



Nov. 2015 — Feb. 2016
Volume II, Issue IV

Connect@CodexIndia

fssai

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India

CODEX 50
ALIMENTARIUS 1963-2013



Images: CIMMYT, Anshruni RK, stevendepolo, chorda, Sweet on Veggies, Mynamisharsha, Flickr streams, Wikimedia Commons

FROM THE DESK OF NATIONAL CODEX CONTACT POINT (NCCP)

Past few months have been a period of high activity for the Codex team at FSSAI. Be it organizing shadow committees' meetings, preparing India's views on agenda items under discussion in the Codex Committees' meetings, or the preparatory work for the CCASIA20, the NCCP Secretariat was geared to meet the challenge.

Taking a look back at the Codex work in the past one year at global level, the Codex fraternity is focussing on issues like strategic work management and revitalization of the Coordinating Committees, among others, within the Codex system in order to make the organization more relevant and responsive to changing environment. While such issues are important for the Codex and all its members in general, it means additional responsibilities for executive members, including India, to lead and steer these discussions in order to achieve the desirable outcome.

The NCCP Secretariat is equally aware of the need to further strengthen and institutionalize the Codex related structure and work in the country. We have been receiving valuable suggestions from our partners to connect with a wider network of professionals/student community through the aegis of relevant educational/research institution to build capacity for, and sustain activities pertaining to, Codex related work in the country. This aspect needs to be explored in the right earnest.

Indian delegations successfully participated in the 47th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (November 2015, Boston, USA), 37th Session of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (November 2016, Bad Soden, Germany), 22nd Session of Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification System (February 2016, Melbourne, Australia) and 37th Session of Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (February 2016, Budapest, Hungary). The Food Hygiene Committee, India offered to be a co-chair for the Electronic Working Group led by France to work on revision of the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CAC/RCP 1–1969) and its HACCP Annex,. We also continued to successfully organize informal meetings of the CCASIA member countries on the sidelines of the main Codex Committee meetings. The efforts of our identified coordinators in facilitating these informal meetings are much appreciated.

Now we are looking forward to participate in the upcoming meetings of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) in March; and Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF), Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP) and Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) in April 2016.

CODEX SESSIONS DURING THE PERIOD

CCFH 47 Boston, USA - 9th to 13th November 2015

India participated in the 47th Session of **Codex Committee on Food Hygiene**. A six member delegation led by Shri. Kumar Anil, Advisor, Standards, FSSAI participated in the session meeting. India as the CCASIA coordinator convened the Asia meeting prior to the plenary session of CCFH.

The Committee agreed new work on - Revision of the General Principles of Food Hygiene and its HACCP Annexure and established an electronic working group chaired by France and co-chaired by India, Chile, Ghana, and the

United States of America; Revision of the Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

The committee advanced for adoption: Proposed Guidelines for the Control of Non-typhoidal Salmonella spp. in Beef and Pork Meat; Proposed Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Foodborne Parasites and Proposed Annex I “Examples of Microbiological Criteria for Low-Moisture Foods When Deemed Appropriate in Accordance with

the Principles and Guidelines for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria Related to Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997)” and Annex II “Guidance for the Establishment of Environmental Monitoring Programs for Salmonella spp. and other Enterobacteriaceae in Low-Moisture Food Processing Areas” to the Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Moisture; Proposed Annex III “Spices and Dried Aromatic Herbs” to the Code of Hygienic Practice for Low Moisture

CCNFSDU 37 Bad Sodenam Taunus, Germany – 23rd to 27th November 2015

The 37th Session of the **Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)** was held in Bad Sodenam Taunus, Germany from 23rd to 27th November 2015. The Indian delegation was led by Dr. Sandhya Kabra, Director, Food Safety & Standards Authority of India. The Committee agreed new work on “Guideline for ready to use therapeutic food (RUTF)”. The Committee advanced for adoption: proposed additional or

revised nutritional reference values for labelling purposes in the Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling.



