



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

**CODEX
ALIMENTARIUS**
INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS

Codex@60

Past, present and future

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Secretary of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission



Long before Codex ...

- Keeping food safe and ensuring fairness when trading it have been long-standing preoccupations of humanity
- The first “food standards” may date to 12000BC
- The ancient Greek and Roman civilizations had elaborate systems to standardize food and keep it



In the 19th
century things
accelerated ...

- As food trade and technology advanced more organized standards and codes were needed:
 - IDF (1863) – 120 this year!!!
 - Codex Alimentarius Austriacus (1891)
 - OIE (now WOAH) and OIV (1924)
 - Joint FAO/WHO Conference on Food Standards and JECFA (1956)
 - Codex Alimentarius Europaeus (1958)





Celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission



The Parents

Food and Agriculture Organization of
the United Nations (FAO) (1945)

World Health Organization (WHO)
(1948)

The Birth

- 1961: FAO Conference endorses the statutes of the Codex Alimentarius Commission
- 1962: 1st FAO/WHO Conference on Food standards
- 1963: WHA endorses the statutes of Codex
- **1963: First Session of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)**





Growing up and maturing

- 1991: 2nd FAO/WHO Conference on Food Standards
- 1995: WTO SPS and TBT Agreements
- 2002/3: Joint FAO/WHO evaluation of Codex



- 2003-2012: Integration of risk analysis into the work of Codex
- 2018: World Food Safety Day established by UN General Assembly
- 2022: Inauguration of the the ACT project



Food is a commodity like no other

- Available/affordable
- Safe
- Nutritious
- Tasty
- Sustainably produced
- Fair income for producers





Food Safety: The Global gap per year

- 420,000 Deaths
- 143,000 children < 5 years
- 600,000,000 Illnesses
- 110,000,000,000 US\$
Lost productivity



Fair practices in
the food trade:
Global
opportunities
per year

1,500,000,000,000 US\$
Global Food Trade



CODEX: A tool to set international food standards in an open, inclusive international forum

Protect consumer health

Ensure fair practices in food trade

Coordinate ALL food standards work of IGO and NGO

Publish and update the Codex Alimentarius

Since 1963



Facts

- 188+1 Members
- 237 Observers (UN, IGO, NGO)
- 100% Member driven (FAO and WHO DGs can give input)
- Harmonizing rules
- Food safety texts based on science / risk analysis
- Voluntary BUT Reference in WTO-SPS (TBT)





World Health Organization

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS
INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS



53RD

SESSION OF THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON
FOOD ADDITIVES
HONG KONG, CHINA
27-31 MARCH 2023



What does «based on science» mean?



Structure

Codex Alimentarius Commission

Executive Committee

Horizontal / General Committees

General Principles (France)	Food Labelling (Canada)
Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (Australia)	Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (United States)
Food Additives (China)	Pesticide Residues (China)
Contaminants in Foods (Netherlands)	Food Hygiene (United States)
Methods of Analysis and Sampling (Hungary)	Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (Germany)

Vertical / Commodity Committees

Active	Adjourned <i>sine die</i>
Fats and Oils (Malaysia)	Cocoa Products and Chocolate (Switzerland)
Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (Mexico)	Meat Hygiene (New Zealand)
Spices and Culinary Herbs (India)	Natural Mineral Waters (Switzerland)
Fish and Fishery Products (Norway)	Vegetable Proteins (Canada)
Cereals, Pulses and Legumes (United States)	Cereals, Pulses and Legumes (United States)
Processed Fruits and Vegetables (United States)	Milk and Milk Products (New Zealand)
	Sugars (Colombia)

