

Report of the 29th meeting of the Arab Codex Contact Points

In preparation for the 47th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC47) to be held in person in Geneva, Switzerland, from 25 to 30 November 2024, and based on the email received on 28/10/2024 from Professor Samuel Godefroy, in which he proposes holding coordination meetings for the Arab Codex Contact Points, as follows:

- Meeting29 : Thursday, October 31, 2024
- Meeting30 : Thursday, November 14, 2024
- Meeting31 : Wednesday, November 20, 2024

Based on the approval of His Excellency the Director-General of AIDSMO to hold the coordination meetings of the Arab CCPs according to the dates indicated above.

The 29th meeting was held on Thursday, October 31, 2024, with the participation of representatives of the following Arab countries:

1. Jordan
2. United Arab Emirates
3. Bahrain
4. Sudan
5. Iraq
6. Oman
7. Qatar
8. Lebanon
9. Libya
10. Yemen

As well as AIDSMO, GForSS, and GSO representatives.

The meeting was opened by the representative of AIDSMO and the coordinator of the Arab Codex Initiative, with a speech in which he welcomed the participants and thanked them for accepting the invitation to participate, indicating that this meeting and the next two meetings will be devoted to preparing for the 47th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC47), scheduled to be held in person in Geneva from 25 to 30 November 2024, and thanked the experts of the Arab Codex Initiative for their efforts in preparing the presentations of this meeting, which include the outcomes of the meetings of the Codex committees held during this year, as follows:

- Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)
- Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF)
- Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH)

The meeting agenda was reviewed and its items approved as follows:

Agenda item	Subject
Item 1	Opening Remarks and adoption of Agenda: Arab Codex Initiative Coordinator
Item 2	Preparation of the 47th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) • Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF) Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH)

Item 2: Preparation of the 47th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission:

• **Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA54)**

This committee’s presentation was given by Dr. Wiem Guissouma, expert in the Arab Codex Initiative, who reviewed the following:

The background of the 54th Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA54):

The Fifty-Fourth Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) held in Chengdu, China, from 22 to 26 April 2024, was attended by 41 Member Countries, one Member Organization, 23 Observer Organizations, FAO, and WHO.

Arab countries that participated to the physical meeting: Algeria, Egypt; Morocco; Saudi Arabia.

Highlights and Decisions from CCFA54:

Item	Decisions
Agenda Item 3.a: Matters of Interest from FAO/WHO and 96th/97th JECFA	forward to CAC47 for revocation of the provision for azodicarbonamide (INS 927a) from Tables 1 and 2 of the GSFA
Agenda Item 3.b: Proposed Draft Specifications for Identity and Purity of Food Additives	forward full specifications for food additives to CAC47 for adoption at Step 5/8 and make the consequential amendment to the List of Codex Specifications for Food Additives
Agenda item 4.a: Endorsement and/or Revision of Maximum Levels for Food Additives	Endorsement proposals included three standards put forward by the codex committee on spices and culinary herbs (CCSCH) and the codex committee for processed fruits and vegetables (CCPFV).
Agenda item 4.b: Alignment of Food Additive Provisions with GSFA	Forward to CAC47 for adoption; Adoption/Alignment
Agenda item 5.a: General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) - Report on New/Revised Provisions	Forward to CAC47 for adoption the updated food additive section in the Standard for Jams, Jellies, and Marmalades
Agenda item 5.b: Proposal for Discontinuation of Draft Food Additive Provisions	forward to CAC47: Food additive provisions for revocation and proposed discontinuation of draft provisions in the GSFA Proposed draft food additive provisions for inclusion in the GSFA, at Step 2 for information.
Agenda item 6: Proposed Draft Revision to Class Names and the INS	Forward to CAC47: Proposals for revising Class Names and the International Numbering System for Food Additives for adoption at Step 5/8, Consequential amendments due to changing the INS number for gellan gum to INS 418(i),

Agenda item 7: Proposals for Additions to the Priority List of Substances for JECFA Evaluation	forward the amended Priority List of Substances Proposed for Evaluation by JECFA for endorsement by CAC47
Agenda item 8: Discussion Paper on Divergence between GSFA and Commodity Standards	Discussions at CCFA55.
Agenda item 9: Discussion Paper on Development of a Standard for Yeast	submit to CAC47 the project document on the development of a standard for baker's yeast for new work for approval;

- **Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF17)**

This committee's presentation was given by Dr. Mustafa Sultan, expert in the Arab Codex Initiative, who reviewed the following:

The background of the 17th Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF17):

The Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF) held its 17th Session, in Panama City, Panama, from 15 to 19 April 2024.

This session was attended by 54 Member countries, one Member organization and 7 Observer organizations, among which 6 Arab countries (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia).

Highlights and Decisions from CCCF17:

Item	Decisions	
Agenda Item 5: Maximum levels for lead in certain food categories (at Step 4)	Forward for adoption at Step 5/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ML of 0.9 mg/kg for Spices, dried aril • ML of 0.9 mg/kg for Spices, dried seeds, excluding celery seeds • ML of 1.5 mg/kg for Spices, dried celery seeds • ML of 2.0 mg/kg for Spices, dried rhizomes, and roots • ML of 2.5 mg/kg for Spices, dried floral parts • ML of 0.6 mg/kg for Spices, dried fruit, and berries, excluding dried Sichuan pepper, star anise, paprika and sumac • ML of 0.8 mg/kg for Spices, dried paprika and sumac • ML of 3.0 mg/kg for Spices, dried Sichuan pepper and star anise
	Forward for adoption at Step 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ML of 2.5 mg/kg for Spices, dried bark • Re-establish EWG chaired by Brazil "to consider new data collected" • Request the JECFA Secretariat to issue a call for data • ML of 2.5 mg/kg for Spices, dried culinary herbs • Request the JECFA Secretariat to issue a call for data for lead in dried culinary herbs and that the EWG should consider new available data in their review.
	Discontinue Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spices, dried Flower • Fresh culinary herbs
Agenda Item 6: Sampling plans for methylmercury in fish (at Step 4)	Forward the sampling plan (Appendix III) to CAC47 for adoption at Step 5/8 .	
Agenda Item 7: Definition for ready-to-eat peanuts for the establishment of a maximum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply existing definition of RTE Tree nuts in CXS 193 to RTE Peanuts; • Establish an EWG chaired by India and co-chaired by USA, to develop ML for Aflatoxins in RTE Peanuts and association of sampling plan for comments by CCCF18; 	

