

# CODEX INDIA Annual Report 2024



FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS  
AUTHORITY OF INDIA

*Inspiring Trust, Assuring Safe & Nutritious Food*

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India

# CODEX INDIA ANNUAL REPORT 2024

## FROM THE DESK OF NATIONAL CODEX CONTACT POINT (NCCP)

Dear Readers,

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I share with you the annual report of Codex-India for the year 2024. This report captures the achievements, initiatives, and collaborative efforts that have positioned India as a key contributor to global food standards.

The year 2024 has been a milestone in many ways. India actively participated in various Codex meetings, both virtual and physical, ensuring our national interests and perspectives were well-represented. Notably, India hosted the 7th Session of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs in Kochi, Kerala, taking on significant leadership roles, including chairing and co-chairing multiple Electronic Working Groups (EWGs) across several Codex committees.

In addition to these international engagements, we have strengthened our domestic capacity-building efforts. The successful execution of initiatives such as the Codex Internship Program, workshop for FSSAI officials, and regional collaborations through the Global Food Regulators Summit exemplifies our commitment to fostering knowledge-sharing and enhancing Codex-related activities. The Inter-Country Workshop under the Codex Trust Fund and the Regional Conclave on harmonizing food standards among Asian nations stand as testaments to our leadership in fostering international cooperation.

As we look ahead, our mission remains clear: to continue contributing to the development of robust international food standards while safeguarding the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the global food trade. Together, with the unwavering support of all stakeholders, we can achieve our shared vision of safe and nutritious food for all.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to all contributors, stakeholders, and readers for their continued support. Let this report serve as a reminder of the significant progress we have made and inspire us to achieve even greater milestones in the years ahead.

Warm regards,

**Dr. Alka Rao**

Codex Contact Point of India

FSSAI

## Table of Contents

| Title  | Page No. |
|--|----------|
| Summary of India's Participation               | 4        |
| Codex Sessions during the Period               | 11       |
| Training Activities                            | 37       |
| Participation in the Electronic Working Groups | 40       |
| Featured Article                               | 42       |
| Upcoming Events in 2025                        | 44       |

# CODEX INDIA ANNUAL REPORT 2024

## SUMMARY OF INDIA'S PARTICIPATION

The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) is a joint inter-governmental body of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Health Organisation (WHO) of the United Nations with 189 Members [188 Member countries and one Member Organization (EU)]. Codex has worked since 1963 to create harmonized international food standards to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair trade practices. India has been a member of Codex Alimentarius Commission since 1964 and continues to be a partner in the international food standards development process. India actively participates in the Codex meetings and cooperates in hosting and co-hosting Codex Committee meetings to ensure that India's concerns/issues are taken into consideration while developing international standards. National Codex Contact Point for India is located in Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

In 2024, India participated actively in the Codex work for development of international standards that are fundamental to ensuring safety and fair practices in international trade of food products. The meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Codex Alimentarius Commission took place both in virtual and physical mode.

The Indian delegation attended various meetings as indicated in Table and India made specific proposals and/or ensured that India's concerns were addressed.

Table -Codex meetings held in the year 2024 and India's contribution

| S. No. | Date(s) of Meeting       | Meeting Title/Code  | Outcome of the Meeting   |
|--------|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1      | 29.01.2024 to 02.02.2024 | 7 <sup>th</sup> Session of Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH7) at Kochi, Kerala | India hosted the 7th session for CCSCH held at Kochi, Kerala. India agreed to Chair the EWG to prepare a proposed draft standard for dried seeds-coriander. India also agreed to participate as co-chair in the following EWGs:<br>(i) EWG for proposed draft standard for Large Cardamom<br>(ii) EWG established for proposed draft standard for spices in the form of dried or dehydrated fruits and berries: part B – requirements for vanilla. |

# CODEX INDIA ANNUAL REPORT 2024

|   |                             |  |   |
|---|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 2 | 19.02.2024 to<br>23.02.2024 | 28 <sup>th</sup> Session of Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO28) at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia          | <p>1. India supported the adoption of Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CXS 210 -1999) for inclusion of Avocado oil, Camellia seed oil, Sacha Inchi oil, High oleic acid soya bean oil.</p> <p>2. India proposed changes and supported the discussion paper on possible work that CCFO could undertake to reduce TFAs or eliminate PHOs.</p>   |
| 3 | 11.03.2024 to<br>15.03.2024 | 54 <sup>th</sup> Session of Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH54) at Nairobi, Kenya                   | <p>India contributed actively in the finalization of Guidelines for traditional Markets of Food and agreed to co-chair the following EWGs:</p> <p>i. EWG established to Revise Annex II on Fish and Fishery products and further develop Annex IV related to water fit-for-purpose assessment as per the terms of reference decided by the committee.</p> <p>ii. EWG established to prepare the proposed draft Revision of Guidelines for the Control of Campylobacter and Salmonella in Chicken Meat (CXG 78 -2011) for circulation for comments at step 3 and consideration at CCFH55 as per the terms of reference decided by the committee.</p> |
| 4 | 15.04.2024 to<br>19.04.2024 | 17 <sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF17) at Panama City, Panama | <p>India became Chair and co-chair for the following EWGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop the ML for AFT in RTE peanuts and the associated sampling plan for comments and consideration by CCCF18 (Chair)</li> <li>• To develop a discussion paper on Acrylamide on foods with a proposal for a draft revised Code of Practice and a project document (Chair)</li> <li>• To develop Sampling plans for total aflatoxins and ochratoxin a in certain spices (Chair)</li> <li>• Revision of Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin</li> </ul>  |

# CODEX INDIA ANNUAL REPORT 2024

|   |                          |  |  |
|---|--------------------------|--|--|
|   |                          |  | Contamination in Peanuts (CXC 55-2004) (Co-chair)  |
| 5 | 03.06.2024 to 08.06.2024 | 55 <sup>th</sup> Session of Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues at Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China                                      | <p>The draft guidelines prepared by EWG chaired by India on monitoring the stability and purity of reference materials, endorsed for draft adoption at step 5 by the committee.</p> <p>India became chair of the EWG reestablished by the committee to include provisions for monitoring the stability and purity of mixed pesticide standard solutions</p> <p>India also became co-chair for the EWG on Management of unsupported compounds without public health concerns scheduled for periodic review by JMPR and the national registration database.</p>                              |
| 6 | 01.07.2024 to 05.07.2024 | 86 <sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission at Rome, Italy                                    | <p>India, as a member elected on a geographic basis (Asia), actively participated in the 86th session of the Executive Committee (CCEXEC) of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)</p> <p>During the session, India strongly supported the advancement of standards development for various spices, including small cardamom, turmeric, and vanilla. Additionally, India backed the progression of standards for named vegetable oils, guidelines for the control of Shiga Toxin-Producing Escherichia coli, and the safe use and reuse of water in food production and processing..</p> |
| 7 | 16.09.2024 to 20.09.2024 | 27 <sup>th</sup> Session of Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS27) at Cairns, Australia | <p>India proposed the discussion paper on appeal mechanism in the context of rejection of imported food and the discussion paper was forwarded to CAC47 for approval. India also became Co-chair for the EWG on Guidance on Standardization of the representation of sanitary requirements.</p>  |
| 8 | 02.10.2024 to 06.10.2024 | 44 <sup>th</sup> Session of Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods   | <p>Indian delegation made interventions on important agenda items including General principles for establishing nutrient reference</p>   |