India emphasized on the need to address definition of Follow up formula as per the World Health Assembly resolution 39.28 on optimal infant and young child feeding.

India also reserved its position to include genetically modified food/organism in the proposed definition of “Biofortification”.

CCFICS 22 Melbourne, Australia – 06th to 12th February 2016

The 22nd Session of Codex **Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems** was held during 6-12 February, 2016 in Melbourne Australia. The Committee was attended by 51 Member Countries, 1 Member Organization, 9 international governmental and non-governmental Organizations including WHO and FAO. Three member delegation led by Dr. Sushil Kumar Saxena, Director, Export Inspection Council of India participated in the Session.

The agenda that was of importance to India were: Principles and guidelines for the exchange of information between countries to support food import and export; Guidance for monitoring the performance of National Food Control Systems; Revision of the Principles and guidelines for the exchange of information in Food emergency situations; Revision of the guidelines for the exchange of information between countries on rejection of imported foods.



CCMAS 37 Budapest, Hungary - 22nd to 26th February 2016

The 37th Session of **Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling** was held during 22-26 February, 2016 in Budapest, Hungary. The committee was attended by 47 Member countries, 1 Member Organization and Observers from 17 international organizations. Three member delegation, led by Dr KK Sharma, Indian Agricultural Research Institute participated in this committee meeting. The Committee was of the view that the determination of nitrogen factor for soya protein

isolates does not fall under the purview of this committee since these are not analytical procedures and will recommend to CAC and CCNFSDU that FAO and WHO should convene an expert panel to review the literature. The committee noted that significant work on the determination of equivalency to Type I methods falls under the Standards Development Organizations (SDOs) and that it should provide recommendations in the future session of CCMAS.



WORKSHOP ON CODEX ALIMENTARIUS (ASIA REGION)

A workshop on Codex Alimentarius work in Asia region was organized by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India on 2nd February 2016 at the Indian Habitat Centre, New Delhi.



The objectives of the workshop were to discuss the Codex related activities in the Asian region, challenges faced by the nations in various areas of food safety and the roles and responsibilities of India as the Regional Coordinator of the 20th session of FAO/WHO Coordinating committee for Asia (CCASIA).

Ms Annamaria Bruno, Representative of Codex Secretariat, Ms. Yayoyi Tsujiyama, Vice Chair of Codex Alimentarius Commission, Ms. Shashi Sareen, Representative of FAO, Dr. Gyanendra Gongal, Representative of WHO, Shri Pawan Agarwal, Chief Executive Officer, FSSAI, Shri Sunil Bakshi, Advisor Codex, Shri P Karthikeyan, Assistant Director Codex, Coordinators of CCASIA within India and various Officers from FSSAI participated in the event.

The workshop encompassed General Introduction to Codex Alimentarius Commission, its committees and works relevant to the Asian region. The work of some of the intergovernmental Task Forces in the area of Antimicrobial Resistance, Animal Feeding, Processing and handling of Quick Frozen Foods etc. was highlighted.



Representatives of FAO/WHO emphasized on the work done in the area of Food Safety and Quality in the Asia region and on the need of priority setting in the areas like Food safety risk analysis, enhanced information sharing, harmonization with international standards specially Codex and strengthening national codex structures in countries.

The achievements and contributions of India in Codex related work and activities were brought out and the roles and responsibilities of the National Codex Contact Point India in this respect were outlined.

The tremendous work in Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs by India was appreciated.