Ad-hoc Intergovernmental Task Forces

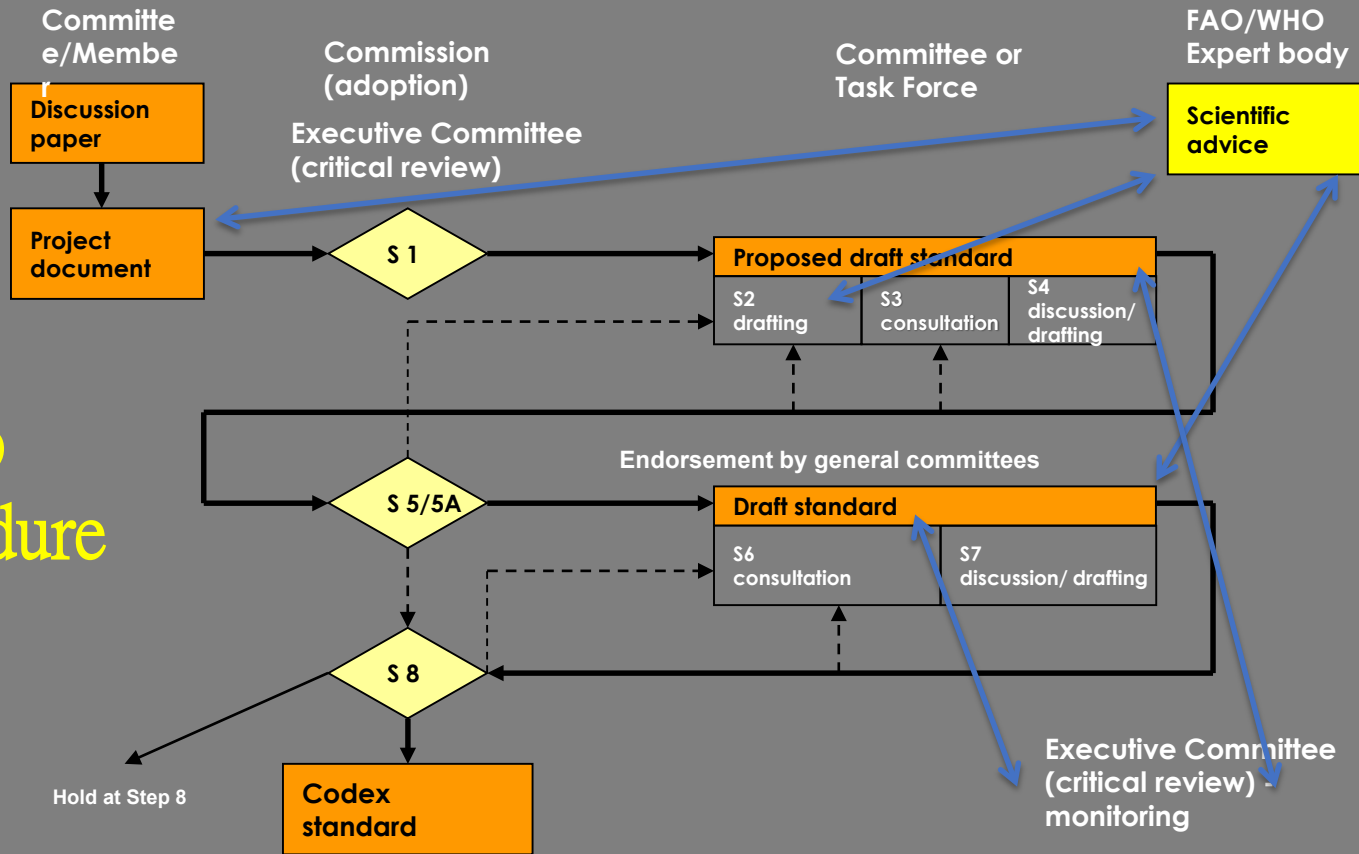
Active	
Dissolved	
Antimicrobial Resistance (Republic of Korea)	
Processing and Handling of Quick Frozen Foods (Thailand)	Animal Feeding (Switzerland)
Fruit Juices (Brazil)	Foods Derived from Biotechnology (Japan)

FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committees

12 Africa (Uganda)	Introduction to Codex	Asia (China)	Europe (Kazakhstan)	Latin America and the Caribbean (Ecuador)	North America and South West Pacific (Fiji)	16 Near East (Saudi Arabia)
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8-Step Procedure



Achievements

Commodity standards 221

Guidelines 78

Codes of practice 52



Contaminants ML 106


Additives ML 4130

Pesticide residues MRL 5231

Veterinary drugs residues MRL
623



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Codex and the SDGs
 How participation in Codex Alimentarius supports the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