# CODEX INDIA ANNUAL REPORT 2024

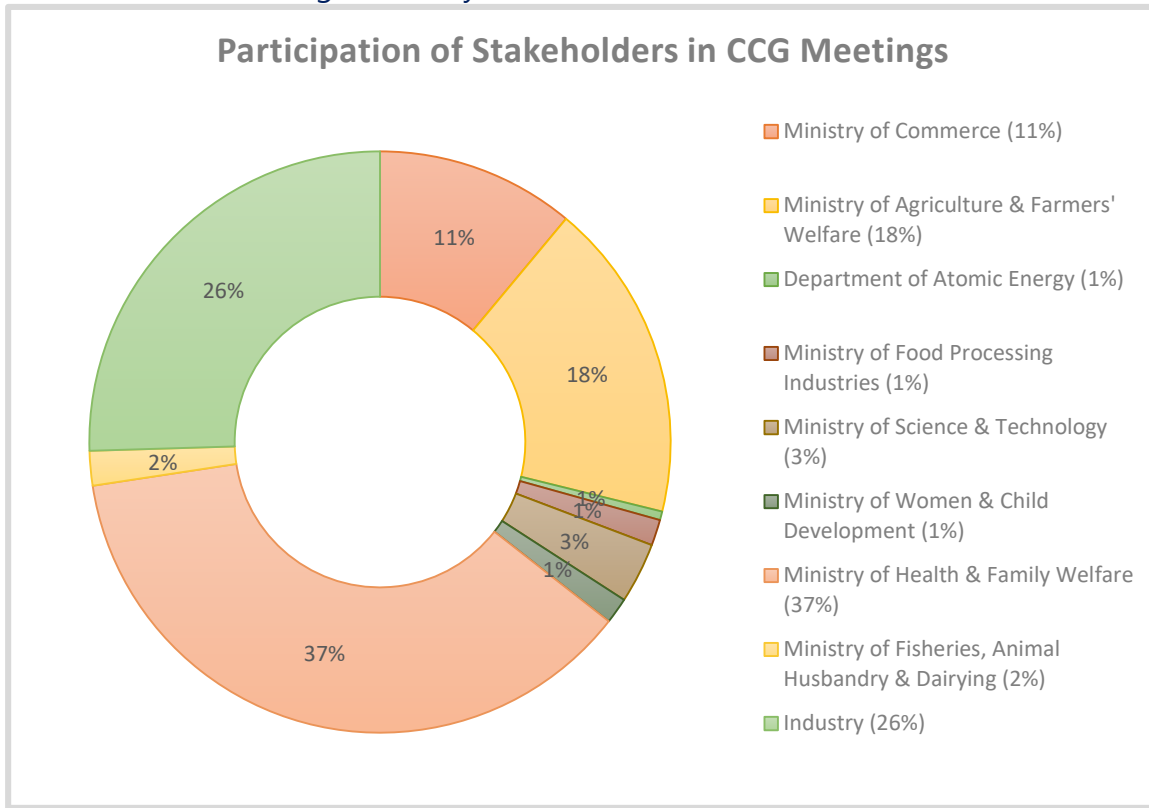
|    |                          |   |  |
|----|--------------------------|---|--|
|    |                          | for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU44) at Dresden, Germany  | values for persons aged 6 to 36 months and methods of assessing relative sweetness of carbohydrate sources in the Standard for Follow-up Formula. India extended its support to frame a harmonized probiotic guidelines for use in foods and food supplements  |
| 9  | 07.10.2024 to 17.10.2024 | 36 <sup>th</sup> Session of Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products held by correspondence | India actively supported the labelling provisions for fish and fishery products and supported the amendment to include <i>Sardinella lemuru</i> in the product definition of CXS 94-1981.  |
| 10 | 27.10.2024 to 01.11.2024 | 48 <sup>th</sup> Session of Codex Committee on Food Labelling at Quebec City, Canada            | India co-chaired two important guidelines related to 'e-commerce' & 'use of technology to provide food information', which were advanced to CAC47 for final adoption. Indian delegation strongly advocated for India's stance on key issues, including saffron and allergen labelling. India agreed to Co-Chair EWG on Food labelling in food formats joint presentation and in multiple packages.   |
| 11 | 18.11.2024 to 22.11.2024 | 87 <sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission        | India participated as a member elected on geographical basis in the 87th session of CCEXEC. The session marked significant progress in the development of Codex standards, with India playing a pivotal role in discussions on food safety, trade, and strategic planning. India's proposals, particularly on millets and labeling of spices, reflected its commitment to supporting fair trade and ensuring consumer protection through well-defined food safety standards. |
| 12 | 25.11.2024 to 30.11.2024 | Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission  | In the 47th session of CAC, India was at the forefront of discussions on new work proposals, particularly in advocating for a group standard for whole millet grains. The proposal received overwhelming support from more than 15 countries. The proposal was accepted by the CAC wherein the commission  |

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
|  |  |  | <p>approved the reactivation of Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes to work by correspondence.</p> <p>The following important agendas of India's interest were discussed in the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New work proposal of Standard for health supplements/ dietary supplements/ functional foods and nutraceuticals</li> <li>• New work proposal of Standards of cashew kernel</li> <li>• New work proposal on the development of a group standard for certain types of millets</li> <li>• Issues related to Mandatory labelling of country-of-harvest for Saffron</li> <li>• Standards for spices such as small cardamom, turmeric, allspice, juniper berry, star anise and coriander seeds</li> <li>• Revision to Codex standards on fats and oils to reduce trans-fatty acid intake</li> <li>• Draft Guidelines for Food Hygiene Control Measures in Traditional Markets for Food</li> <li>• MLs for lead in spices for inclusion in the General standard for contaminants and toxins in food and feed</li> <li>• Sampling plan for total aflatoxin levels in certain spices</li> <li>• Guidelines for monitoring the stability and purity of reference materials and related stock solutions of pesticides during prolonged storage</li> <li>• Draft guidelines on the prevention and control of food fraud</li> <li>• Guidance on appeals mechanism in the context of rejection of imported food</li> <li>• Guidelines on the provision of food information for prepackaged foods to be offered via e-commerce</li> <li>• Guidelines on the use of technology to provide food information in food labelling</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|---|

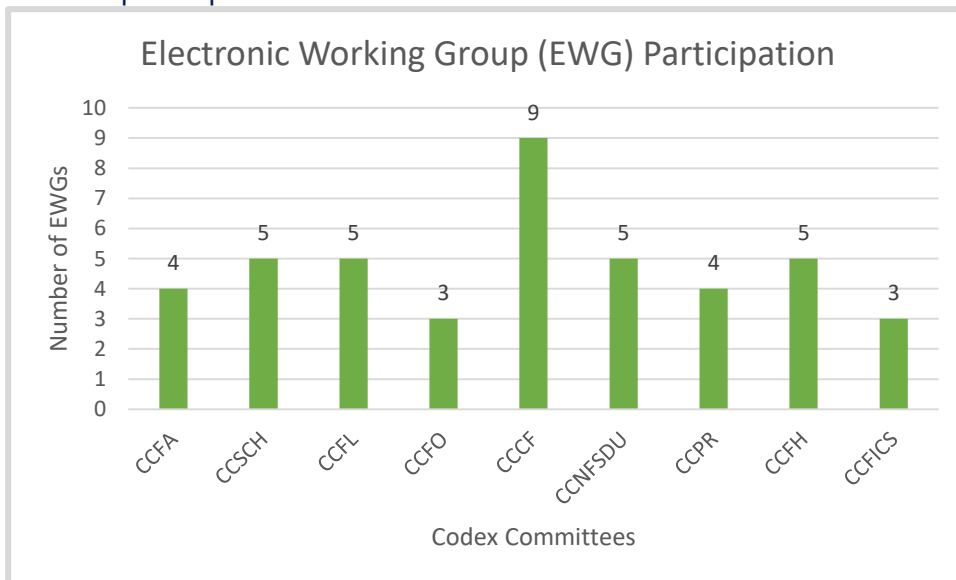


# CODEX INDIA ANNUAL REPORT 2024

The graphic below illustrates the involvement of various stakeholders in the CCG meetings conducted throughout the year.



India's participation in number of EWGs vis a vis codex committee is depicted below



FSSAI also conducted several training programs in 2024 for creating awareness and enhancing participation in Codex among stakeholders, as outlined below:

1. A 3-Day Workshop was organised by Codex Contact Point (CCP) for the officials of Science & Standards division from 5th-7th April, 2024, followed by Mock drill session on 12th April, 2024. This programme played a pivotal role in enhancing the capabilities of FSSAI's officers with respect to understanding of Codex procedures which will aid in strengthening India's engagement with the Codex Alimentarius Commission.
2. FSSAI, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) under the Codex Trust Fund (CTF) project, successfully conducted the first Inter Country workshop on "Enhancing Participation for Codex Activities." The workshop took place from June 24-28, 2024, at the International Training Centre for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (ITCFSAN) in Mumbai. The event saw the participation of 40 government officials from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste.
3. FSSAI successfully conducted Codex Internship Program for officials from Maldives and Timor-Leste from 9th to 21st September, 2024.
4. A Regional Conclave on "Enhancing Regional Collaboration and Harmonization in Standard Setting" as part of this year's Global Food Regulators Summit (GFRS24) was organized by FSSAI on 21st September, 2024. The event featured representatives from Codex Contact Points of ten Asian countries including all the Codex-related ministries and stakeholders from India. The primary goal of the regional conclave was to discuss ways to enhance collaboration and harmonization of food safety standards among Asian nations particularly in the Codex standard setting process.

## CODEX SESSIONS DURING THE PERIOD

### 1. 7th Session of Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH7) at Kochi, Kerala (29.01.2024 to 02.02.2024)



Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) was established in July 2013 by the Codex Alimentarius Commission at its 36th meeting held at Rome. India is the host country and the Spices Board, Kochi acts as the secretariat for CCSCH.

The primary purpose of the Codex standards developed by this committee is to facilitate international trade, ensuring that spices and culinary herbs meet acceptable quality and safety thresholds across different countries. The standards aim to harmonize practices and provide a benchmark for producing and trading spices globally.