PARTICIPATION OF INDIA IN THE ELECTRONIC WORKING GROUPS



CCNFSDU 38 (Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses)

- Review of the Standard for Follow- up Formula
- Nutrient Reference Value-Non Communicable Disease FOR EPA/DHA
- Bio fortification
- Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods



CCFH 48 (Codex Committee on Food Hygiene)

- Revision of GPFH & HACCP ANNEX – India will act as Co-Chair for this EWG



CCCPL (Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes)

- International standard for Quinoa

FEATURED ARTICLES

1. THE IMPACT OF CODEX COMMITTEE ON SPICES AND CULINARY HERBS (CCSCH)

Dr P.S.Sreekantan Thampi
Organizing Secretary, CCSCH

It was the Indian initiative that helped in the formation of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs, ultimately resulting in India hosting and the Spices Board India manning the secretariat. More than the pride and prestige, the process had brought in lots of positive signs in Indian spice industry. The trade and commerce that used to be more bothered about the various parameters of quality fixed by importing countries started realizing that there are ample opportunities for the producers and exporters also to contribute in the standard setting process, which hitherto was a one way affair. For effective participation in the deliberations, the participant need to be aware of the process of putting across viewpoints based on scientific conclusions. The interventions by many developed countries from Europe and from the US on many floors of the Codex platforms stand testimony to the active involvement through planned preparations at home.

As regards the spice industry is concerned, the Codex forum had become a major topic of discussion and action of immediate concern only very lately. The priority for Codex notifications has come to prevail, true to say, with the commencement of the functions of the CCSCH.

As India is hosting the CCSCS Secretariat, there is a priority and direct attention being given to all the Codex notifications for participation in electronic working groups, contribution in terms of comments and viewpoints. In short, expertise in dealing with Codex documents has been developing. Many from the spice trade in the country are now participating in various Codex Committee sessions.

Alongside the mainstream operations, the Spices Board is actively involving in various electronic working groups (eWGs) constituted by various Codex Committees.

The deliberations of the eWGs now in progress will contribute to the global standard setting process in the long run. Participation of India in the electronic working groups is to be hailed, as the very presence of India helps in protecting India's interest in the standard setting process of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The interface and the interactions that take place in Codex Committee meetings have also necessitated updating information on standards and related documents on various quality parameters.

Being a part of the international electronic working groups more often is found to be yielding lots of valuable information on the trend in standard setting processes. The memberships in eWGs in Codex commodity committees (vertical) and subject committees (horizontal) have also helped in securing viewpoints that could be adopted for parameters in the CCSCS. The lesson learned lends easy subscriptions and permits smooth functioning.

The Indian participation is in the following eWGs of various committees of the Codex Alimentarius Commission:

In CCSCS (Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs)

1. Discussion paper for grouping for spices and culinary herbs
2. Proposed draft standard for Cumin
3. Proposed draft standard for Black, Green and White pepper

4. Proposed draft standard for Thyme
5. Proposed draft standard for Oregano

In CCFH (Codex Committee on Food Hygiene)

6. Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Moisture Foods (LMF)
7. Revision of the General Principles of Food Hygiene and its HACCP annex
8. Draft Annexes for the Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Moisture Foods

In CCCF (Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods)

9. Revision of the maximum levels for Lead in the General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed
10. Code of Practice on Mycotoxin contamination in Spices (including specific annexes)
11. Discussion paper on Mycotoxin contamination in spices
12. Methylmercury in fish

In CCMAS (Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling)

13. Discussion paper - Equivalency to Type I methods
14. Discussion paper on criteria approaches for methods which use a 'Sum of Components'

In CCPR (Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues)

15. Criteria for Methods of Analysis for the Determination of Pesticide Residues
16. EWG on Minor Crops
17. Establishment of Codex Schedules and Priority Lists of Pesticides

In CCFICS (Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems)

18. The Guidelines for the Exchange of Information between Countries on Rejections of Imported Food

19. Principles and Guidelines for the Elaboration and Management of Questionnaires

Directed at Exporting Countries

20. Revision of the Principles and Guidelines for the Exchange of Information in Food Safety

Emergency Situations.

2. SIGNIFICANCE OF EARLY ENGAGEMENT (STEPS 1-3) IN CODEX PROCESSES

Dr. Jasvir Singh

Co-chairman FICCI Codex Cell,

Significance of an effective engagement in Codex and other similar international food standards setting frameworks can't be emphasized enough, especially in today's globalized world. This becomes even more important in the light of increasing national aspirations to become global super power and a food factory to the world. In this back drop, this article discusses the extremely important role of effective engagement in the early stages of agenda development.

