



FAO/WHO REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

**Organized in collaboration with the Governments
of Switzerland and Poland**

REPORT



6th October 2008, Warsaw, Poland.

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1. Introduction

The FAO/WHO Regional Workshop took place on 6th October 2008 in Warsaw, Poland. The Workshop was attended by 44 delegates representing Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom and the European Community and the European Commission. The Workshop was organized in collaboration with the Governments of Switzerland and Poland. 15 participants received support from the FAO/WHO Trust Fund for Enhancing participation in Codex in order to attend the regional workshop and subsequent 26th Session of CCEURO (Warsaw, 7th to 10th October 2008).

The list of participants who attended the 1-day Workshop is attached in Annex 1.

2. Acknowledgements

The organizational and technical support of the Agriculture and Food Quality Inspection Office of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Poland, and the technical and financial support from the Government of Switzerland is acknowledged and appreciated. Speakers and delegates at the regional workshop are thanked for sharing their expertise and practical knowledge of Codex. The WHO Secretariat of the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund is recognised for their support in organizing travel and logistics for 14 delegates supported by the CTF.

3. Opening Remarks

Delegates were welcomed by Ms. Monika Rzepecka, Chief Inspector of the Agriculture and Food Quality Inspection. Ms. Rzepecka thanked all present, and acknowledged the support of the Government of Switzerland and success of the partnership between both countries in preparing for this Seminar. In addition, reference was made to the Regional training course held in Warsaw in October 2007 which was attended by 42 participants from 22 countries.

Ms. Awilo Ochieng Pernet welcomed the participants on behalf of the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health, Switzerland, and extended appreciation to the Government of Poland and thanked them for their efforts in the successful organization of this Regional Workshop as well as the forthcoming 26th Session of CCEURO.

Ms. Hilde Kruse, Regional Advisor on Food Safety for WHO-EURO welcomed the participants on behalf of WHO and thanked the Government of Poland for hosting the meeting, the Government of Switzerland for coordinating CCEURO and FAO for excellent collaboration on Codex matters. She also informed about funding by Codex Trust Fund to this particular workshop.

Finally, Ms. Mary Kenny welcomed delegates on behalf of the Food Quality and Standards Service of FAO, thanked the Governments of Poland and Switzerland for their strong support and in-depth collaboration which has been strengthened over the years – during the Swiss mandate as Coordinator of the CCEURO.

4. Issues discussed during the Regional Workshop

The objective of the one-day Workshop was to provide information on the purpose and priority procedures of Codex Alimentarius Commission and to orientate delegates for the subsequent 26th Session of CCEURO. With this in mind, the following topics were included on the Agenda:

The Agenda for the workshop is attached as Annex 2.

- **Codex Alimentarius Commission** – an introductory presentation setting out the structure of Codex, its function and main output, the role of Codex standards in international trade and relationship with the WTO Agreement.
- **Scope and range of Codex Standards – how to access them** – a demonstration on the range of Codex standards and information available on the Codex website, available FAO/WHO manuals and e-learning course on Codex, a description of CD ROMs and the thematic publications available from the Codex Secretariat e.g. Food Labelling, Animal Food Production, Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems.
- **Procedures for the elaboration of Codex Standards** - Explained the criteria for starting new work in Codex, importance of the project document, overview of 8-step and 5-step standard development, relevance of Codex working groups, information on the handling of Codex documentation at the Swedish Codex Contact Point.
- **A Case Study on the Revision of the Codex Standard for Natural Mineral Waters** – the process followed and content of discussions which took place during the recent revision of the Codex Standard for NMW. This case study successfully demonstrated a number of Codex procedures and processes, such as the revision and reason why the Standard was revised, reactivation of CCNMW which had previously been adjourned *sine die*, the use of the accelerated step procedure as the revised Standard had been proposed for adoption by the Commission at Steps 5/8, the need for endorsement of the Draft revised Standard (proposed by CCNMW), by the Codex Committee for Food Labelling, and Codex Committee for Contaminants – and related to this the importance of information sharing between different delegates from countries attending different Codex sessions.
- **Overview of the CCEURO Agenda** – an outline of the main agenda items and associated working papers. Participants were reminded that CCEURO has been requested to consider a number of issues, including the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan (2008 – 2013) and the participation of developing countries in Codex. An agenda item on nutritional issues in the region was also noted. Items which were going to be proposed for consideration under “Agenda Item 8: Other Business and future work” were the Code of Ethics, GM labelling and a methods of analysis database for detecting GM material.
- Finally, the presenter noted that Switzerland will complete its term in July 2009 as regional coordinator and therefore a new coordinator will be elected during the 26th session. Delegates were reminded that the UK had commenced its four-year period as geographical representative in 2007. Reference was also made to some broader issues

under discussion within Codex – the use of private standards, GM labelling, consensus, efficiency within Codex, etc.