At the 7th session of CCSCH held at Kochi, Kerala, the Committee addressed a diverse range of topics, including standards for dried small cardamom and turmeric, as well as continuing work on the development of group standards for spices, with a focus of this session on spices in the form of dried fruits and berries (covering Allspice, Juniper berry, Star anise, and Vanilla). This session also discussed provisions around labelling for saffron.

The development of group standards was one of the approaches developed by the Committee to enhance efficiency and expedite work for a wider range of spices.

India submitted comments on these agenda items during the working Groups meetings & through submission of CRD. India also hosted pre-session meetings with CCASIA, CCLAC and CCAFRICA delegations to facilitate smooth progression of all the agenda items.

In this session, quality standards for 5 spices, namely small cardamom, turmeric, juniper berry, allspice and star anise were finalised. CCSCH forwarded these five standards to the Codex

Alimentarius Commission (CAC) recommending for adoption at Step 8 as full-fledged Codex standards which was later adopted by CAC at its 47th Session in Geneva, Switzerland.

The draft standard for vanilla was progressed to step 5. Proposals for development of Codex standards for Dried Coriander Seeds, Large Cardamom, Sweet Marjoram and Cinnamon were put before the committee and were accepted. The committee will work on draft standards for these four spices in its forthcoming editions.

India agreed to Chair the EWG to prepare a proposed draft standard for dried seeds-coriander. India also agreed to participate as co-chair in the following EWGs:

- (i) EWG for proposed draft standard for Large Cardamom
- (ii) EWG established for proposed draft standard for spices in the form of dried or dehydrated fruits and berries: part B – requirements for vanilla.

### **Benefits of India's participation:**

India is the world's largest producer, exporter, and consumer of spices, accounting for over 50% of the world's spice exports. The Indian spice industry benefits from these internationally recognized standards developed by the CCSC by accessing new markets and reducing barriers to trade. The standards also reduce the risk of trade disputes.

➤ **Stakeholder Consultations held:** The first meeting of the Codex Coordination Group (CCG3): Foods of Plant Origin (Sub-group on Spices and Culinary Herbs) was held on 19th January, 2024 under the chairmanship of Shri G Kamala Vardhana Rao, CEO, FSSAI. The meeting was attended by representatives from Spices Board, ICAR-National Research Centre on Seed Spices, World Spice Organisation, EIC, CII, ICAR, NIFTEM, BARC and members of scientific panel on spices, FSSAI.

## 2. 28th Session of Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO28) at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (19.02.2024 to 23.02.2024)



The Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO) is an important commodity committee with the Terms of reference (ToR) to elaborate worldwide standards for fats and oils of animal, vegetable and marine origin including margarine and olive oil.

The 28th session of CCFO discussed the standards for avocado oil, Camelia seed oil, High Oleic Acid Soya Bean Oil and the standards for olive oils and olive pomace oils. Further, the new work proposals to reduce TFAs or eliminate PHOs and Microbial Omega 3 Oils were also deliberated.

India submitted comments on these agenda items during the working Groups meetings & through submission of CRD. The following delegates from India participated in session:

1. Dr. Ravinder Singh, Director, Science and Standards Division, FSSAI, New Delhi (Head of the delegation)
2. Mr. Ratish Ramanan K, Technical Officer, Science and Standards Division, FSSAI, New Delhi
3. Dr. Prabodh Halde, Head-Technical Regulatory Affairs, Marico Limited, Mumbai

India supported the adoption of Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CXS 210 -1999) for inclusion of Avocado oil, Camellia seed oil, Sacha Inchi oil, High oleic acid soya bean oil. India also proposed changes and supported the discussion paper on possible work that CCFO could undertake to reduce TFAs or eliminate PHOs.

### **Benefits of India's participation:**

Production of avocado oil and olive oil are very limited in India and the products are majorly imported from the producing countries. Development of codex standards for these commodities may lead India to promote their production and to harmonize our national

standards to ensure their fair-trade practices. India's participation in the new work undertaken to reduce TFAs or eliminate PHOs will enhance India's commitment to Trans Fat Free India and Eat Right India initiatives.

➤ **Stakeholder Consultations held:** The first meeting of the Codex Coordination Group (CCG3): Foods of Plant Origin (Sub-group on Fats and Oils) was held on 14th February, 2024 under the chairmanship of Shri G Kamala Vardhana Rao, CEO, FSSAI. Representatives from CSIR-CFTRI, ICAR-IIOR, ICAR-NDRI, PJTSAU, Anand Agricultural University, CII & FICCI participated in the meeting.

CCFO28 agenda and outcome of the meeting was also briefed & presented to the Scientific Panel on Oils and Fats.

### 3. 54th Session of Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH54) at Nairobi, Kenya (11.03.2024 to 15.03.2024)



The Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) is responsible for drafting basic provisions for food hygiene, reviewing and endorsing hygiene standards proposed by Codex commodity committees, addressing specific hygiene issues, proposing areas for international microbiological risk assessment, and addressing microbiological risk management matters related to food hygiene and risk assessment in collaboration with FAO and WHO.

In its 54th session, CCFH discussed some of the crucial agendas including the development of guidelines for Safe Use and Reuse of Water, control of Shiga Toxin-Producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) in food products, food hygiene control measures in traditional markets, control of pathogens in food products. India submitted comments on these agenda items during the Virtual working Groups meetings held prior to session & through submission of CRD. The following delegates from India participated in session:

1. Dr. Satyen Kumar Panda, Advisor, FSSAI (Head of the delegation);
2. Mr. Dodda Venkata Swamy, Chairman, The Marine Products Export Development Authority.
3. Dr. Ajai Prakash Gupta, Director, FSSAI
4. Mr. Adityakumar Premchand Jain, Deputy General Manager, NDDDB
5. Dr. Abhilash E C, Assistant Director, The Marine Products Export Development Authority.
6. Mr. Vikas Dahiya, Technical Officer, Export Inspection Council, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India.
7. Ms. Aditi Sharma, Technical Officer, FSSAI

India participated actively in the Virtual Working Group (VWG) meeting held prior to the meeting for the Proposed draft revision on the Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Pathogenic *Vibrio* Species in Seafood. In the VWG meeting, India gave comments on several issues including the adequate temperature for the growth of *Vibrio* species and inclusion of *Vibrio cholerae* (O1 and O139) as pathogenic *Vibrio* species in line with national standards of India for Fish and Fishery Products.

India also participated in the three pre-session meetings with CCASIA delegations, US delegation and CCFH Chair before the plenary session. India proposed revisions in the proposed Guidelines for traditional food markets to enable its implementation under different scenarios and make them non-prescriptive. Further, India proposed changes in the Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Pathogenic *Vibrio* Species in Seafood (CXG 73-2010) to make them scientifically accurate and in alignment with our regional standards. Two Physical Working Group Meetings were held on the same day in which India proposed a few amendments particularly in Annex II on Fish and Fishery products for the guidelines for safe use and reuse of water. These guidelines developed by the committee will be beneficial for the national food control system and the Indian food industries to prevent

the breakout of the food borne diseases by implementing the Good Manufacturing and Hygiene Practices in the system.

India contributed actively in the finalization of Guidelines for traditional Markets of Food wherein, India shared FSSAI's best practices already being implemented as its pilot project "100 food streets" with aim to develop 100 food streets in 100 districts across the country to create an example for other such food streets to come up across the country for ensuring hygienic and safe food practices. Indian delegation also presented 'SOP for Modernization of Street Foods' published by FSSAI to Dr. Evelyne Mbandi, Chairperson CCFH and other delegations participating in the meeting to highlight India's efforts in this direction.

After detailed deliberations, CCFH54 agreed to forward the proposed draft guidelines for food hygiene control measures in traditional markets for food to CAC47 for adoption at Step 5/8. CAC adopted these guidelines in its 47<sup>th</sup> Session held in Geneva, Switzerland in November, 2024.

During the meeting India agreed to co-chair the following EWGs:

- i. EWG established to revise Annex II on Fish and Fishery products and further develop Annex IV related to water fit-for-purpose assessment as per the terms of reference decided by the committee. (returned by CAC to step 2/3)
- ii. EWG established to prepare the proposed draft Revision of Guidelines for the Control of Campylobacter and Salmonella in Chicken Meat (CXG 78 -2011) for circulation for comments at step 3 and consideration at CCFH55 as per the terms of reference decided by the committee. (New work proposal)

### **Benefits of India's participation:**

With traditional food markets and street food vendors forming a vibrant part of India's food sector, the adoption of "Guidelines for traditional Markets of Food" by Codex will bring positive impacts to the Indian food industry. The guidelines provide a clear framework for authorities to implement food safety controls, ensuring that food vendors maintain a hygienic environment that protects consumers while supporting food business operators (FBOs) in sustaining safe practices. This is in line with the FSSAI's initiatives for implementing training and capacity-building programs for street food vendors, furthering efforts to ensure that India's vibrant street food culture remains safe and hygienic for consumers.