The significance of the food code for consumer health protection was underscored in 1985 by the United Nations Resolution 39/248, whereby guidelines were adopted for use in the elaboration and reinforcement of consumer protection policies. The guidelines advise that "When formulating national policies and plans with regard to food, Governments should take into account the need of all consumers for food security and should support and, as far as possible, adopt standards from the ... Codex Alimentarius or, in their absence, other generally accepted international food standards".

This importance gets further accentuated through WTO obligations, where Agreement on the

Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) and the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) both encourage the international harmonization of food standards. As such, World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreements refer to Codex standards as global reference points.

Against this backdrop it becomes extremely crucial for countries to ensure that their trade interests, backed with enough scientific justifications, are adequately protected, while standards are conceptualized, developed and implemented internationally. This article attempts to understand the various layers of standards setting process, as envisaged in Codex Procedural Manual, and tries to identify the right stage for making interventions in these processes.

Codex Procedural Manual provides for a standard setting process, as illustrated in Fig.1.

If we closely look at the process, it becomes evidently clear that a huge amount of time and effort is focused initial stages of conceptualization, and developing a standard. This is becomes important in view of the basic attributes of Codex processes, such as:

- Democratic and transparent processes
 - Multiple opportunities to provide inputs
 - Emphasis on creating consensus
 - Equal voice for every member
 - Due importance to Scientific Advice.
-
- Before a decision is made to undertake the development of a new standard or other text, a project proposal is prepared and discussed at Committee level.

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| - STEP - 1 | - The project proposal is reviewed by the Executive Committee and compared against the criteria and priorities established by the Commission. |
| - STEP – 2 & 3 | - A draft text is prepared and circulated to member countries and all interested parties for comments |
| - STEP - 4 | - The draft and the comments are reviewed at Committee level and, if necessary, a new draft is prepared. |
| - STEP - 5 | - The Commission reviews the progress made and agrees that the draft should go to finalization. After this stage, the draft is also endorsed by the relevant General Subject Committees so that it is consistent with Codex general standards.* |
| - Accelerated Process | - Accelerated Process (Step 5/8): - When text is considered to be ready for final adoption at this stage, In such cases the process moves directly from step 5 to step 8, omitting the steps 6-7. |
| - STEP – 6 & 7 | - The approved draft is sent again to governments and interested parties for comment and finalized by the relevant Committee. The draft is submitted to the Commission for adoption. |

