



## IFT CODEX ALIMENTARIUS NEWSLETTER – Summer 2023

### *CODEX Highlights:*

- CODEX Activities Status Update – substantial amount of Codex work occurred over the past few months
- Summaries and report links on CODEX Committee activities on Food Additives (CCFA), Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS), Contaminants in Food (CCCF) and Pesticide Residues (CCPR) and IFT comments submitted on these Codex Committees.
- Opportunities to engage with IFT on Codex Activities
- Upcoming CODEX activities of interest
- CODEX information web links

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As a global organization committed to advancing the science of food and its application across the global food system, the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) proactively serves as an objective voice in public dialogue on food and nutrition-related issues to advocate for science-based outcomes. IFT's engagement with CODEX Alimentarius continues to have a strong voice in the global discussion within CODEX on global food standards, codes of practice, guidelines and other consumer health and international food trade issues.

IFT is committed to communicating to our members information about how the activities of CODEX Alimentarius may impact the global food industry and provide opportunities for interested and experienced IFT members to engage in CODEX.

### **CODEX Activities Status Update**

The **Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA53)** was held March 27-31, 2023 in-person in Hong Kong, China. The following are selected key highlights from the meeting.

- The WHO JECFA secretariat informed CCFA53 of the following report: Health Effects of non-sugar sweeteners and the WHO global strategy for Food Safety. The report highlighted that non-sugar sweeteners did not appear to assist in weight loss reduction or a reduction in cardiovascular issues.
- JECFA evaluated the safety of benzoic acid and salts and derivatives – the previous Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) of 0 – 5mg/kg was replaced by CCFA with a broader ADI of 0 – 20mg/kg based on the new scientific data, allowing for increased use of these preservative agents.
- IFT submitted two Conference Room Documents (CRD's) on the topics of **the application of food additive provisions “as consumed”** and on how **CCFA shall base its risk management recommendations to the CAC on JECFA's risk assessments, including safety assessments, of food additives**. The full text of these documents can be found at the link [here](#).
- Significant process was made on some issues that have been with CCFA through several sessions:
  - Alignment on a path for adoption of xanthan gum use in juices
  - Adoption of provisions for sweeteners in a number of food categories with the newly aligned alternative to the previously used Note 161
  - Alignment on a footnote for use of trisodium citrate in milk as a stabilizer.
  - Alignment on a footnote for wine additives that allows progression of those provisions forward in Codex.

- The committee raised questions around the use of carotenoids (INS 160) as colors in many food categories. Additional data on use levels has been requested to support additional exposure assessments.
- A discussion paper on the mapping of food categories for the FOODEX2 database was held – the work originated from a JECFA89 request. FoodEx was developed by the EU to classify food and describe food. It has been used by the FAO and WHO to harmonize food categories for dietary exposure assessment and will be tested by JECFA over the next 1-2 years.
- A summary of CCFA53 by the IFT team that observed it can be found at the link [here](#).
- Additionally, the complete 259 page Codex report on CCFA53 can be found at the link [here](#).

The **Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF16)** was held April 9-13 and 24, 2023 in-person in Utrecht, Netherlands. The following are selected key highlights from the meeting.

- In advance of the plenary session for CCCF16, working groups were held to make technical progress on the items regarding guidance for conducting data analysis, and new discussions on addressing emerging issues. The IFT delegation endorsed the working group proposal to establish a workstream on how CCCF could add structure to address emerging issues, leveraging knowledge across sectors, from member and observer organizations.
- IFT submitted comments to promote the scientific basis for standards and practices on two items: the Code of Practice to reduce mycotoxins in cassava, and on aflatoxins in spices, items 6 and 9 on the CCCF16 agenda. IFT actively engaged during CCCF16 as a leading observer voice on the cassava code of practice. The Committee took into account the IFT views with text modifications that were made. The IFT comments on these two topics can be found at the link [here](#).
- Another important topic was the setting of Maximum Levels (ML's) for sugars and RTE infant foods. For lead in soft, brown, raw sugars, a single level of 0.15 mg/kg was agreed. For ready-to-eat (RTE) infant food, the single maximum level of 0.02mg/kg was aligned.
- CCCF16 agreed to take forward new work on a code of practice for the prevention and reduction of cadmium contamination in foods. This follows on from the code of practice for prevention and reduction of cadmium in cocoa, agreed at CCCF15. The US is to prepare a discussion paper for CCCF17.
- A summary of CCCF16 from the IFT team can be found at the link [here](#).
- The complete 46-page CCCF16 report from Codex is available for review at the link [here](#).

