

## Report of the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Arab Codex Contact Points

As a follow-up to the activities of the Arab Codex Initiative, a coordination meeting of the Arab Codex Contact points was held virtually on Wednesday, 13 September 2023, with the aim of reviewing the updates of the Arab electronic working groups as well Preparations for the 11th Meeting of the Codex Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNE11).

with the participation of representatives of the following Arab States:

- Jordan
- UAE
- Bahrein
- Algeria
- Sudan
- Syria
- Oman
- Palestine
- Qatar
- Kuwait
- State of Libya
- Egypt
- Morocco

As well as AIDSMO, GFORSS and GSO representatives.

The coordinator of the Arab Codex initiative within AIDSMO launched the meeting with introductory remarks. He commenced the meeting by extending a warm welcome to all the participants and expressing his gratitude for their prompt response to the invitation.

The meeting agenda was approved and included the following items:

Agenda item	Subject matter
1	<b>Opening Remarks and adoption of Agenda:</b> Coordinator Arab Codex Initiative, AIDSMO
2	<b>Updates of the Arab electronic working groups</b>
3	<b>Preparations for the 11th Meeting of the Codex Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNE11)</b>
4	<b>Supporting the candidacy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to renew its presidency for the position of Regional Coordinator for the Near East Countries</b>
5	<b>Response to the recent circular letter in preparation for CAC46</b>

### **Item2: Updates of the Arab electronic working groups**

- Electronic Working Group on Peanuts:

Eng. Hanan Fouad the representative of Egypt and chair of the EWG, reviewed the work plan of the electronic working group concerned with determining the maximum limits for aflatoxins in peanuts ready to eat, where she explained a set of points, most notably the scope of work and tasks of the group and the timetable for completing these tasks.

- Electronic working group on fresh dates:

Eng. Khadija Kadiri the representative of Morocco and chair of the EWG, presented the stages of progress of the work of the working group concerned with collecting and analyzing data on the percentage of moisture in fresh dates in the Arab region, the most prominent of which are the data outputs sent by the participating countries and the positions proposed by the experts of the member states.

This item witnessed several interventions by the representative of Algeria, Oman, Palestine, and Sudan.

### **Item3: Preparations for the 11th Meeting of the Codex Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNE11)**

Professor Samuel Godefroy presented this item regarding preparations for the 11th meeting of the Codex Coordination Committee for the Near East (CCNE11), which is scheduled to be held in Rome, Italy during the period 18-22 September 2023, where he touched on the most important items that will be discussed during the meeting, including:

- Proposed Draft Standard on Maamoul.
- Food safety and quality in the region including current and emerging issues.
- Discussion paper on the development of a standard for halal products.

This item witnessed the intervention of the representative of Egypt, Engineer Hanan Fouad, about the Discussion paper on the development of a standard for halal products., she explained the framework of this document, which Egypt was assigned to present during the sixth meeting of the Codex Coordination Committee for the Near East (CCNE6), and its discussion will be completed during the CCNE11 meeting.

**Item4: Supporting the candidacy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to renew its presidency for the position of Regional Coordinator for the Near East Countries**

During the meeting, the participating Arab States supported the representative of Saudi Arabia for re-election to a second term (three-year term) as Coordinator of the Codex Coordinating Committee for the Near East in the elections to be held during the 46th Session of the Codex Commission in Rome, Italy, from November 27, 2023, to December 2, 2023.

The Coordinator of the Arab Codex Initiative presented this item and called on the representatives of the Arab countries to support the nomination of Saudi Arabia to renew its presidency for the position of Regional Coordinator for the Near East Countries, given the importance of the presence of the Organization's member states in the legislative councils of international and regional organizations to defend Arab interests, and this aspect is a priority for the Organization. Out of its keenness to enhance the role of its member states in the field of standardization at the international and regional levels, this item included a group of interventions, as several Arab countries expressed their support for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

**Item5: Response to the recent circular letter in preparation for CAC46**

Professor Samuel Godefroy presented this item by recalling the importance of a set of circular letters that were shared by Codex and calling for interaction and opinions regarding them, which are as follows:

- Circular letter requesting comments on the draft guidance on the application of statements of principles on the role of science in decision-making in Codex.

- Circular letter requesting for comments on possible issues related to standard setting for new food sources and production systems (NFPS) that could not be addressed by the current Codex structure and procedures and options to address them.
- Circular letter requesting for comments at step 6 on the draft MRLs for zilpaterol hydrochloride in cattle liver, kidney, and muscle.

**Lastly, the following conclusions and recommendations were adopted:**

1. Inclusion of all documents and presentations presented during the meeting in the interactive platform of the Arab Codex Initiative ([www.Arabcodex.com](http://www.Arabcodex.com)).
2. Thanking Eng. Hanan Fouad & Eng. Khadija Kadiri for the presentations made.
3. Preparing a form and circulating it to the Arab Codex Contact Points regarding participation in person/remotely in the CCNE11 meeting, with the aim of coordinating and unifying positions to defend the common interests of the Arab countries.
4. Holding the 18th meeting of the Arab CCPs on a date to be determined in coordination with the GFoRSS.