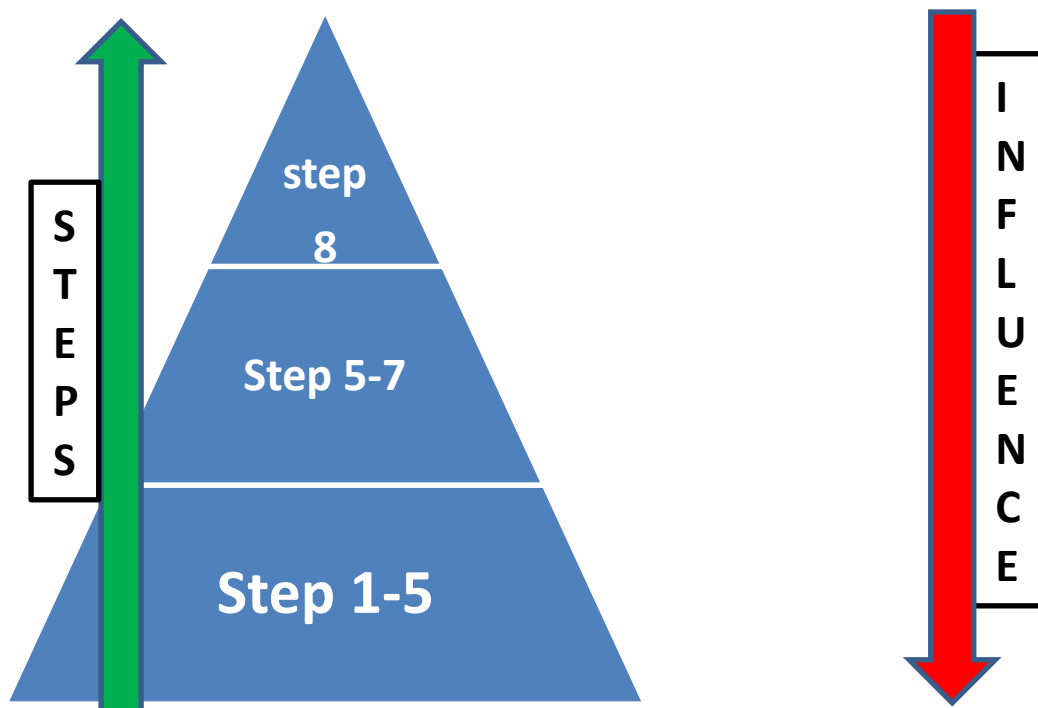
- STEP - 8

- Following a final round of comments, the Commission adopts the draft as a formal Codex text. The standard, guideline or other text is then published by the Codex Secretariat.

-
- Fig1 : Codex Standard Setting Process

- We also need to become aware that as the agenda progresses forward, and agreement over portions of draft text gets recognized and recorded, it becomes extremely difficult to reverse the process, except under exceptional circumstances. In this scenario, it is extremely critical that Codex member countries and organizations get fully engaged in the initial steps of discussions, provide input to the text being drafted, and raise their concerns. This will ensure that any standard being developed, takes adequate care the concerns of member countries.

- In these standards setting processes, what really matters is the ability of member country to impact the outcomes of the discussions so that interests are adequately protected. From the experience of working in Codex agenda, we can easily see that this aspect plays out in a very similar manner, across various Codex committees, and across agenda items. This is explained in Fig 2.



- Fig 2: Ability to influence the agenda outcomes, in relation to Steps in Codex Step Process.

- As we can see from Fig 2, as the agenda progresses further into stage 4 onwards, ability of member countries to influence the outcomes goes down. Apart from this obvious impact on the outcomes, an effective engagement at early steps also helps member countries in various other ways, such as:
 - This is the most important stage to provide inputs.
 - Early inputs help set the direction of the discussions in line with our interests.
 - Early engagement also provides us with some early warnings about the potential negative impacts on our trade interests.
 - It also helps industry, which is the most important stakeholder in implementing standards, to get ready with their plans for implementation.
 - It is an established fact that early engagement always result in sustained engagement.
 - Apart from the above, an early engagement also provides opportunities to National Codex Contact Point with enough time to engage other member countries in building support for our positions, through effective networking and engagement on contentious issues of concern.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ❖ 48th Session of Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA), 14-18 March, 2016 in Xián, China.
- ❖ 10th Session of Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF), 4-8April, 2016 in Rotterdam, Netherland.
- ❖ 30th Session of Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP), 11-15 April, 2016 in Paris, France.
- ❖ 48th Session of Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR), 25-30 April, 2016 in Chongqing, China.
- ❖ 43rd Session of Codex Committee on food Labelling (CCFL), Ottawa, Canada, 9-13 May, 2016 in Ottawa, Canada.
- ❖ 71st Session of Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC), 20-23 June, 2016 in Rome, Italy.
- ❖ 39th Session of Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), 27 June- 1 July, 2016 in Rome, Italy.

0-0-0-0-0

CODEX INDIA

NOV 2015 – FEB 2016

Volume II. Issue IV



Address: National Codex Contact Point
Food Safety and Standards Authority of India,
FDA Bhawan, near Bal Bhawan,
Kotla Road,
New Delhi—110002
Website: fssai.gov.in

For any comments/suggestions/observations, or if you would like to contribute articles for future issues,
kindly contact: codex-india@nic.in