

FROM THE DESK OF NATIONAL CODEX CONTACT POINT (NCCP)

Here again we are with our fifth issue of the newsletter. These four months passed as swiftly as we could have ever imagined! It seems with the blink of an eye, work of five important Codex Committees and the Commission was deliberated upon leading to important decisions by the Codex fraternity. India actively and effectively participated in these Committees, raising concerns where needed.

The NCCP Secretariat with the support from the national stakeholders efficiently and diligently reviewed the working documents as circulated by Codex Secretariat. Keeping in mind that our proposals should be taken forward in the Commission, we gave little bit more time to it.

The Commission approved two new work proposals - one for the development of a Codex standard for fresh dates and the other one on developing guidance for the labelling of Non- retail containers of food – that were originally proposed by India. Now with India as Chair of the electronic working groups entrusted with the initial preparation of the documents for consideration by the respective Codex Committees, we are gearing up to work on these two items.

Apart from these Codex Committees, India also participated in the US-CCASIA Colloquium held in Loa People's Democratic Republic in the month of June 2016. The event provided an opportunity to delegates from 12 Codex member countries from the Asian Region to discuss the agenda items being considered in CAC together with the delegates from US in an informal setup. India as CCASIA Coordinator also presented a preview of the forthcoming session of the CCASIA20 in September 2016 in New Delhi.

In next couple of months, NCCP Secretariat will be engaged working on the upcoming Codex committees: 28th Session of Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV), 20th Session of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia (CCASIA), 23rd Session of Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF). Again, it's going to be exciting, exhaustive and never ending work! But then it is always important to continue and sustain the country's active involvement in Codex work at the international level.

In this issue of the Newsletter, we also bring to you an article on the incredible journey of the Codex India in the past ten years capturing some memorable moments which Codex India has gone through during this period. We hope you will find this quite interesting and enjoy reading this as much as we enjoy bringing it you.

Wishing Happy Reading with this edition too.

CODEX SESSIONS DURING THE PERIOD

CCFA48 Xián, China – 14th to 18th March, 2016

The 48th Session of CCFA was held during 14-18 March, 2016 in Xian, China. The session was attended by 48 Member countries, one Member organization and 31 international governmental and non-governmental organizations. From India, a three member delegation led by Shri Anil Mehta, DD, FSSAI participated in the meeting.

India raised the following concerns:

1. deletion of Gold and Silver provisions from the commodity standard for chocolates & chocolate products but was not considered appropriate by the committee, as JECFA had not established an ADI for silver or gold,

2. use of tartrates in Mango Chutney in food category 4.1.2.6. and

3. for the use of propylene glycol alginate in category- Jams, jellies & Marmalades. As a result, the proposal was sent to CCPFV to provide guidance for use in these categories.



CCCF10 Rotterdam, Netherlands – 4th to 8th April, 2016

The 10th Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods was held in Rotterdam, Netherlands from 4th to 8th April, 2016. The Session was attended by 55 Member countries, 1 Member Organisation, and Observers from 14 international organisations. The Indian delegation was led by Shri. P. Karthikeyan, Assistant

Director, FSSAI. During the meeting, **India strongly raised its concern with regard to the agenda on draft maximum level for inorganic arsenic in husked rice. India informed the Committee that the approach taken by EWG regarding non-inclusion of data about draft ML of 0.35 mg/kg was contrary to the decision of CCCF9 and**

India's reservation on this was recorded



CCGP30 Paris, France- 11th to 15th April, 2016

The 30th Session of Codex Committee on General Principles was held during 11th to 15th April, 2016 in Paris, France. The session was attended by delegates representing 72 member countries, one member organization, one observer country, and 9 international organizations. From India, Shri. Sunil Bakshi, Advisor, FSSAI participated in the Session. One of the Agenda to review the current practice and provisions in the

Procedural Manual, specifically the rules for the creation of new committees and task forces was discussed in depth. **India did not support the review of the Codex work management and was of the view that the review may be undertaken once the current Strategic plan (2014-2019) ends. Also, India proposed to discuss the issue under each of the Regional Committees to get a wider response, since the**

participation of member countries is more in RCC meetings rather than CAC or CCEXEC meetings. In addition, agenda on consistency of the risk analysis texts across the relevant committees, India support the proposal for considering JEMNU as the primary source for scientific advice with regard to CCNFSU in the upcoming session of CAC

CCPR 48 Chongqing, China, 25th to 30th April, 2016

The 48th Session of Codex Committee on Pesticides and Residues was held during 25th to 30th April, 2016 in Chongqing, China. The session was attended by 49 Member countries, one Member organisation; nine international organisations attended the Session. From India, five member delegations, led by Dr KK Sharma, Indian Agricultural Research Institute participated in this committee meeting. In the

session, **India proposed document on risk assessment using brew factor for the establishment of MRLs for pesticides in tea-jointly prepared by India and China. Also, India proposed to include two new subgroups for Groundnut in Group 014e(underground beans and peas)and 015c (Dry underground pulses) in the revision of classification of**

Food and Feed which was accepted by the Committee.