➤ **Stakeholder Consultations held:** The first meeting of the Codex Coordination Group CCG2 – Biological held on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2024 under the chairmanship of Shri G. Kamala Vardhana



Rao, CEO, FSSAI. The meeting saw participation from representatives from Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Export Inspection Council (EIC), CII, ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) and Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) and members of Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards, FSSAI.

The Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards was also consulted to seek inputs from the panel for all the agenda items addressed in CCFH.

#### 4. 17th Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF17) at Panama City, Panama (15.04.2024 to 19.04.2024)



The Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF) is a general subject committee whose Terms of Reference (ToR) include establishing or endorsing permitted maximum levels or guideline levels for contaminants and naturally occurring toxicants in food and feed. It also prepares priority lists of contaminants and toxicants for risk assessment by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives. Additionally, the committee considers methods of analysis and sampling for determining contaminants and toxicants in food and feed, elaborates standards or codes of practice for related subjects, and addresses other matters assigned by the Commission concerning contaminants and naturally occurring toxicants in food and feed.

The 17<sup>th</sup> session of CCCF discussed the agendas on establishment of maximum levels for lead in certain food categories; Priority list of contaminants for evaluation or re-evaluation by JECFA; sampling plans for methylmercury in fish; Code of Practice for the prevention or reduction of ciguatera poisoning; Apart from these agendas, India chaired the following three EWGs and discussed during the session:

- Sampling Plan for Mycotoxins in Spices
- Maximum level for total aflatoxins in ready-to-eat peanuts and associated sampling plan
- Acrylamide in Foods

India submitted comments on these agenda items during the working Groups meetings & through submission of CRD. The following delegates from India participated in session:

1. Mr. Praveen Kumar, Director, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India (Head of the delegation)]
2. Dr. Dinesh Singh Bisht, Scientist-C, Spices Board of India
3. Ms. Reeba Abraham, Deputy General Manager Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)
4. Mr. Nagabhooshana G, Technical Officer, FSSAI

India highlighted that the approach taken for fixing MLs for lead in spices grouped in the form of parts of the spices like arils, seeds, floral parts, rhizome and roots instead of individual spices like cardamom, saffron, turmeric and ginger was not appropriate. This approach of setting MLs based on grouping of spices leads to uneven distribution of samples considered for setting ML. Therefore, the proposed ML was not representative of the category of spices. India also highlighted that the data considered was majorly from importing countries rather than producing countries. In the view of the above, India did not support the MLs and expressed reservation against these MLs for lead in spices under the categories of dried aril; dried seeds; dried celery seeds; dried rhizomes and roots; dried floral parts; dried fruit and berries.

India presented the sampling plan for the total aflatoxin and ochratoxin A in various spices. The comments from the members were deliberated and CCCF17 agreed to forward the sampling plan to CAC47 for adoption at step 5. Further, re-established the EWG for finalizing the Sampling plan.

India, as one of the largest producers of peanuts, faces significant risks from aflatoxin contamination, which affects both domestic consumption and international trade due to stringent regulations from key importing markets. Developing MLs for Aflatoxin may help reduce the risk without affecting international trade. In the CCCF17, the definition of the RTE peanuts was finalized and agreed to establish EWG for further development of ML.

India briefed the agenda of Acrylamide in Foods and proposed the revision of the existing COP with new risk management measures. The revised Code of practice (COP) for the reduction of acrylamide in foods aims to incorporate recent developments in the technologies to avoid the risk of public health issues. This will be beneficial to the national and local authorities,

manufacturers and other relevant bodies to prevent and reduce formation of acrylamide in various processed foods. CCCF17 agreed to the proposal and established an EWG for further development of discussion paper, project document and draft COP.

India became Chair and co-chair for the following EWGs at the 17th session of Codex committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF17) scheduled from 15-18th April 2024 at Panama City, Panama:

- i. To develop the ML for AFT in RTE peanuts and the associated sampling plan for comments and consideration by CCCF18 (Chair)
- ii. To Develop a discussion paper on Acrylamide on foods with a proposal for a draft revised Code of Practice and a project document (Chair)
- iii. To develop Sampling plans for total aflatoxins and ochratoxin a in certain spices (Chair)
- iv. To develop discussion paper on revision of Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Peanuts (CXC 55-2004) (Co-chair)

➤ **Stakeholder Consultations held:** The first meeting of the Codex Coordination Group (CCG1): Chemicals (Sub Group of Contaminants in Foods) was held on 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2024 under the chairmanship of Shri G Kamala Vardhana Rao, CEO, FSSAI. Representatives from CSIR-IITR, CSIR-CBMR, CIB&RC, NIFTEM-K, CSIR-CFTRI, ICAR-NBAIM, ICAR-CMFRI, NDDDB, NABCB, BITS-Pilani, Spices Board, APEDA, CII & FICCI participated in the meeting.

CCCF17 agenda and outcome of the meeting was also briefed & presented to the Scientific Panel on Contaminants in Foods.

## 5. 54th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA54) at Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China (22.04.2024 to 26.04.2024)

India's comments on food colors and sweeteners for various food categories under the General Standards for Food Additives (GSFA) finalized in the stakeholder's consultation were submitted to the Codex Secretariat through CRD.

➤ **Stakeholder Consultations held:** The 1st CCG1: Chemicals (Subgroup on Food Additives) meeting for the 54th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA54) was held on 18th April, 2024, under the chairmanship of Shri Anil Mehta, Director, FSSAI.

## 6. 55th Session of Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues at Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China (03.06.2024 to 08.06.2024)



The Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) is responsible for establishing maximum residue limits (MRLs) for pesticides in specific food items, food groups, and certain animal feeds. It prepares priority lists of pesticides for evaluation by the Joint FAO/WHO Meetings on Pesticide Residues (JMPR), considers methods for the analysis and sampling of pesticide residues, and addresses other matters related to pesticide residues to ensure the safety of food and feed. Additionally, the CCPR establishes maximum limits for environmental and industrial contaminants that share chemical or other similarities with pesticides in specific food items or food groups.

In its 55th Session, CCPR addressed some crucial issues including the reports of the JMPR meetings held in 2023, revised Maximum residue limits for pesticides based on the outcome of JMPR meeting, establishment of Codex schedules and priority lists of pesticides for evaluation/re-evaluation by JMPR and national registration on pesticides. On behalf of India, Dr. Vandana Tripathi, Network Coordinator (AINP) & Scheme In-charge (MPRNL), All India Network Project on Pesticide Residues, ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute participated in the meeting.

Notable accomplishments for India in this session include:

- Based on India's submission of monitoring data earlier, the committee agreed to successfully advance the Codex Maximum Residue Limit (CXL) for Chlorthianidin and Thiamethoxam on cumin seed to step 5/8, marking a crucial step in international pesticide regulation for spices.
- India proposed MRL for Tricyclazole as 5ppm for rice to safeguard India's rice exports, which has been agreed by CCPR for adoption
- India presented draft guidelines on monitoring the stability and purity of reference materials and their stock solutions. The committee agreed to advance these guidelines for draft adoption at step 5.

The draft guidelines prepared by EWG chaired by India on monitoring the stability and purity of reference materials, endorsed for draft adoption at step 5 by the committee which was later adopted at step 5 by the Codex Alimentarius Commission in its 47<sup>th</sup> session in Geneva, Switzerland.

India also became chair of the EWG reestablished by the committee to include provisions for monitoring the stability and purity of mixed pesticide standard solutions.

India also became co-chair for the EWG on Management of unsupported compounds without public health concerns scheduled for periodic review by JMPR and the national registration database in this session. The database periodically updated by this EWG plays an instrumental role in determining the need for retaining the CXLs of compounds for which no supporting country or sponsor is committed to provide toxicological and residue data anymore

### **Benefits of India's participation:**

Limited shelf life, diminishing purity, and high recurring cost of Reference Materials act as major impediments for performing regular pesticide residue analysis. These problems are magnified for multi-pesticide residue analysis by testing laboratories situated in developing countries as they are required to allocate a large part of their funds to the frequent procurement of expensive RMs. The development of 'Guidelines on monitoring the stability and purity of reference materials including mixed pesticide standard solutions' represent a first step towards developing comprehensive harmonized guidance which would enable the laboratories to monitor the stability and purity of the pesticide RMs and their stock solutions during prolonged storage.

- **Stakeholder Consultations (CCG meetings) held:** 1st CCG1 meeting for 55th Session of Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR55) held on 16.05.2024 under the chairmanship of Shri Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, Additional Secretary, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare. The meeting was attended by officials from various departments of Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, and industry organizations including FICCI and CII.
- 2nd CCG1 meeting for debriefing of the 55th Session of Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR55) held on 19.07.2024 under the chairmanship of Shri Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, Additional Secretary, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare. The meeting was attended by officials from various departments of Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Food Processing Industries and FICCI.