- 1: No poverty
- 2: Zero hunger (2.1.1 and 2.1.2)
- 3: Good health and well being (3.2.1 and 3.2.2)
- 8: Decent work and economic growth
- 12: Food waste and management of chemicals
- 17: Partnerships for the SDGs

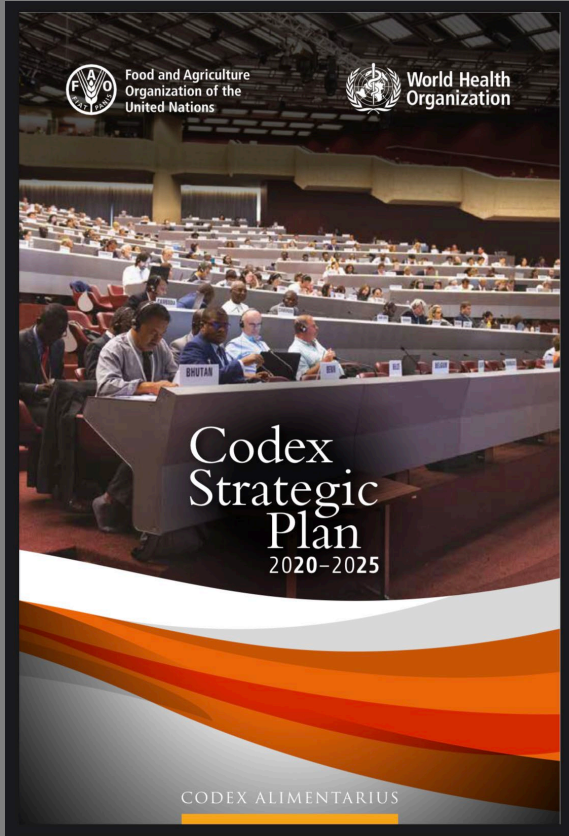


7 June
Every year

#WorldFoodSafetyDay

Food safety is everyone's business





Goal 1 - **Address** current, emerging and critical issues

Goal 2 - **Develop standards** based on science and risk analysis principles

Goal 3 - **Increase impact** through the recognition and use of Codex standards

Goal 4 - **Facilitate the participation** of all Codex members throughout the standard setting process

Goal 5 - **Enhance work management systems** and practices that support the efficient and effective achievement of all strategic plan goals



Vision

Codex Strategic Plan 2020–2025

“Where the world comes together (Goal 4) to create food safety and quality standards (Goal 1, 2, 5) to protect everyone everywhere (Goal 3)”



1963-
2019

2022-
...

2020-
2021...

The power of
cooperation & relationships, Inclusiveness, transparency
& consensus-building transcends from physical to virtual to hybrid



Drivers for change

- Pandemic(s)
- Climate change
- Innovations in food science and technology
- Consumer concerns and behavior
- New food sources and production systems
- Food systems transformation - sustainability



**There are reasonable,
legitimate concerns**

About our food systems,
the way we treat
animals, nutritionism,
commercial misleading
information...

BUT ...





We are all actors in the food system

- Adjusted for inflation, bacon is cheaper now than in 1920 (in the US)
- Farmers and food producers need to make a profit.
- We need to work together on what a better food system should look like
 - It will have a price
 - **Food systems are everyone's business!**
 - **Food standards have a role to play in food systems transformation**



Components of the future

- Continued innovation – not only by crisis
- Learn, adapt and invent and ask questions
- Put the scientific method at the centre of the stage
- Expand use of sciences beyond natural science
- Food is more than nutrition - health is more than the absence of disease
- Standards are needed to achieve anything
- Controversial issues need constructive and creative debates
- Measure use(fulness) of our standards



China is vital for CODEX

- Over the last 20 years China has become a leader in food safety
- Coordinator for Asia
- Host of two major Codex Committees



- Food safety and quality are important for China
- Food trade is important for China
- International connections are important for China
- Influencing the international agenda is important for China



食物環境生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department



...and participation in Codex
is vital for China



codexalimentarius.org
fao.org/world-food-safety-day
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