CCFL43 Ottawa, Canada, 9th to 13th May, 2016

The 43rd Session of CCFL was held during 9-13 May, 2016 in Ottawa, Canada. 53 member countries, 17 International Government Organizations attended the session. Two member delegation led by Shri. Bimal Kumar Dubey, Director, FSSAI, attended the session. In the session, **India proposed guidelines for revision of the already existing “General Standard**

for Labelling of Pre packaged Foods (GSLPF)” to include provisions related to non-retail containers. This was supported by many member countries. Committee agreed to establish an EWG –chaired by India and Co-chaired by USA to develop a proposed

draft guidance for the labelling of Non-Retail containers of food for comments at Step 3 and consideration at the next session

CAC 39 Rome, Italy, 27th June-1st July, 2016

The 39th Session of CAC was held during 27 June- 1 July, 2016. The session was attended by delegates from 123 Member countries and one Member Organisation, and observers from 38 international governmental and nongovernmental organizations, including UN agencies. From India, five member delegation led by Shri. Ashish Bahuguna, Chairperson, FSSAI attended Session

Following are the important concerns and the deliberations:

1. Committee on Fresh fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV) - Standard for Aubergine:

Some of the delegates informed the Commission that having a tolerance for decay in “Extra” Class was not in line with the concept of “Extra” Class, where the products classified “Extra” must be of an exceptional nature; and with the same tolerance for decay (1%) in both “Extra” Class and Class I,

there was no meaningful distinction between the two classes. The Commission agreed to adopt the proposed draft standard at Step 5 and requested that all comments submitted at the present session should be re-submitted to CCFFV to finalize the text by the next session.

- **Standard for Fresh date:** The Commission approved the new work.

2. Codex committee on Food Additives (CCFA)

-Provisions for gold (INS 175) and silver (INS 174), which were originally included in the Standard for Chocolate and Chocolate Products (CODEX STAN 87-1981): The Commission adopted the revised food additive sections of the standards for chocolate and cocoa products and agreed to request CCFA to clarify why the provisions for gold (INS 175) and silver (INS 174) had not been included in the GSFA on intervention by delegation from India in this matter.

3. Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF) - Maximum level for inorganic arsenic in husked rice:

The Commission adopted the ML of 0.35 mg/kg for inorganic arsenic in husked rice on the understanding that the ML would be reviewed three years after the implementation of the Code of Practice and would take into account all available data in order to lower the ML of 0.35 mg/kg. 65. EU,

Norway, India, Sri Lanka and Philippines expressed their reservation to this decision.

-Proposed draft MLs for lead in fruit juices and nectars ready-to-drink (inclusion of passion fruit); canned fruits (inclusion of canned berries and other small fruits); canned vegetables (inclusion of canned leafy vegetables and canned legume vegetables); jams, jellies and marmalades (lower ML and inclusion of marmalades); pickled cucumbers (lower ML); preserved tomatoes (lower ML and deletion of the note on the application of a concentration factor); and table olives (lower ML) (Step 8) at Step 5/8: The Commission agreed with the proposal of the Chair to adopt the MLs at Step 5/8 as proposed by CCCF with the exception of the MLs for preserved tomatoes and jams, jellies and marmalades which would be adopted

at Step 5 only, on the understanding that countries concerned would submit relevant data in reply to a call for data to be issued shortly in order to finalize these MLs at CCCF11 (2017).

4. Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH)

-Draft standard for cumin: The Committee adopted the draft standard for cumin at Step 5.

- Draft Standard for thyme: The Committee adopted the draft standard for thyme at Step 5.

5. Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL)

-Guidance for the labelling of non-retail containers of food: The Commission approved the new work, EWG to be chaired by India and co-chair by Costa Rica.



US-CCASIA COLLOQUIUM

The U.S. Codex Office and the Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) sponsored the colloquium in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic during June 14-16, 2016. The meeting discussed codex operations structured, challenges in Codex faced by countries and preview of CCASIA.