CCPR55 agenda and outcome of the meeting was also briefed & presented to the Scientific Panel on Pesticide Residues in Foods.

## 7. 86th Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission at Rome, Italy (01.07.2024 to 05.07.2024)



The Executive Committee of CAC acts as the Executive organ of the Commission. In particular, the Executive Committee can make proposals to the Commission regarding general orientation, strategic planning, and programming of the work of the Commission. The Executive Committee assists in the management of the Commission's programme of standards development by conducting a "critical review" of proposals to undertake work and monitoring the progress of standards development.

The Executive Committee comprises of 17 members:

- Chairperson of Commission
- 3 vice-Chairpersons,
- 6 regional coordinators
- 7 elected representatives from the various geographical groups (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Near East, North America, South-West Pacific) of Codex.

During 46th session of CAC held from 27th November to 2nd December, 2023 at Rome, Italy, India was elected as "Member elected on geographic basis" in the Executive Committee of Codex Alimentarius Commission

CEO, FSSAI, representing India, as a member elected on a geographic basis (Asia), actively participated in the 86th session of the Executive Committee (CCEXEC) of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) During the session, India strongly supported the advancement

of standards development for various spices, including small cardamom, turmeric, and vanilla. This initiative is particularly significant for India, being a major producer and exporter of these spices, as it would facilitate smoother international trade. Additionally, India backed the progression of standards for named vegetable oils, guidelines for the control of Shiga Toxin-Producing Escherichia coli, and the safe use and reuse of water in food production and processing.

India, also supported the proposal for developing Codex guidance on food safety considerations related to the use of recycled materials in food packaging. This initiative is crucial in addressing global challenges such as climate change, environmental protection, and sustainability. Moreover, India shared its experience with the guidelines developed by FSSAI on recycling post-consumer PET for food contact applications. These guidelines were well-received and appreciated by the CCEXEC members.

India's participation, as a member, in the High-level Executive Committee (CCEXEC) underscored its dedication to establishing robust food safety standards and promoting fair practices in the global food trade, reflecting its pivotal role in the international food industry.

## **8. 27th Session of Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS27) at Cairns, Australia (16.09.2024 to 20.09.2024)**



The Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) is a key general subject committee whose Terms of Reference (ToR) include developing principles and guidelines for food import and export inspection and certification systems to harmonize methods and procedures that protect consumer health, ensure fair trading practices, and facilitate international food trade. It also works on principles and guidelines for applying measures by competent authorities in exporting and importing countries to assure compliance with requirements, particularly statutory health requirements.

The committee develops guidelines for the appropriate use of quality assurance systems to ensure foodstuffs meet requirements and promotes the recognition of these systems in facilitating trade through bilateral or multilateral arrangements.

Furthermore, it establishes guidelines and criteria for the format, declarations, and language of official certificates required by countries, aiming for international harmonization. CCFICS also makes recommendations for information exchange related to food import/export control, consults with other international groups working on food inspection and certification systems, and addresses other matters assigned by the Commission.

The 27th session of CCFICS discussed the agendas on Draft Consolidated Codex Guidelines related to Equivalence; Draft Guidelines on the Prevention and Control of Food Fraud; Draft revision and updating of the Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool within a Food Inspection and Certification System (CXG 60-2006); Discussion paper on the standardization of sanitary requirements. Apart from these agendas, India chaired the EWG on guidance on appeals mechanism in the context of rejection of imported food and discussed during the session.

India submitted comments on these agenda items during the working Groups meetings & through submission of CRD. The following delegates from India participated in session:

1. Dr. Jali Surendar Reddy, Additional Director, Export Inspection Council, Ministry of Commerce and Industry(Head of the Delegation)
2. Shri Dodda Venkata Swamy, IAS, Chairman, MPEDA
3. Ms. Suganya K, Joint DGFT, Department of Commerce
4. Dr. Lokendra Kumar, Joint Director, FSSAI
5. Dr. Jayagopal P, Deputy Director (Aquaculture), MPEDA
6. Shri Ajith Kumar K, Assistant Commissioner (Dairy Development), Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India and
7. Dr. Anoop A Krishnan, Assistant Director (T), EIC

India proposed the new work on developing Guidance on appeals mechanism in the context of rejection of imported food highlighting the need for a uniform appeal mechanism to ensure fair practices in food trade. Based on the discussion, the scope of the new work proposal was amended to include the exporting country as one of the stakeholders that may file an appeal against the rejection. Further, it was decided that the work should not be a stand-alone document but rather an annex to either the Guidelines for the Exchange of Information between Countries on Rejections of Imported Foods (CXG 25-1997) or Guidelines for Food Import Control Systems (CXG 47-2003). The committee decided to forward the proposal to



CAC47 for approval and to establish a EWG chaired by India and Co-chaired by Nigeria, Australia, Chile, and Kenya, subject to approval of new work at CAC.

Considering the importance of “Guidance on the standardization of the representation of sanitary requirements”, India expressed support for this new work proposal noting that it would help India transition to the use of electronic certificates, which can simplify clearance processes and thereby promote food safety. India opted to Co-chair the EWG Chaired by Brazil.

India also supported the “Discussion paper and new work proposal on establishment listings” and opted to Co-chair the EWG Chaired by Norway

### **Benefits of India’s participation:**

The “Guidance on appeals mechanism in the context of rejection of imported food” is expected to guide the national food control systems to develop appeal mechanisms in the context of rejection of food consignment by importing country and provide opportunity to relevant stakeholders to present their case and decisions are taken in a transparent manner without any compromise with food safety and fair trade.

➤ **Stakeholder Consultations (CCG meetings) held:** The first meeting of the Codex Coordination Group (CCG9): Principles and Procedures was held on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2024 under the chairmanship of Shri Rajesh Agarwal IAS, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Representatives from Department of Commerce, EIA, EIC, ICAR, Spices Board, MPEDA, DAHD, MoFPI & FICCI participated in the meeting.

## 9. 44th Session of Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU44) at Dresden, Germany (02.10.2024 to 06.10.2024)



The Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) is responsible for addressing specific nutritional problems assigned by the Commission and providing advice on general nutrition issues. It drafts general provisions related to the nutritional aspects of all foods and develops standards, guidelines, or related texts for foods for special dietary uses, collaborating with other committees when necessary. Additionally, the CCNFSDU reviews, amends if needed, and endorses nutritional provisions proposed for inclusion in Codex standards, guidelines, and related texts.

In its 44th Session, CCNFSDU addressed some crucial issues including the NRVs-R for persons aged 6 – 36 months, Technological justification for several food additives, Prioritization mechanism/emerging issues or new work proposals and discussion papers on harmonized probiotic guidelines for use in foods and food supplements, use of fructans, beta-carotene, lycopene in Standard for Infant Formula and Formulas for Special Medical Purposes Intended for Infants and methods of assessing the sweetness of carbohydrate sources in the Standard for Follow-up Formula.

The following delegates constituting an all women delegation from India participated in session:

1. Dr. S Vijaya Rani, Director (NRO), FSSAI (Head of the delegation)
2. Dr. Zoya Ali Rizvi, Deputy Commissioner (Nutrition), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
3. Dr Kavitha Ramasamy, Joint Director (S&S), FSSAI
4. Ms. Jyotika, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development
5. Ms. Shravya G.N., Technical Officer (S&S), FSSAI
6. Dr. Neerja Hajela Head – Science and Regulatory Affairs Yakult Danone India Pvt. Ltd. (CII)

Indian Delegation made interventions on important agenda items including General principles for establishing nutrient reference values for persons aged 6 to 36 months and methods of assessing relative sweetness of carbohydrate sources in the Standard for Follow-up Formula. India extended its support to frame a harmonized probiotic guideline for use in foods and food supplements

➤ **Stakeholder Consultations (CCG meetings) held:** The first meeting of the Codex Coordination Group 7: Nutrition was held on 25th September, 2024 under the chairmanship of Shri Gyanesh Bharti, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development. The meeting was attended by officials from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, IGNOU, FICCI and CII.

CCNFSDU44 agenda and outcome of the meeting was also briefed & presented to the Scientific Panel on Nutrition & Fortification.

## **10. 36th Session of Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products held by correspondence (07.10.2024 to 17.10.2024)**

The Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products is responsible for elaborating worldwide standards for fresh, frozen (including quick frozen) or otherwise processed fish, crustaceans and molluscs.

On request by Philippines to include the fish species *S. lemuru* (Bali Sardinella), CAC43 (2020) approved the proposal that CCFFP be reactivated to work by correspondence in accordance with the "Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Codex Standards for Fish and Fishery Products" (PM Section 2 (adopted 2013)) to evaluate if the Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine-Type Products (CXS 94-1981) could be amended to include the fish species *S. lemuru* (Bali Sardinella) in the list of Sardinella species under section 2.1.

