a project document on ware potatoes. Several delegations indicated that the proposal was circulated only a week before the meeting which gave them insufficient time to consult with their domestic stakeholders. Given the large number of countries trading in ware potatoes and the diversity of stakeholders, many delegations requested more time for national consultation. The Committee, however, decided to forward the proposal to the Executive Committee and the Codex Commission with the understanding that countries may undertake domestic consultation and present comments to the Executive Committee.

Possible Revision of Codex Standards in light of the Revision of UNECE and OIV Standards

The United Nations Economic Cooperation for Europe (UNECE) informed the CCFFV that revision of its standards for mangoes, pineapples, tomatoes, and fresh chili peppers were almost completed. The International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) informed the CCFFV of changes made to its minimum Maturity Requirements for Table Grapes and would appreciate the harmonization of that requirement. The CCFFV established an electronic working group



coordinated by the United States and working in English only to evaluate the proposal of the OIV and to report at the 18th Session of the Committee.

Revision of the CCFFV Terms of Reference (TOR)

The Committee considered the revision of its Terms of Reference in view of the relationship with the UNECE. It was noted that the Terms of Reference of the CCFFV was unique in that it included detailed cooperation with a single regional body. The delegation of the European Union, some European Countries, and the UNECE secretariat noted that CCFFV and the UNECE have historically worked together in accordance with their individual procedures and such cooperation benefitted both bodies and was not viewed as a hindrance. Nevertheless, several delegations felt that CCFFV would be best served if its Terms of Reference were aligned with those of other Codex commodity committees and that a singular regional standardization body should not be referenced.

The meeting established an electronic working group coordinated by Japan and working in English, Spanish and French to consider the Terms of Reference of the CCFFV and in doing so take into account paragraphs 18, 20 and 23 of CX/FFV 12/17/13.

The next CCFFV session was tentatively scheduled to be held in March 2014.