- **Developing national positions – the Polish Experience-** outlined the need to prioritise topics on which to send written comments, need to have a national consultation on the topic, a suggested format for sending written comments to the Codex Secretariat, and some ideas on effective national consultation were shared.
- **Importance of Codex to European Community, and the EC as a member of Codex** – history to the membership of EC to Codex, means to coordinate EC position and level of consultation among member states, explanation of the designation of competence.
- **FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund** – the origin and purpose of CTF were addressed, allocation of countries to groupings, deadline for applications for 2009 Codex meetings was recalled, overview of donor support, and need to ensure that delegates travelling to Codex meetings are adequately prepared and conduct effective de-briefings to their office.

5. Conclusions

The workshop was successful in information exchange and provided information on a range of different topics.

Participants to the workshop were reminded that CCEURO is a general committee coordinating issues of relevance to the region and it also replies to issues as requested by the CAC. Therefore, participants were requested to keep in mind that where there is already a mechanism within Codex to discuss certain issues, then it should be maintained, the example provided was Consensus which will be discussed in detail at CCGP.

6. Feedback and Evaluation

Some key points raised in the workshop evaluation – to be considered when planning future capacity building activities and pre-Codex workshops in the region.

General points

- Need for more interactivity and more practical experiences
- Include presentations from participants
- More information in Russian language

Strengthening national codex programmes

- Help in establishing national Codex Contact Points, Codex Committees and programmes for Codex.
- Practical guidance on how to get greater national inputs to Codex work – from all stakeholders, consumers, industry, etc.
- Efforts to enhance more awareness of public, consumers and industry on Codex

- To organise a workshop only for Codex Contact Points, which will allow the exchange of information and views on national Codex activities, how to organise national Codex work and to listen to best practices from CCPs where the national Codex office is better organised.

Information topics

- Select specific topics and give more in-depth explanation – e.g. food additives
- Information on risk assessment bodies that provide scientific advice to Codex
- Case Studies on the preparation of comments within the EU
- More use of real examples, e.g. the Case Study on NMW and the EC session
- Experience of EC on most difficult issues and developing positions on them
- More information on creating EC position
- Role of CCEXEC in the Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Greater information on preparing national positions, and ensuring comments are effective, relevant and suitable, how to ensure your comments are valid.
- More examples on how Codex works in other countries
- More information on electronic working group participation
- More information on health hazards and measures of protection.
- Importance of Codex standards from legal viewpoint
- More information on selected topics from Procedural manual

Regional communication

- Increase communication between countries in the region
- Increase communication between EU and non-EU member countries
- Encouragement of mentoring for CTF beneficiaries
- Stronger linkage between FAO and WHO representatives in countries and other official authorities to assist capacity building

Annex 1

**FAO/WHO Regional Workshop on the Codex Alimentarius
6th October, 2008
Warsaw, Poland**

List of participants

L.p	Country	Delegates
1.	Armenia	Ms Iren Melkonyan Senior Specialist in Foreign Relations and Marketing, Ministry of Agriculture, Codex Contact Point III Government Building, Republic Square, 0010 Yerevan, Armenia
2.	Armenia	Ms Susanna Minasyan Head of Legal Assurance and Information Department of the Food safety and veterinary state inspectorate Ministry of Agriculture
3.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr Sejad Mackic Director, Food Safety Agency of Bosnia & Herzegovina Dr. Ante Starcevic B.B., 88000 Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina
4.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr Dzemil Hajric Head of Department Food Safety Agency
5.	Bulgaria	Ms Silviya Zdrakova Bakardzhieva Junior Legal Adviser, Quality and Safety of Food Directorate Ministry of Agriculture and Food
L.p	Country	Delegates
6.	Bulgaria	Ms Petinka Dimitrova Chief Expert, Directorate Public Health Ministry of Health
7.	Czech Republic	Ms Lenka Rubesová National Codex Contact Point Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic
8.	Czech Republic	Ms Dana Trisková Head of subdepartment Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic
9.	Czech Republic	Mr David Zima Ministry of Agriculture of Czech Republic
10.	Estonia	Ms Elsa Peipman Chief Specialist of the Food Safety Bureau Food and Veterinary Department

11.	Georgia	Mr Tengiz Kalandadze Head of Food Safety and Quality Supervision Division National Service of Food Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection
L.p	Country	Delegates
12.	Georgia	Ms Manana Beruchashvili Deputy Director General of National Center of Disease Control and Public Health
13.	Moldova	Mr Vasile Dogotari Legal Consultant Division for Harmonization of the Sanitary Veterinary Legislation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry
14.	Poland	Ms Dorota Kozłowska Polish Federation of Food Industry
15.	Poland	Ms Edyta Wolnicka Polish Chamber of Commerce „Bottling Industry”
16.	Poland	Ms Marta Dziubiak Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
17.	Poland	Ms Monika Plewa PZH- National Institute of Public Health – National Institute of Hygiene
L.p	Country	Delegates
18.	Poland	Ms Maria Piekarska PZH-National Institute of Public Health – National Institute of Hygiene
19.	Poland	Ms Ewa Ledzion PZH- National Institute of Public Health – National Institute of Hygiene
20.	Poland	Mr Łukasz Mąka PZH- National Institute of Public Health – National Institute of Hygiene
21.	Poland	Ms Martyna Mirkowska PZH- National Institute of Public Health – National Institute of Hygiene
22.	Poland	Ms Halina Gawarska PZH- National Institute of Public Health – National Institute of Hygiene
23.	Poland	Mr Andrzej Starski PZH- National Institute of Public Health – National Institute of Hygiene