India supported the labelling provisions for fish and fishery products and supported the amendment to include Sardinella lemuru in the product definition of CXS 94-1981.

As per MPEDA, India has exported 1028 MT of canned sardines worth US\$ 2.28 million (₹1869.85 Lakh) in 2023-24. Inclusion of new species to this standard will help in reducing trade barriers and enhancing trade in the Indian fishery sector.

CCFFP36 agenda and outcome of the meeting was also briefed & presented to the Scientific Panel on Fish & Fishery Products.

## 11. 48th Session of Codex Committee on Food Labelling at Quebec City, Canada (27.10.2024 to 01.11.2024)



The **Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL)** is responsible for developing global standards and guidelines related to food labeling to ensure fair practices in food trade and consumer protection. Its mandate includes drafting labeling provisions applicable to all foods, reviewing and endorsing specific labeling requirements developed by other Codex Committees, and addressing labeling-related challenges assigned by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC). Additionally, CCFL examines issues related to food advertising, with a particular focus on claims and misleading descriptions, to promote transparency and prevent consumer deception in the marketplace.

48th Session of CCFL addressed some crucial agenda items including Food allergen labelling; Guidelines on the use of technology to provide food information in food labelling; Guidelines on the provision of food information for pre-packaged foods to be offered via e-commerce; discussion papers related to Labelling of alcoholic beverages, Sugar Labelling - definition for 'added sugars'. India submitted comments on these agenda items during the Virtual working Groups meetings held prior to session & through submission of CRD. The following delegates from India participated in session:

1. Mr. Ajith Kumar K., Assistant Commissioner (Dairy Development), Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Govt of India
2. Mr. Pankaj Kumar Meena, Assistant Director, FSSAI
3. Ms. Manpreet Kour, Technical Officer, FSSAI

Indian delegation also advocated strongly for India's stance on key issues, including saffron and allergen labelling. India agreed to Co-Chair EWG on Food labelling in food formats joint presentation and in multiple packages.

India co-chaired two important guidelines related to 'e-commerce' & 'use of technology' to provide food information, which were forwarded by CCFL48 to CAC for adoption at Step 8. CAC47 adopted these guidelines.

### **Benefits of India's participation:**

The *Guidelines on the provision of food information for prepackaged foods to be offered via e-commerce* would assist governments to monitor this important area of E-commerce, in order to ensure food safety as well as protect consumers from food fraud. Further, the *Guidelines on the Use of Technology to provide food information in food labelling* would be useful in the development and evolution in the way food information could be provided to consumers, industry and competent authorities i.e. through websites; QR codes; text messaging; mobile phone applications.)

➤ **Stakeholder Consultations held:** The first meeting of the Codex Coordination Group (CCG8): Packaging and Labelling was held on 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2024 under the chairmanship of Dr. Alka Rao, Advisor, Science and Standard and Regulations, FSSAI and Codex Contact Point India. Representatives from Deptt. of Animal Husbandry & Dairying , NABCB, CII & FICCI participated in the meeting.

CCFL48 agenda was also briefed & presented in the Scientific Panel on Labelling & Claims/Advertisements.

## 12. 87th Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission at Geneva, Switzerland (18.11.2024 TO 22.11.2024)



The session was attended by Dr. Alka Rao, Codex Contact Point of India and Advisor (Science and Standards and Regulations), FSSAI on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and Shri. G. Kamala Vardhana Rao, CEO, FSSAI on 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> in the capacity of member elected on a geographic basis for Asia.

### ➤ **Key Discussions and Contributions**

A pre-session workshop on the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 was conducted on November 17, 2024, where India contributed significantly to discussions on revising the strategic plan to include food trade considerations. This was in alignment with India's stance that food safety and fair trade practices should go hand in hand to ensure equitable access to safe food worldwide. India emphasized the need for a comprehensive strategy for CAC47 that ensures inclusivity and adaptability in addressing emerging food safety challenges. During the workshop, members exchanged views on drafting the plan and improving its impact assessment strategies.

The opening session saw leaders from WHO and FAO reiterate the critical role of Codex in global food safety and trade regulations. WHO's Director of Nutrition and Food Safety and FAO's Chief Economist underscored the urgency of finalizing food safety standards, particularly concerning follow-up formulas and amendments to existing infant formula regulations. The session also highlighted emerging concerns related to processed foods and sustainability, encouraging Codex to proactively address these issues. Codex Secretary Sarah Cahill and Chairperson Steve Wearne stressed the importance of procedural clarity in Codex operations, underscoring the need for strong collaboration and effective decision-making.

During the critical review and standards adoption process, CCEXEC87 examined multiple food safety and quality standards. Key topics included pesticide residues, veterinary drug limits, food fraud prevention and control guidelines, and Nutrient Reference Values (NRVs) for children aged 6-36 months. Additionally, revisions were made to fishery product labeling and new Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for veterinary drugs. India chaired the Electronic Working Group (EWG) on pesticide reference material guidelines, contributing to discussions on the harmonization of dietary exposure methodologies across different Codex committees. India supported efforts to improve transparency and efficiency in Codex's decision-making processes.

One of India's major contributions to the session was the proposal for developing a group standard for certain types of millets. Given the increasing recognition of millets as a significant staple crop, the proposal aimed to establish a unified global standard that would facilitate trade and ensure food safety. The proposal received broad support but required further refinement to align with existing standards. India advocated for an inclusive and balanced approach to workload management in Codex committees, ensuring equitable representation and participation in standard-setting processes.

#### ➤ **Strategic and Financial Matters**

India played a key role in defending the retention of science-based standards in Codex's strategic goals, recognizing that scientific risk assessments are essential to standard development. Discussions also centered around ensuring sustainable funding for Codex activities, particularly highlighting concerns over delays in the availability of FAO/WHO scientific advice. India supported cost-effective measures to enhance Codex operations, including suggestions to hold CCEXEC and CAC meetings in Rome instead of Geneva, as it offers logistical and financial advantages.

#### ➤ **Capacity Building and International Collaboration**

India actively engaged with WHO officials to explore opportunities for capacity-building initiatives, particularly in risk assessment training, Codex Trust Fund (CTF) activities, and the use

of WHO's data tools. Discussions covered a range of topics, including total dietary studies, surveillance of foodborne diseases, and strategies to harmonize Codex standards with national regulations. India collaborated with the European Union (EU) on food labeling regulations, particularly in relation to saffron and millet standards. The interactions underscored the importance of international cooperation in strengthening food safety frameworks and ensuring uniformity in regulatory approaches.

## ➤ **Networking and Engagements**

Throughout the session, India actively participated in networking events, fostering collaborations with international delegates to advocate for its proposals. Bilateral discussions were held with representatives from the U.S., EU, China, and Japan on various Codex developments and potential areas of cooperation. India's contributions during the session were well-received, with many member nations and the Codex Secretariat acknowledging India's leadership and proactive engagement in advancing food safety standards. The delegation also used networking opportunities to refine its proposals and seek consensus on key agenda items.

## ➤ **Conclusion**

The 87th session of CCEXEC marked significant progress in the development of Codex standards, with India playing a pivotal role in discussions on food safety, trade, and strategic planning. India's proposals, particularly on millets and food labeling, reflected its commitment to supporting fair trade and ensuring consumer protection through well-defined food safety standards. The session reinforced India's standing as a key player in the global Codex framework, demonstrating its dedication to advancing science-based, transparent, and inclusive food regulatory practices. India's active engagement in discussions and strategic contributions during CCEXEC87 underscored its commitment to strengthening global food safety frameworks and promoting fair trade practices in the food sector.



## 13. 47th Session of Codex Alimentarius Commission at Geneva, Switzerland (25.11.2024 to 30.11.2024)



**Codex Alimentarius Commission**, the highest governing body, consists of member countries and observer organizations. It sets the overall policy and strategic direction of the commission and approves the adoption of standards, guidelines, and codes of practice.

The Indian delegation comprising of the following officials participated In the 47th Session of Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC47):

1. Shri. G. Kamala Vardhana Rao, Chief Executive Officer, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) (**Head of the delegation**)
2. Mr. Rajiv Wadhawan, Adviser (Cost), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)
3. Dr. Alka Rao, Codex Contact Point of India and Advisor (Science and Standards and Regulations), FSSAI
4. Mr. Adityakumar P Jain, Deputy General Manager, National Dairy Development Board (NDDB)

5. Dr. Ram Mohan M K, Joint Director, The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA)
6. Ms. Varsha Misra, Deputy Director, National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB), Quality Council of India (QCI)
7. Dr. Anoop A Krishnan, Assistant Director, Export Inspection Council (EIC)
8. Mr. Ratish Ramanan K, Technical Officer, Science and Standards Division, FSSAI
9. Dr. Aman Gupta, National Head - Corporate Affairs, Yum Brands India

India presented key proposals, including the development of standards for health supplements, dietary supplements, functional foods, and nutraceuticals, as well as the establishment of a standard for cashew kernels. India reiterated the need to advance these discussions under the Codex framework, given the increasing global demand for such products and the lack of uniformity in international regulations. Additionally, India pushed for the resumption of work on cashew kernel standards, which had been stalled since CAC40. These proposals were discussed under the agenda item on “Other Business” and received considerable attention from the Commission, leading to further deliberations in relevant Codex committees.

