



19 October 2020

(20-7189)

Page: 1/2

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (CODEX)

The following communication, received on 16 October 2020, is being circulated at the request of the Codex secretariat.

1 CODEX MEETINGS HELD SINCE THE LAST SESSION OF THE SPS COMMITTEE (25-26 JUNE 2020)

1.1. **79th Session of the Executive Committee** (CCEXEC79) was the first formal Codex meeting held online. It took place from 13 to 20 July 2020 and focused on the critical review of Codex work aimed at addressing proposals for new work and monitoring the progress of standards development in the Codex Step Procedure with a view to making recommendations for consideration by the Codex Alimentarius Commission related to the adoption of standards and approval of new work. CCEXEC79 also considered the strategic challenges and opportunities of Codex due to the COVID-19 pandemic and agreed to establish a Sub-Committee of the CCEXEC to: examine the impact of the pandemic on Codex work management; advise the Commission and its subsidiary bodies on actions/initiatives to advance its work program of 2020/2021 and build resilience using modern tools and approaches consistent with Codex core values; ensure that Codex was well placed to deal with similar events in the future; and report back on their findings to CCEXEC80 (2021). The report of CCEXEC79 can be downloaded from the Codex [webpage](#).

1.2. **43rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission** (CAC43) was held online after going through an endorsement process in which over 140 members agreed with its way of working. CAC43 met on 24-26 September, 12 October (and will subsequently meet on 19 October and 5 and/or 6 November 2020) and focused its work on adoption of Codex standards and approval of new work. CAC43 adopted several food safety texts such as the Code of Practice on Food Allergen Management for Food Business Operators and the revision of the General Principles of Food Hygiene and its HACCP Annex; approved new work such as the priority lists of pesticides for evaluation by the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting for Pesticide Residues (JMPPR) to ensure workflow between the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) and JMPPR, the development of Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production, etc.; and advanced work to the next step in the Codex Step Procedure for additional comments and consideration/finalization at the relevant upcoming Codex meetings such as the Guidance for the Management of Biological Foodborne Outbreaks and the revision of the Code of Practice to Contain Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance. The next session of the Ad hoc Codex Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance will consider this Code of Practice focusing on critical issues and also work on the Guidelines for the Monitoring and Surveillance of Foodborne AMR with a view to their finalization. The report of CAC43 can be downloaded from the Codex [webpage](#).¹

1.3. The Codex secretariat will provide an update on the continuity of Codex work in 2020-2021 based on the discussion that will take place in the virtual plenary meeting of CAC43 scheduled for 19 October 2020. The discussion will be based on the advice of the Codex secretariat in consultation

¹ The report of CAC43 will be available following adoption of the report of its Session on 5/6 November 2020.

with FAO and WHO legal departments and the interim report of the CCEXEC Sub-Committee on the guidance for management of Codex work amidst worldwide crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

2 CODEX WORK AND THE PANDEMIC

2.1. The Codex secretariat continues to work closely with the host country secretariats and chairpersons of relevant Codex committees as well as the lead countries of electronic working groups (EWGs) established under different Codex committees to ensure work continuity while maintaining the Codex principles of inclusiveness and transparency. Regular updates on the status of work of these Committees are published on their dedicated webpages on the [Codex website](#). In addition, the Secretariat continues the consultation with host country secretariats and chairpersons of committees for the scheduling of Codex meetings in 2021 and ongoing work in EWGs during 2020-2021.

2.2. For specific questions on the status of work in Codex committees of interest to SPS delegates please check the dedicated webpages or send an email to codex@fao.org.