The **Codex Committee on Food Labeling (CCFL47)** was held in-person on May 15 – 19, 2023 in Gatineau (Ottawa), Canada. The following are selected key highlights from the meeting.

- In advance of the meeting, the working group on Allergen Labeling met.
- The committee discussed E-Commerce labeling of small packages at length and concluded that an expiration/best use by date should be encouraged to be included on all e-commerce.
- IFT submitted comments in a Conference Room Document to the meeting on the topic of revisions to the standard on Allergen Labeling. Specifically, IFT addressed section 4.2.1.5 of the proposed revisions and recommended it's removal as a potential impediment to global harmonization on the topic. IFT also commented on the continued inclusion of oats as a gluten containing allergen (similar to wheat), on the topic of sulphites, and on the exemptions for foods like highly refined soybean oil from label declarations. IFT also commented on the topic of the use of Precautionary Allergen Labeling (PAL). The complete IFT comments can be found at the link [here](#).

- A major initial discussion on a new topic of Sustainability Labeling of food products was conducted. The conclusion was to establish a working group chaired by New Zealand and co-chaired by Costa Rica, EU and US to further develop approaches to standards development on the topic.
- A summary of CCFL47 from the IFT team can be found at the link [here](#).
- The complete 39-page CCFL47 report from Codex is available for review at the link [here](#).

The **Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Certification Systems (CCFICS26)** was held May 1-5, 2023 virtually and in-person in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia. The following are key topics discussed at the meeting.

- **Food Fraud:** Substantial debate occurred on the draft guidance on Food Fraud and was unable to reach consensus on definitions and geographic indicators. The discussion concluded with directions to re-draft the guidance with a continuation of the working group in order to:
  - prepare revised draft guidelines on the prevention and control of food fraud, taking into account all discussions and the comments (including text found in square brackets) submitted at CCFICS26, for consideration at CCFICS27.
  - to submit the report of the working group at least three months in advance of the next session
  - to hold a potential physical working group session immediately prior to the next CCFICS session and/or a virtual intersessional meeting, to address any outstanding issues.
- **Use of Remote Audit Verification in Regulatory Frameworks:** After substantial discussion and some editing, CCFICS26 agreed to forward the proposed draft “Principles and Guidelines on the Use of Remote Audit and Inspection in Regulatory Frameworks” to CAC46 for adoption at Step 5/8.
- **Food Traceability:** The United States of America and the United Kingdom as working group co-chairs introduced a project report highlighting identified gaps in the current Food Traceability Codex Standard (CXG 60-2006) as outlined in document CX/FICS 23/26/8. CCFICS26 agreed to forward the project document on the revision and updating of the Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification Systems (CXG 60-2006) to CAC46 for approval as new work to be done. They also agreed to initiate a full working group of interested country members and observers to prepare a proposed draft revision of the Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification Systems for CCFICS27 to circulate 3 months prior to the CCFICS27 meeting date.
- A summary of the project report on Food Traceability can be found at the link [here](#).
- The complete 45-page CCFICS26 report can be found at the link [here](#).

The **Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR54)** was held June 26 – July 1, 2023 in-person in Beijing, China. The following are key topics discussed at the meeting.

- **Human Microbiome Impacts:** The JMPR Secretariat reported that JECFA had been assessing residues of veterinary drugs for their possible impact on the human microbiome for almost 20 years, specifically for two endpoints of concern: Disruption of the bacterial colonization barrier and increase in bacterial resistance. While the initial focus of JECFA was on antibiotics, it was now recognized that other molecules could have detrimental effects regarding these endpoints of concern, and JECFA now systematically assesses the possible need for a microbiological Acceptable Daily Intake (mADI) and a microbiological

Acute Reference Dose (mARfD) for all veterinary drugs. Over the last decade, evidence has accumulated that a wide range of compounds can affect the human microbiome, including pesticides. JMPR recommended that JMPR convene a microbiome expert working group to consider the above points with a view to developing guidance for discussion and eventual adoption by JMPR.