From India, the colloquium was attended by Shri. Karthikeyan, Assistant Director, FSSAI, wherein he presented the preview of upcoming CCASIA (CCASIA 20th session) regional meeting to the delegates and informed that the session is going to be held in September during 26-30 September 2016 in New Delhi, India. Information on various agenda items of CCASIA including the side events was also part of the presentation.

Codex implements online commenting system

The Codex Online Commenting System (OCS) is innovative tools that will revolutionize the way Codex develop standards. Moving from a paper based system to an online platform will encourage greater global participation in the work of standard setting, will be faster, will have simpler solutions for formulating Codex texts and building consensus on the standards themselves.

The Platform was launched at the 39th Session of Codex Alimentarius Commission, held in Rome from 27 June to 1 July, 2016 where delegates had the opportunity to experiment with the system.

Launch of 2nd Codex Trust Fund

The new Codex Trust Fund or CTF2 officially launched on 27 June, 2016. In the starting, CTF2 will be implemented in Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar and Senegal. Many other

The new CTF2 will shift from a primary focus on supporting physical participation in Codex meetings, to helping build strong, solid and sustainable national capacity to engage in Codex.

Once the CTF2 is implemented, many countries can prepare strong applications and will benefit from on-going consultations with FAO/WHO to strengthen their applications in subsequent rounds.

PARTICIPATION OF INDIA IN THE ELECTRONIC WORKING GROUP

CCMAS



Measurement On Uncertainty
Codex General Guidelines On Sampling
Review And Update Of CODEX STAN 234-1999

CCFA



Food Additives Provisions In The Category Of Grape Wines And Its Sub Categories
General Standards For Food Additives (GSFA)
Aligment Of Fod Additive Provisions Of Commodity Standards Of GSFA
International Numbering System.



CCFL

Development of Guidance on the labelling of Non retail containers of foods
Front of pack nutrition labelling

FEATURED ARTICLES

Commemorating ten years of Codex India (2006-16)

NCCP- Codex Division

Codex Alimentarius, is literally translated from Latin “Food code” is a collection of internationally adopted food standards and related texts presented in a uniform manner. These food standards and related texts aim at protecting consumers’ health

and ensuring fair practices in the food trade and has become the global reference point for consumers, food producers and processors, national food control agencies and the international food trade .

The Codex Alimentarius Commission is a joint intergovernmental body of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WHO with 188 Members (187 Member countries and one Member Organization (EU)). Codex has worked since 1963 to create harmonized international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice.

Codex Alimentarius is accepted worldwide as the standards are science based and countries which do not have their own food standards rely on the Codex standards as a starting point. In essence, the Codex Alimentarius has reached to every continent, and its contribution to the protection of public health and fair trade practices is immeasurable¹.

India became the member of Codex Alimentarius in 1964. If we go back in time, glance ten years down the line, Codex India evolved immensely from 2006 till 2016. India has marked its niche in the Codex world by participating in the various Codex Committees, hosting and chairing Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH), (1st session in 2014 & 2nd session in 2015) and co-hosting Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) , 2007 and Contaminants in Foods (CCCF), 2015 in New Delhi.

India's proposal for establishing the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) was accepted and approved by the Commission in 2013. India successfully hosted and chaired the first session of CCSCH in Kochi (2014) and second session in Goa (2015). The conception for having a codex committee on Spices and Culinary herbs, the need to have an international standards in Spices was felt when India's trade and commerce was getting hindered due to the various parameters of quality fixed by importing countries. **It's a matter of prestige that India a "developing country" is host of such an important Codex Committee!**

1. Understanding the Codex Alimentarius- FAO/WHO



During these years, India actively participated in several Electronic and Physical Working Groups. India chaired the following Electronic Working Groups:

- Proposed Draft Amendment of the Standard for Processed Cereal- Based Foods for Infants and Young Children (Codex Stan 74- 1981) to Include a New Part B for Underweight Children at Step 4,
- Discussion paper on the purpose of the grouping of spices and culinary herbs,
- Draft Standard on BWG Peppers,
- MLs for total aflatoxins in RTE peanuts,
- Establishment of Maximum Levels for Aflatoxins B1 And Total Aflatoxins In Nutmeg And Associated Sampling Plans,
- Mycotoxin Contamination In Spices,
- Draft Standard on ware Potatoes,
- Draft Standard on Aubergines,
- Draft Regional Code Of Hygienic Practice For Street-Vended Foods,
- Draft Standard on BWG Peppers- at Step 2/3 for redrafting,
- Discussion Paper on Grouping of Spices And Culinary Herbs,

- Draft Standard on Fresh Date Palm.