level for total aflatoxins in this product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request JECFA Secretariat to issue a call for data with a guidance to specify the raw peanuts as RTE or FFP; Request GEMS/Food database administrator to clarify with the submitter whether the data currently identified as unknown were RTE or FFP.
Agenda Item 8: Sampling plans for total aflatoxins and ochratoxin A in certain spices (at Step 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward the sampling plan to CAC47 for adoption at Step 5; Re-establish an EWG chaired by India to continue the unfinished work for one more year to finalize the sampling plan at CCCCF18; the revised sampling plan would be circulated for comments and consideration by CCCCF18; Request CCEXEC86 to extend the timeline for completion of work to 2025.
Agenda Item 9: Code of practice/guidelines for the prevention and reduction of ciguatera poisonin (at Step 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward the code of practice (CoP) for the prevention and reduction of ciguatera poisoning (Appendix V) to CAC47 for adoption at Step 5/8; Request the Codex Secretariat to publish information on resources as information document (Appendix VI) with the relevant links.
Agenda Item 10: Pyrrolizidine alkaloids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To further develop the discussion paper for the revision of the CoP to prevent and reduce Pyrrolizidine Alkaloid Contamination in Food and Feed (CXC 74-2014), also to address practices for honey and to provide the revised CoP as a project document to be discussed at CCCCF18; To develop a guidance on sampling and analysis performance characteristics for the collection of data to be submitted to the GEMS/Food database. Establish EWG chaired by Türkiye, co-chaired by UK and Netherlands to develop the discussion paper.
Agenda Items 11: Tropane alkaloids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-establish a EWG chaired by China and co-chaired by Saudi Arabia to prepare a revised discussion paper including proposal for the new CoP and project document for consideration at CCCCF18; Request JECFA Secretariat to issue call for data on tropane alkaloid contamination in food and feed, with a guidance to indicate the stage of sampling.
Agenda Item 12: Acrylamide in foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-establish a EWG chaired by India and co-chaired by Saudi Arabia to develop a discussion paper with a proposal for a draft revised CoP and project document; Issue a CL to collect information on new risk management measures for the reduction of acrylamide.
Agenda Item 13: Cadmium and Lead in Quinoa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward the ML of 0.15 mg/kg for cadmium and 0.2 mg/kg for Lead in Quinoa for adoption by CAC47 (Appendix VII);
Agenda Item 14: Review of the Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Peanuts (CXC 55-2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward the project document (Appendix VIII) to CAC47 for approval. Establish EWG chaired by Brazil and co-chaired by India to prepare a proposed revision of the Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Peanuts for comments and consideration by CCCCF18.
Agenda Item 15: Review of the Code of Practice for the Reduction of Aflatoxin B1 in Raw Materials and Supplemental Feedingstuffs for Milk-Producing Animals (CXC 45-1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-establish EWG chaired by Canada and co-chaired by Saudi Arabia to revise the discussion paper with a proposal for a revised CoP and a project document for the new work. Consider in future how the different CoPs could be integrated or merged to avoid overlap, or inconsistencies.
Agenda Item 16: Development of a Code of practice for the prevention and reduction of cadmium contamination in foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward the project document to CAC47 for approval (Appendix IX); Establish EWG chaired by USA develop a code of practice for the prevention and reduction of cadmium contamination in food for comments and consideration at CCCCF18.

●Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH7)

This committee’s presentation was given by Dr. Karima Zouine, expert at the Arab Codex Initiative, who reviewed the following:

The background of the 7th Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH7):

The 7th meeting of the CCSCH was hosted and chaired by the Government of India, in Kochi, Kerala, India (29 January - 2 February 2024).

30 member countries and one member organization and one observer organization attended the five–day meeting.

3 Arab countries (Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia).

Highlights and Decisions from CCSCH7:

Item	Decisions
<p>The Committee agreed to forward to CAC47 for final adoption three texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draft standard for spices derived from dried or dehydrated fruits and berries – small cardamom ● Draft standard for spices in the form of dried or dehydrated fruits and berries: 	(At Step 8)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draft standard for dried or dehydrated roots, rhizomes and bulbs – turmeric 	(At Step 5/8)
<p>Draft standard for spices derived from dried or dehydrated fruits and berries – vanilla</p>	Forward to CAC47 for adoption at step 5
<p>To start new work on four different spices or culinary herbs and submit these new work proposals for approval by CAC47:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sweet marjoram ● Cinnamon ● Large cardamom ● Coriander 	

This item saw several interventions, including the representatives of the UAE, Bahrain, Iraq and Qatar.

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 the experts of the Arab Codex Initiative for preparing and presenting the meeting presentations.
3. Include an item during the next meeting of the Arab Codex Contact Points dedicated to discussing and explaining the voting procedures for the session (47) of the Codex Alimentarius Commission relating to the position of Vice-Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.
4. Activating the work of the Committee for Developing and Following Up the Strategy for the Arab Codex Initiative, by holding its first meeting as soon as possible, to discuss the procedures manual and support Arab participation in CAC47.