24.	Poland	Ms Emilia Staniszewska Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
L.p	Country	Delegates
25.	Poland	Ms Marzena Chacińska Main Inspectorate of Agricultural and Food Quality
26.	Poland	Ms Magdalena Żelazna Main Inspectorate of Agricultural and Food Quality
27.	Poland	Ms Małgorzata Klak Main Inspectorate of Agricultural and Food Quality
28.	Poland	Ms Marta Sobieraj Main Inspectorate of Agricultural and Food Quality
29.	Poland	Ms Hanna Kunachowicz National Food and Nutrition Institute
30.	Poland	Mr Albert Jurek Head of Unit of Food Safety and Hygiene Department of Food Safety and Veterinary
L.p	Country	Delegates
31.	Poland	Magdalena Bartosińska Specialist in Food Safety and Veterinary Matters Department of Food Safety and Veterinary
32.	Poland	Ms Bożena Pławka Specialist in analysis of food Department of Agriculture Markets Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
33.	Romania	Ms Maria-Mihaela Armanu Ministry of Public Health of Romania
34.	Serbia	Mr Ivan Stankovic Professor of Bromatology and Food Safety Faculty of Pharmacy University of Belgrade
35.	Serbia	Mr Slobodan Sibalic Head of Department Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Veterinary Directorate
36.	Slovak Republic	Ms Katarína Janeková State Advisor

		Ministry of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic
L.p	Country	Delegates
37.	Sweden	Ms Eva Rolfsdotter Lönberg Codex Coordinator National Food Administration
38.	Switzerland	Ms Awilo Ochieng Pernet Codex Alimentarius, International Food Safety and Nutrition Issues
39.	Turkey	Ms Nurserem Budak Division Manager
40.	United Kingdom	Mr Bill Knock Head of EU and International Strategy Food Standards Agency
41.	Codex Secretariat	Mr Jeronimas Maskeliunas Food Standards Officer
L.p	Country	Delegates
42.	Codex Secretariat	Mr Tom Heilandt Senior Food Standards Officer
43.	FAO	Ms Mary Kenny Nutrition Officer Food Quality and Standards Service
44.	FAO	Mr Milan Kovac FAO Regional Office for Europe, Budapest
45.	WHO	Ms Hilde Kruse Regional Adviser for Food Safety WHO Regional Office for Europe
47.	European Community	Ms Eva Maria Zamora Escribano European Commission Health and Consume Protection Directorate-General (SANCO)
48.	European Commission	Ms Bernadette Klink-Khchan DG SANCO
L.p	Country	Delegates
49.	European Commission	Mr Risto Holma DG SANCO



AGENDA

**FAO/WHO Regional Workshop on the Codex Alimentarius
6th October, 2008
Warsaw, Poland
(Novotel Warszawa Centrum)**

08:30 – 09:00 Registration of participants

09:00 – 09:15 Opening

Session 1: Introduction to Codex

09:15 – 10:00 Codex Alimentarius Commission: what it is and how it works –
Jeronimas Maskeliunas, Codex Secretariat

10:00 – 10:30 Scope and range of Codex standards – how to access them –
Mary Kenny, FAO

10:30 – 10:50 COFFEE BREAK

Session 2: How does Codex work?

10:50 – 11:35 Procedures for the elaboration of Codex standards
Eva Lönnberg, Sweden

11:35 – 12:30 Case study on the revision of the Codex Standard for Natural
Mineral Waters - ***Awilo Ochieng Pernet, Chairperson
CCNMW, Switzerland***

12:30 – 14:00 LUNCH BREAK

Session 3: Issues for the CCEURO Region

14:00 – 14:30 Overview of the Agenda for the 26th session of the CCEURO
Bill Knock, United Kingdom

14:30 – 15:00 Experience in developing national positions, including those
for CCEURO – ***Marta Sobieraj, Polish Codex Contact Point***

15:00 – 15:30 Importance of Codex to European Countries, the European
Community as a member of Codex - ***Eva Zamora Escribano,
European Commission***

15:30 – 16:00 Support and function of the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund –
Hilde Kruse, WHO

16:00 – 16:15 Training Seminar Evaluation

16:15 – 16:30 Closing and Presentation of Certificates