India also co-chaired the Electronic Working Groups on Draft Standard on Cumin, Proposed Draft Guidance on Performance Criteria for Methods of Analysis for the Determination of Pesticide Residues, Discussion Paper on Guidance to Facilitate the Establishment of Maximum Residue Limits for Pesticides for Minor Crops / Specialty Crops, discussion paper on Feasibility to Develop a Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Mycotoxin Contamination in Spices, proposed Draft Guidance On Performance Criteria For Methods Of Analysis For the Determination of Pesticide Residues, revision of the General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1–1969) and its HACCP Annex.

India participated in the physical working groups on Proposed Draft Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Foodborne Parasites., Principles and guidelines for elaboration and management of questionnaire directed at exporting countries, Principles and guidelines for monitoring regulatory performance of NFCS and processed cheese.

India is a major exporter of many food products and the world relishes the different food products coming from India due to its variety, taste and texture! For not letting the export to be affected, it is imperative to have Codex standards. Also, it is prudent to have a Codex Standard which complies with essential parameters for the facilitation of smooth trade. India therefore prepared and proposed many new work proposals on setting up Codex Standards which is as under:

- Standards on Okra, Aubergine , Ware Potato and Fresh date Palm in the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV),
- Proposed draft Guidance for the labelling of Non- retail containers of foods in the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL),
- Proposed Draft Regional Code of Hygienic Practice for Street vended foods in the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia (CCASIA) ,
- Black White Green pepper, cumin and thyme in the Codex Committee of Spices and Culinary herbs (CCSCH) and

- Establishment of a maximum level for total aflatoxins in ready to eat peanut and associated sampling plan, establishment of maximum levels of aflatoxins in spices in the Codex Committee on Contaminants in foods (CCCF).

Apart from participation and involvement in the Codex activities, India has been given a huge responsibility of being a regional coordinator (CCASIA). India is elected as the Regional Coordinator for Asia for the period of July 2015 to July 2017 and will host the 20th Session of the CCASIA in September 2016 in New Delhi. It's a privilege to be a regional coordinator, an opportunity for representing the Asian concerns in the Codex Committees, working together with the Asian members to develop regional standards for certain food products and to do the capacity building workshops in certain Asian countries where Codex structure is not well defined.

With regard to capacity building within India, Codex India has been actively involved for dissemination of Codex work, spreading information on all the Codex activities. NCCP India successfully conducted three regional workshops on Codex Alimentarius: Principles and Procedures held at Delhi, Kochi and Mumbai respectively. The workshops were held for better understanding of rules, procedures and functioning of Codex Alimentarius. Different stakeholders be it government officials, eminent scientists, industry representatives, consumer organizations and students actively participated. Their participation in these workshops was a clear manifestation of interest related to Codex activities and functioning of Codex in India. The workshops generated awareness among the stakeholders on the Rules and procedures of Codex Alimentarius. During one of the workshops, the role of academia in Codex Alimentarius was highlighted emphasizing on the Inputs from Academia (Institutes, Colleges, and Universities) to be extremely useful in finalizing the country position or proposing a new work in the Codex Committee. As a result of these workshops, the stakeholders understood an overall general layout of Codex Alimentarius, the mandate, the international food standards, structure and network of Codex (member countries, observers, Codex Committees, Executive Committee, Scientific bodies etc), the Codex Procedural manual which is the foundation for Codex Functioning and Codex Documentation. Conducting these workshops in the Northern, Southern and Western region, increased an active and effective participation among

stakeholders for attending Codex Committees and also for preparing Country comments.

Looking at these ten memorable years of Codex India, it's evident that India has emerged as one of the important Codex member countries. Codex India efficiently and diligently worked in all the Codex activities and the progress made is notable!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ❖ US-CCASIA Colloquium-22 to 24th August 2016 in New Delhi, India.
- ❖ 72nd Session of Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC) - 30th August to 1st September 2016 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- ❖ 28th Session of Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPVF)- 12th to 16th September 2016 in Washington D.C.,USA.
- ❖ 20th Session of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia (CCASIA)- 26th to 30th September 2016 in New Delhi, India.
- ❖ 23rd Session of Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF) - 17th to 21st October 2016 in Houston, USA.

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