

Report of the 28th meeting of the Arab Codex Contact Points

As part of the implementation of recommendation (4) of the 27th meeting of the Arab Codex Contact Points, held virtually on Thursday 10 October 2024, which states:

“The 28th meeting of the Arab Codex Contact Points will be held at a date to be determined later in coordination with GFoRSS.”

This coordination meeting was held in person/virtually on Monday 21 October 2024 in conjunction with the Dubai International Food Safety Conference (DIFSC), to prepare the meeting (48) of the Codex Alimentarius Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL48), with the participation of representatives of the following Arab countries:

Virtual	In Person
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bahrain ● Iraq ● Palestine ● Yemen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jordan ● United Arab Emirates ● Bahrain ● Oman ● Libya ● Egypt ● Morocco <p>As well as AIDSMO, GSO and GFoRSS representatives.</p>

The meeting was opened by the representative of AIDSMO and the coordinator of the Arab Codex Initiative, in a speech in which he welcomed the participants and thanked them for responding to the invitation to participate, noting that the meeting is concerned to analyzing the agenda items of the 48th of the Codex Alimentarius Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL48), To be held in Quebec, Canada, during the October 27,2024 to November 1,2024.

The meeting agenda items were approved as follows:

Agenda item	Subject
Item 1	Opening Remarks and adoption of Agenda: Arab Codex Initiative Coordinator
Item 2	Review and analysis of agenda Items of the Codex Alimentarius Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL48)

Item 2: Review and analysis of agenda Items of the Codex Alimentarius Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL48)

This item was introduced by Professor Samuel Godefroy, COO of GForSS as follows:

Item 2 of the agenda: Matters Referred to the Committee by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Codex Executive Committee:

CAC46 adopted CCFL47 draft standards step 5:

- The revision to CXS1-1985: The General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged foods (GSLPF):
- provisions related to allergen labelling.
- The Guidelines on the provision of food information for pre-packaged foods to be offered via e-commerce.
- The Guidelines on the use of Technology to provide food information.

CAC46 also approved the CCFL47 proposal for new work on the amendment of the General Standard for Labelling of prepackaged foods (CXS1-1985) on the labelling of prepackaged foods in joint presentation and multi-pack formats.

Item3 of the agenda: Matters Arising from FAO and WHO:

The following updates that may be of interest to the Codex food labelling community:

- Ad hoc Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Risk Assessment of Food Allergens
- Joint FAO/WHO update of nutrient requirements for infants and young children from birth through 3 years of age
- Joint Statement on the Principles of a Healthy Diet
- FAO activities on Food Labelling
- Global Food Consumption Databases

Item4 of the agenda: Consideration of Labelling Provisions in Draft Codex Standards (endorsement):

CCFL48 is asked to consider labelling provisions in draft Codex standards – CCSCH, CCFO and CCLAC

Item5.1 of the agenda: Proposed draft revision to the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods – Provisions relevant to Allergen Labelling

Most provisions of the amended version of the GSLPF related to allergens were supported by CCFL47, and were forwarded for adoption at Step 5 by CAC46, which was achieved. However, some issues remained for discussion:

- The Definition of 'food allergen', with the consideration of the way additives, processing aids ought to be declared,
- The exemption from declaration under certain conditions, based on the scientific advice being completed by the
- FAO/WHO Expert Consultation,
- The declaration of sulphite and the way the 10-ppm threshold applies, and
- The way the allergen declaration should appear on the label.

An Electronic Working Group (EWG) was re-established chaired by Australia and co-chaired by the US and UK to support the development of the remaining provisions

Item 6 of the agenda: Proposed Draft Guidelines on the Provision of Food Information for Prepackaged Foods offered via E-commerce

- Adopted as a draft standard (at Step 5) at CAC46.
- An EWG, chaired by the UK and co-chaired by Chile, Japan, India and China was established to further develop the text enclosed in square brackets.

Discussions remain with:

- Aspects such as “durability” intended to reflect the period expected between a delivery date and other aspects of date marking on the food.
- The exemption of small units, to provide information when these foods are sold through e-commerce.

Item 7 of the agenda: Proposed draft Guidelines on the Use of Technology to Provide Food Information in Food Labelling

- CCFL47 recommended adoption as a draft standard by CAC46.
- A EWG chaired by Canada and co-chaired by India and New Zealand, was tasked to support the completion of the work and enable consensus on the areas bracketed.

Item 8 of the agenda: Amendments to the General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods (CXS 1-1985): Provisions relevant to joint presentation and multipack formats

- New work was suggested at CCFL44 (2017): Discussion paper on food labelling in joint presentation and multi-pack formats, introduced by Colombia discussed at CCFL45 (2019).

- Discussions at CCFL46 highlighted the need to address issues related to possible information being hidden from consumers / missing from labels such as date marking and the list of ingredients, when food are presented in a multi-pack format.
- A project document was submitted for the consideration of CAC46 to initiate new work on this issue, with the establishment of an EWG chaired by Colombia and co-chaired by Jamaica, tasked to develop a preliminary draft text for circulation and discussion at CCFL48 at Step 4.

Item11 of the agenda: Discussion Paper on Transfatty Acids

- Following CCNFSDU’s decision to discontinue work on establishing conditions for “free of TFAs” claim, CCFL46 agreed that Canada prepare a discussion paper outlining possible new work for consideration by its 47th session: Discussion paper should consider the outcomes of discussions at the CCFO.
- CCFO28 agreed to submit for approval by CAC47 proposal for new work to revise three Codex standards on fats and oils to include a prohibition on partially hydrogenated oils (PHO) and/or limits on industrially produced trans fatty acids (iTFA): An EWG chaired by Canada and co-chaired by Saudi Arabia, was tasked to prepare proposed draft revisions to the three Codex standards.

This item received multiple interventions, including contributions from the representatives of the UAE and Oman.

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).
2. Thanking Prof.Samuel Godefroy for preparing and presenting the items of the agenda of CCFL48.