Another major focus for India at CAC47 was its leadership in the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH). India successfully facilitated the final adoption of standards for small cardamom, allspice, juniper berry, star anise, and turmeric, underscoring its position as the largest producer and exporter of these commodities. The approval of these standards benefits India by ensuring better market access, protecting consumer health, and promoting fair trade practices globally. Additionally, India co-chaired discussions on the adoption of a standard for vanilla, further reinforcing its leadership in global spice standardization.

India also played an instrumental role in deliberations on the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO). The delegation supported the revision of the standard for named vegetable oils to include avocado oil, camellia seed oil, sacha inchi oil, and high oleic acid soybean oil. Revisions to standards for fish oils, olive oils, and non-retail container labeling provisions were also endorsed. Although India is not a major producer of avocado or olive oil, the adoption of these standards may encourage domestic production and the harmonization of national food safety regulations with global benchmarks.

In the area of food hygiene, India supported the adoption of guidelines for food hygiene control measures in traditional markets and revisions to control pathogenic *Vibrio* species in seafood. Recognizing the importance of these standards for street food safety in India, the delegation encouraged their alignment with existing national regulatory frameworks. India also

played a crucial role in the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF), particularly in discussions on maximum levels (MLs) for lead in spices. India expressed strong reservations regarding the methodology used to determine MLs for lead in various spice categories, emphasizing that the approach lacked adequate data from spice-producing countries. The delegation insisted that MLs should be set based on scientific evidence, with broader geographical representation, to prevent unfair trade restrictions.

India's engagement extended to discussions on pesticide residues, where it chaired an electronic working group on guidelines for monitoring the stability and purity of pesticide reference materials. The country highlighted the significance of these guidelines for developing nations, ensuring cost-effective regulatory practices and robust food safety mechanisms. India also contributed to deliberations on food additives, emphasizing the need for globally accepted identity and purity specifications.

In addition to commodity standards, India played a prominent role in the strategic planning of Codex. The delegation actively contributed to the development of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031, advocating for greater inclusivity, capacity-building programs, and enhanced participation of developing countries in standard-setting activities. India highlighted the importance of digital tools and training initiatives to bridge knowledge gaps and ensure wider engagement in Codex processes. The delegation also pushed for increased funding for Codex Trust Fund (CTF) initiatives, emphasizing the need for sustained financial support to assist developing nations in effective Codex participation.

India was at the forefront of discussions on new work proposals, particularly in advocating for a group standard for millet grains. The proposal received overwhelming support from more than 15 countries, including major economies like the European Union, Canada, and the United States. The delegation underscored India's leadership in the global millet movement, particularly following the United Nations' declaration of 2023 as the International Year of Millets. India's commitment to promoting millets was reinforced through its active role in the reactivation of the Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses, and Legumes (CCCPL), which will oversee the development of the millet standard.

The delegation also engaged in high-level meetings with FAO, WHO, and WTO officials, reinforcing India's role as a key contributor to global food safety governance. Discussions with WTO representatives highlighted the role of Codex standards in facilitating fair trade under the SPS Agreement, while engagements with FAO and WHO officials focused on collaborative projects in food safety and nutrition. India also proposed the establishment of a Codex regional office to enhance capacity-building efforts across Asia, further solidifying its leadership in Codex activities.

Side events at CAC47 saw significant Indian participation, with representatives contributing to discussions on food safety education, digital advocacy, and food fraud prevention. India's "Eat Right" initiative was prominently featured, showcasing innovative approaches to consumer awareness and behavior change in food safety. The delegation also engaged in discussions on emerging topics like food safety challenges in cell-based foods, food fraud detection, and Codex's role in supporting sustainable food systems.

India's contributions to CAC47 reinforced its leadership in Codex and global food safety governance. The delegation's efforts in standard-setting, strategic planning, and advocacy for fair and science-based regulations reflected India's commitment to ensuring safe and fair trade practices. With continued engagement in Codex activities, India remains a strong proponent of food safety, consumer protection, and international regulatory harmonization, paving the way for a robust global food safety framework.

➤ **Stakeholder Consultations (CCG meetings) held:** The first meeting of the Codex Coordination Group (CCG9) (General Principles) and Indian delegates for CAC47 was held on 13rd November 2024 at 12.00 noon through physical cum virtual mode at Conference Room, 3rd floor, FDA Bhawan, FSSAI, New Delhi. The meeting was chaired by Sh. G. Kamala Vardhana Rao, CEO, FSSAI. Representatives from the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, NABCB, ICAR, DAHD, APEDA, MPEDA, Spices Board, CFTRI and CII attended the meeting.

## TRAINING ACTIVITIES

FSSAI conducted several training programs in 2024 for creating awareness and enhancing participation in Codex among stakeholders. Through these training programs, FSSAI aims to build a robust foundation for effective Codex participation, equipping stakeholders with the knowledge and skills needed to influence and shape global food safety policies.

### 1. Three-Day Workshop for FSSAI Officials



A 3-Day Workshop was organised by Codex Contact Point(CCP) for the officials of Science & Standards division from 5th-7th April, 2024, followed by Mock drill session on 12th April,2024. This programme played a pivotal role in enhancing the capabilities of FSSAI's officers with respect to understanding of Codex procedures which will aid in strengthening India's engagement with the Codex Alimentarius Commission

## 2. One-Day Workshop on Codex for National Stakeholders



The National Codex Contact Point, FSSAI, in collaboration with the Chamber for Advancement of Small and Medium Businesses (CASMB), conducted a one-day workshop on Codex at ITCFSAN, Mumbai, on May 24, 2024. This significant outreach initiative, witnessing 500 participants (both online and offline), aimed to improve understanding of Codex and encourage active participation from stakeholders (including industry and scientific experts) for safeguarding national interests for food safety and trade.

## 3. Inter Country workshop on “Enhancing Participation for Codex Activities”



FSSAI, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) under the Codex Trust Fund (CTF) project, successfully conducted the first Inter Country workshop on “Enhancing Participation for Codex Activities.” The workshop took place from June 24-28, 2024, at the International Training Centre for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (ITCFSAN) in Mumbai. The event saw the participation of 40 government officials from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste.

## 4. Codex Internship Program for officials from Maldives and Timor-Leste

FSSAI successfully conducted Codex Internship Program for officials from Maldives and Timor-Leste from 9th to 21st September, 2024. [Details](#)



## 5. Regional Conclave on “Enhancing Regional Collaboration and Harmonization in Standard Setting”



A Regional Conclave on “Enhancing Regional Collaboration and Harmonization in Standard Setting” as part of this year’s Global Food Regulators Summit (GFRS24) was organized by FSSAI on 21st September, 2024. The event featured representatives from Codex Contact Points of ten Asian countries including all the Codex-related ministries and stakeholders from India. The primary goal of the regional conclave was to discuss ways to enhance collaboration and harmonization of food safety standards among Asian nations particularly in the Codex standard setting process.

## PARTICIPATION OF INDIA IN THE ELECTRONIC WORKING GROUP

### **Codex Committee on Food Additives**

1. EWG on General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) to the 55th CCFA - CCFA 54.
2. EWG on "Revision of the Class Names and the International Numbering System for Food Additives (INS)(CXG36-1989)"
3. EWG on the Alignment of the food additive provisions of commodity standards and relevant provisions of the GSFA.
4. EWG on the development of a standard for baker's yeast

### **Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs**

1. Proposed Draft Standard for Large Cardamom
2. Proposed Draft Standard for Vanilla at Step 6/7
3. Draft Standard for Cinnamon under the group standard "Dried bark"
4. Proposed Draft Standard for Sweet Marjoram.
5. Proposed Draft Standard for Dried Seeds-Coriander

### **Codex Committee on Food Labelling:**

1. Food Allergen Labelling
2. Guidelines on the use of technology to provide information on food
3. Provisions Relevant to Joint Presentation and Multipack Formats
4. CCFL Sustainability claims
5. Proposed Draft Guidelines on the Provision of Food Information for Prepackaged Foods offered via E-commerce

### **Codex Committee on Fats and Oils**

1. Standard for Microbial Omega-3 Oils.
2. Collection and submission of scientific data and information on olive oil
3. Proposed Draft Revisions to Codex Standards on Fats and Oils to limit industrially produced Trans-Fatty Acids

### **Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods**

1. Review of the Code of practice for the prevention and reduction of pyrrolizidine alkaloids contamination in food and feed (CXC 74-2014)
2. Maximum level for total aflatoxins in ready-to-eat peanuts