- **Maximum Residue Limits(MRL's):** CCPR agreed to forward 30 MRLs to the CAC for adoption at Step 5/8 at the upcoming November 2023 meeting. Additionally, the EU proposed to include environmental issues in future work on MRL's. The USA indicated that consideration of global environmental issues is beyond the mandate of CCPR, as its focus is on protection of consumer health related to food and facilitation of global food trade and requested clarification on the scope of CCPR from the Codex Secretariat. The Codex Secretariat reiterated the comments made at CCPR53 and recalled that environmental issues are outside the scope of CCPR and Codex and that these questions should rather be addressed in the broader context of the ongoing discussions on the Future of Codex in CAC and CCEXEC.
- **Management of Unsupported Compounds without Public Health Concern:** IFT had provided an intervention on this topic in writing for CCPR53 advocating for a means to continue use of these compounds for members while gathering data during an era of supply chains issues. The new approach proposed by the EWG involved a multi-pronged approach to providing data for risk assessments that would help narrow that gap between developing and developed countries usage. CCPR54 agreed to move forward with this approach, but will keep it as an internal CCPR mechanism and therefore will not seek to codify it with CAC47.
- An IFT summary of the CCPR54 meeting is available at the link [here](#). The complete 204-page CCPR54 report is available at the link [here](#).

## OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE WITH IFT ACTIVITIES ON CODEX WORK

IFT has revised its guidelines in 2023 for IFT member engagement on Codex Teams, updating qualifications needed for Codex Team Members and expanding roles to include an Associate Codex Team Member role for those interested, but with minimal experience or educational background. The revised guidelines can be found at the link [here](#). If you have interest in participating with IFT Codex activities in 2024, please contact the IFT Codex Coordinator, Steve Havlik at [SHavlik@ift.org](mailto:SHavlik@ift.org).

## Upcoming CODEX Activities of Interest - (All being held in-person)

CODEX Committee	Meeting Dates	Some Key Topics Being Discussed
Codex Executive Committee (CCEXEC 85)	November 20-24, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blueprint on the Future of Codex – Model for Future Codex Work and recommendations to CAC46</li> <li>• Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031</li> <li>• Review of International Non-Governmental Organizations with Observer Status (i.e., IFT)</li> </ul>
Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC 46)	November 27 – December 2, 2023; FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission</li> <li>• Work of Codex Committees (adoption, new work, revocation, discontinuation, and</li> </ul>

		<p>amendments to Codex texts proposed by the Committee).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application of the Statements of Principle concerning the role of science in the Codex decision-making process and the extent to which other factors are taken into account.</li> <li>• New Food Sources and Production Systems</li> </ul>
Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH)	March 11-15, 2024; Nairobi, Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD</li> </ul>
Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF)	April 15 – 19, 2024; Location TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of work on Cadmium in foods discussion paper</li> </ul>
Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)	April 22- 26, 2024; Location TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on JECFA use of FoodEx Database pilot evaluation</li> <li>• New additive reviews</li> </ul>
Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR)	June 3 – 8, 2024; China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Microbiome impacts of Pesticide Residues</li> <li>• Updates to Pesticide Max. Residue Limits</li> </ul>
Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection & Certification Systems (CCFICS)	September 16-20, 2024; Cairns, Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Traceability</li> <li>• Food Fraud</li> </ul>
Codex Committee on Nutrition & Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)	October 2 -6, 2024; Dresden, Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD</li> </ul>
Codex Committee on Food Labeling (CCFL)	October 28 – November 1, 2024; TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Allergens</li> <li>• Sustainability Labeling</li> </ul>

## CODEX Information Web Links

General information about CODEX can be found at: [Home | CODEXALIMENTARIUS FAO-WHO](#)

CODEX Global Standards are available at: [Standards | CODEXALIMENTARIUS FAO-WHO](#)

CODEX Global Codes of Practice are available at: [Codes of Practice | CODEXALIMENTARIUS FAO-WHO](#)

CODEX Global Guidelines are available at: [Guidelines | CODEXALIMENTARIUS FAO-WHO](#)

CODEX On-line Databases are available at: [Codex online databases | CODEXALIMENTARIUS FAO-WHO](#)

CODEX List of Specifications for Food Additives is available at: [https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/sh-proxy/en/?lnk=1&url=https%253A%252F%252Fworkspace.fao.org%252Fsites%252Fcodex%252Fstandards%252FCXS%2B192-1995%252FCXS\\_192e.pdf](https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/sh-proxy/en/?lnk=1&url=https%253A%252F%252Fworkspace.fao.org%252Fsites%252Fcodex%252Fstandards%252FCXS%2B192-1995%252FCXS_192e.pdf)

## IFT CODEX Resources

[International Resources - IFT.org](#)