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ANALYSIS OF AGENDA ITEMS IN PREPARATION FOR THE 6th SESSION OF THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON SPICES AND CULINARY HERBS

26th – 30th SEPTEMBER and 3rd OCTOBER 2022 - Virtual Meeting

AGENDA ITEM 7.2

UPDATE TO THE TEMPLATE FOR THE SPICES AND CULINARY HERBS STANDARDS

Objectives

This document offers a review and analysis of the agenda items planned for discussion at the 6th session of the **Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH)**, scheduled to take place virtually September 26th – 30th and October 3rd, 2022. This document is intended for possible use by the Codex communities of practice, promoted by [GForSS](#) and [PARERA](#), as part of their contribution to enhancing awareness and supporting effective participation in international food standard setting meetings (Codex meetings) by representatives from members and observers.

The analysis provided in this document offers a factual review of agenda items, their background and a discussion of some considerations. This analysis is indicative in nature and does not represent an official position of the organizations mentioned above ([PARERA](#) and [GForSS](#)), their membership or their management. It provides a synthesis and analysis of the work currently under discussion by the CCSCH, which may be useful for delegations from Arab countries to prepare their positions taking into account the needs and specificity of the region and the potential impact of the proposed food standards.

This analysis is prepared as part of the **Codex Initiative for the Arab Region: Arab Codex Initiative**, implemented by [PARERA](#) and [GForSS](#), hosted and coordinated by the [Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization \(AIDSMO\)](#) and funded by the US Codex Office, US Department of Agriculture.

**It is important to note that experts – members of the Arab Expert Working Group – do not represent the organizations and / or jurisdictions to which they are affiliated. The selection and participation in the Arab Expert Working Group proceedings is based on each expert's own credentials and experience, which should not be misconstrued as the country's / delegation's / organization's position to which they belong.*

The focus of the analysis of **agenda item 7.2 of CCSCH6**, relates to the update of the template adopted by **CCSCH to establish its standards**.

Agenda Item 7.2: Update to the Template for the Spices and Culinary Herbs Standards.

Document

CX/ SCH 22/6/10

Recommendations formulated by the EWG chaired by the United States of America

In its 6th session, CCSCH is invited to:

consider the revised SCH standard layout as presented in Appendix I to the working document CX/SCH 22/6/10.

Background

At CCSCH2 (2015), 116 named spices and culinary herbs were identified and placed into 8 groups based on the plant part they are derived from. It was noted also that it would be difficult for CCSCH to elaborate an individual quality standard for each of the 109 spices and culinary herbs, which could require 54 years with the CCSCH workload of 4 standards per biennial session. Therefore, the need to group standards emerged.

CCSCH3 (2017) accepted the United States of America's offer to prepare a Discussion Paper for developing a group standard template for consideration at CCSCH4 (2019). After discussions, CCSCH4 (2019) requested the United States of America to continue developing this document for discussion at CCSCH5 (2021), which endorsed the recommendation to revise the Group standard template.

Analysis

CCSCH is asked to consider adopting a standardized template for the development of its standards, following the sections organized in Table 1.

Table 1: *template for spices and culinary herbs standards.*

Paragraph	Content
1. Scope	This standard applies to...
2. Description	
2.1. Product Definition	SCH group, common name, trade names, scientific names, etc.
2.2. Styles	Whole; pieces; ground/powdered; others
3. Essential Composition and Quality Factors	
3.1. Composition	As defined in section 2
3.2. Quality Criteria	- Odour, flavour, and colour - Chemical and physical characteristics
4. Food Additives	Anticaking agents
5. Contaminants	Compliance with relevant codex texts
6. Food Hygiene	Compliance with relevant codex texts



Paragraph	Content
7. Weights and measures	Containers shall be as full as practicable without impairment of quality and shall be consistent with a proper declaration of contents for the product.
8. Labelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliance with (CXS 1-1985). - Name of the product - Country of origin and country of harvest - Commercial identification - Labelling of non-retail containers (CXS 346-2021).
9. Methods of Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - References of Methods of analysis - Sampling plan

This template was reviewed. The sections were maintained the same, with a few additions, modifications and clarifications brought to the initial versions, as presented in Appendix I of working document CX/SCH 22/6/10. Few examples are underlined in the following:

- **Scope:** This Standard applies to all those plants commonly sold in commerce as defined in Section 2.1 below offered for direct human consumption, commercial food processing and for repacking if required. The exact species bought/sold may be defined by contractual specifications. This standard does not apply to these products when intended for industrial processing.
- **Styles:** since this template is developed for standard grouping, it was highlighted that: This section is written in a broad manner that applies to all the products within the group; however, if needed, it can be amended to reflect unique style/form characteristics of a specific SCH.
- **Classification:** The quality classes (Extra, Class I & Class II) are omitted because (i) there are no uniform international acceptance, (ii) the increasing belief that classes should be left to contractual arrangements between traders, (iii) the premise that CCSCCH Standards should establish the absolute minimum requirements for trade and consumer safety.
- **Sections 4 to 9:** These sections reference existing Codex Guidelines and General Standards on Food Additives, Contaminants in Food, Food Hygiene and Labelling. These criteria can be amended if needed to reflect a commodity unique properties, requirements, or trade practices.

Conclusion

The proposed updated template seems to cover all information and requirements necessary for the development of a group standard for spices and culinary herbs and Arab delegations may therefore support its advancement through the Codex procedure.