3. Review of the Code of Practice for the Reduction of Acrylamide in Foods (CXC 67-2009)
4. Development of a code of practice for the prevention and reduction of tropane alkaloids in foods
5. Maximum levels for lead in certain food categories
6. Development of a code of practice for the prevention and reduction of cadmium contamination in foods
7. Review of the Code of practice for the reduction of aflatoxin B1 in raw materials and supplemental feeding stuffs for milk-producing animals (CXC 45-1997)
8. Revision of the Code of practice for the prevention and reduction of aflatoxin contamination in peanuts (CXC 55-2004)
9. Sampling plans for certain mycotoxins in selected spices

### **Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses:**

1. EWG on Establishing NRVs-R for persons aged 6 to 36 months
2. EWG on Proposed Harmonized Probiotic Guidelines for Use in Foods and Food Supplements
3. EWG on the technological justification of food additives
4. EWG on Optional ingredients in the Infant Formula Standard
5. EWG on appropriate methods for assessing the sweetness of carbohydrate sources in "Product for young children"

### **Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues:**

1. Guidelines for monitoring the stability and purity of reference materials and related stock solutions of pesticides during prolonged storage
2. Management of unsupported compounds without public health concerns scheduled for periodic review by JMPR and the national registration database
3. Establishment of CCPR schedules and priority lists for the evaluation of pesticides by JMPR
4. Enhancement of work between CCPR and JMPR

### **Codex Committee on Food Hygiene:**

1. Revision of the Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the control of Viruses in Food
2. Revision of the Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Foods
3. Revision of the Guidelines for the Control of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* in Chicken Meat
4. Alignment of Codex texts with the revised General Principles of Food Hygiene (CXC 1-1969)
5. Guidelines for the safe use and re-use of water in food production

## **Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification System:**

1. Proposed Draft Guidelines on the Prevention and Control of Food Fraud
2. Proposed Draft Revision of the Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System (CXG 60-2006)
3. Consolidation of guidance on Equivalence

## **FEATURED ARTICLES**

### **India Emerges as a Global Leader in Millets: The proposal for Group standards for millets approved by CAC47**

Indian Delegation led by CEO, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India participated in the 47<sup>th</sup> session of Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) which took place from 25-30th November 2024 at Geneva, Switzerland. A significant achievement for India at this meeting was the approval of the proposal for developing group standards for millets by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC).

India's proposal received overwhelming support from the countries across the globe participating in the meeting with more than 16 countries (Gambia, Indonesia, Sudan, Zambia, Hungary, Maldives, Ethiopia, Uganda, Eritrea, Nigeria, Tanzania, Canada, China, UAE, Fiji, Mali) supporting the work including major developed countries like EU, Canada and the USA which is the host country of Codex Committee on cereals, pulses and legumes (CCCPL). Majority of Asian and African Countries applauded the India's effort to develop the group standards of Whole Millet Grains as millets is considered as a staple and majorly consumed food in their region. CAC47 approved India's new work proposal of group standard of whole millet grains with the flexibility to establish an electronic working group or other virtual means for further work under CCCPL.

In the 87th Session of the Executive Committee of Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC87), India secured endorsement for its proposal to establish a group standard on millets and reactivation of Codex Committee on cereals, pulses and legumes (CCCPL). CCEXEC87 recommended CAC47 to reactivate the CCCPL to work in correspondence and with the flexibility to establish an electronic working group or other virtual means for further work

India has been working on this proposal since the 46<sup>th</sup> session of CAC in 2023 where it first advocated for the development of millet standards. The momentum behind the millet revolution has been driven by sustained efforts, catalysed by the United Nations' declaration

of 2023 as the International Year of Millets. This global recognition inspired India to elevate the status of millets, not just as a crop central to its food culture but as a global solution for sustainable agriculture and nutrition. The Government of India, under the leadership of Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has been instrumental in this journey. A landmark moment came in March 2023, during the Global Millets (Shree Anna) Conference, when the Prime Minister launched *Shree Anna - A Holistic Review*, a comprehensive book on millet standards. The publication was subsequently presented to the Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission during its 46th session, underscoring the need for international standards to advance the global promotion of millets.

India's commitment to millets was also highlighted during the Global Food Regulators Summit in 2023, where their potential as a sustainable and nutritious crop was recognised globally. This recognition provided momentum for India's proposal to Codex and reinforced its role as a global leader in millet standardisation. Domestically, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has played a crucial role in setting millet quality standards and promoting their adoption.

Recognising the importance of consumer engagement, FSSAI launched the *Eat Right Creativity Challenge for Millets (Shree Anna)* on World Food Day, 16th October 2023. This initiative targeted school children, aiming to create awareness about the health benefits of millets and their role in fostering sustainable food. Millets, referred to as *Shree Anna* in India, are resilient, nutrient-rich crops that thrive in arid conditions, making them ideal for addressing global challenges such as food security and climate change. India's efforts to bring these millet crops to the forefront of the international agenda reflect its commitment to sustainable agriculture and tackling malnutrition.

The approval of India's proposal by the Codex Alimentarius Commission is a testament to the country's dedication to this cause. By collaborating with Codex to establish global standards, India has not only strengthened its position as a leader in millet cultivation and standardisation but has also laid the foundation for a worldwide millet recognition in trade. This success underscores India's vision of positioning *Shree Anna* as a key driver of sustainable food systems, demonstrating its ability to address critical global challenges through innovative, inclusive, and far-reaching initiatives.

## Meetings scheduled in 2025

- **23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits & Vegetables (CCFFV23):** 25th February - 1st March 2025, Mexico City, Mexico

**Important Agenda Items:** Draft standard for fresh dates, Draft standard for fresh curry leaves.

- **55<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA55):** 24th - 28th March 2025, Seoul, Republic of Korea

**Important Agenda Items:** Revision of General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) to the 55th CCFA - CCFA 54, Revision of the Class Names and the International Numbering System for Food Additives (INS)(CXG36-1989)", Standard for baker's yeast

- **11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes (CCCPL11):** 7th - 30th April, 2025, by Correspondence

**Important Agenda Items:** Establishment of EWG for Drafting standard for 'Whole Millet Grains', Finalization of ToRs for the established EWG

- **44<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS44):** 5th - 14th May 2025 (virtual)

(Important agenda items to be determined when the provisional agenda gets published by the secretariat)

- **56<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR56):** 19th - 24th May 2025, Venue not announced yet

**Important Agenda Items:** Guidelines on Monitoring the Stability and Purity of Reference Materials, stock solutions and mixed pesticide standard solutions, inclusion of propiconazole and cypermethrin in the priority list of evaluation by JMPR. (Other important agendas to be determined when the provisional agenda gets published by the secretariat based on the outcome of latest JMPR meeting)

- **34<sup>th</sup> Session of Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP34):** 2nd - 6th June 2025, Lille, France

(Important agenda items to be determined when the provisional agenda gets published by the secretariat)

- **18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF18):** 23rd - 27th June 2025, Bangkok, Thailand

**Important Agenda Items:** MLs for total aflatoxins in ready-to-eat peanuts, Code of Practice for the Reduction of Acrylamide in Foods (CXC 67-2009), MLs for lead in certain food categories, Code of practice for the reduction of aflatoxin B1 in raw materials and supplemental feeding stuffs for milk-producing animals (CXC 45-1997)

- **88<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC88):** 14th - 18th July 2025, Rome, Italy

(Important agenda items to be determined when the provisional agenda gets published by the secretariat based on the decisions of subsidiary committees)

- **8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Codex Committee on Spices & Culinary Herbs (CCSCH8):** 13th - 17th October 2025, Kochi, Kerala

**Important Agenda Items:** Standard for Large Cardamom, Standard for Vanilla, Standard for Cinnamon under the group standard "Dried bark", Standard for Dried Seeds-Coriander, labelling provision for country of harvest for saffron

- **89<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC89):** 3rd - 7th November 2025, Rome, Italy

(Important agenda items to be determined when the provisional agenda gets published by the secretariat based on the decisions of subsidiary committees)

- **48<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC48):** 10th - 14th November 2025, Rome, Italy

(Important agenda items to be determined when the provisional agenda gets published by the secretariat based on the decisions of subsidiary committees)

- **55<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Codex Committee on Food Hygiene:** 15th-19th December, 2025, Venue Not Announced Yet

**Important Agenda Items:** Revision of Annex II on Fish and Fishery products and further develop Annex IV related to water fit-for-purpose assessment, Revision of Guidelines for the Control of Campylobacter and Salmonella in Chicken Meat (CXG 78 -2011)



### Connect with FSSAI

 [fssaiindia](#)  [fssai](#)  [fssai\\_safefood](#)  [fssaindia](#)  [fssai\\_india](#)

**FDA Bhawan, Kotla Road, New Delhi-110002**