

**FAO/WHO CODEX COORDINATING COMMITTEE
NEAR EAST**



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

**Report of the 33rd Meeting of Arab Countries / CCNE Codex Contact Points - Chaired by the
CCNE Coordinator**

Virtually

Tuesday March 4, 2025

As part of the preparations for the 55th session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA55), the 33rd meeting of Arab Countries/ CCNE Codex Contact Points was held virtually on Tuesday, February 4, 2025. The meeting was chaired by the CCNE Coordinator and attended by representatives from the following countries:

1. Jordan
2. UAE
3. Bahrain
4. Tunisia
5. Algeria
6. Saudi Arabia
7. Syria
8. Oman
9. Kuwait
10. Palestine
11. Qatar
12. Lebanon
13. Libya
14. Egypt
15. Morocco
16. Yemen
17. Iran

In addition to representatives of:

- AIDSMO
- GFoRSS

Engineer Ali Al Ghafri, CCNE Coordinator and the Arab Codex Initiative Coordinator, launched the meeting with a speech in which they welcomed the participants, expressing their thanks for accepting the invitation to participate in this meeting. They highlighted that the meeting is dedicated to analyzing the agenda items of the (55) meeting of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA55), scheduled to be held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, during the period from March 24-28, 2025.

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

Item	Subject
Item 1	Opening Remarks and adoption of Agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCNE Coordinator • Arab Codex Initiative Coordinator
Item 2	Review and analysis of agenda Items of Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA55)

Item 2: Review and analysis of agenda Items of Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA55)

The analysis of the items on the CCFA55 agenda were prepared and presented by representatives of the following countries: Tunisia, Oman, and Qatar, in cooperation with experts from the Arab Codex Initiative, as follows:

<p><u>Presented by Dr. Intisar Al-Gharibi</u> <u>(Oman)</u></p>	<p>3 (a) : Matters of Interest Arising from FAO/WHO and from the 99th Meeting of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) - CX/FA 25/55/3</p>	<p>FAO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO’s work in the area of food packaging • FAO’s work on new foods and production systems • Food safety in personalized nutrition: a focus on food supplements and functional foods • Alternative animal source foods: A comprehensive review of the evidence on their benefits and risks for nutrition, environment, livelihoods, and food safety <p>WHO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for new experts to join the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) • New Approach Methodologies (NAMs) in Future Food Safety Risk Assessment workshop • WHO Alliance for Food Safety • Codex Trust Fund
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	3 (b): Proposed Draft Specifications for the Identity and Purity of Food Additives Arising from the 99th JECFA Meetings - CX/FA 25/55/4	CCFA55 is invited to consider the recommended actions (presented in the Annex to this document) which might be required following the evaluations of these food additives. JECFA would like to remind CCFA of the limited resources and recommends that CCFA place greater emphasis on ensuring the availability of new data before a food additive is prioritized for JECFA re-evaluation.
	4(a): Endorsement and/or revision of maximum levels for food additives and processing aids in Codex standards	The background of the item was discussed and proposed recommendations as follows: Recommendations of the Expert Group of the Arab Codex Initiative: Codex delegations might give their support for the endorsement of the food additive provisions in the draft standard for Castilla lulo (naranjilla) to prevent further delays.
<u>Presented by Eng. Narjes Mhajbi (Tunisia)</u>	4(b): Alignment of the food additive provisions of commodity standards: Report of the Electronic Working Group on Alignment	The background of the item was discussed and proposed recommendations as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalization of unresolved matters should focus on refining additive categorization and resolving alignment inconsistencies, • Continuous Review and Adaptation of Table 3 Notes: Table 3 notes must undergo regular reviews and updates to reflect future GSFA revisions and evolving Codex recommendations.
	9: Discussion paper on the working practices and the engagement plan to avoid divergence between the GSFA, commodity standards and other related Codex texts	The background of the item was discussed and the recommendation proposed as follows: Recommendations of the Expert Group of the Arab Codex Initiative: Implement a hybrid model combining both options for maximum efficiency and consistency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balances expertise: Combines the commodity-specific knowledge of regional committees with the technical expertise of the CCFA. • Reduces delays: Early collaboration prevents lengthy back-and-forth revisions. • Ensures consistency: Final review by the CCFA keeps standards aligned with the GSFA. • Flexible: Works for both simple and complex amendments
<u>Presented by Dr. Amine Kassouf (GFoRSS)</u>	5(a): General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA): Report of the Electronic Working Group on the GSFA	The background of the item was discussed as follows: CCFA54 (2024) agreed to establish an EWG to provide recommendations to CCFA55 on the following topics: Replies from CCFO28 on the technological justification for the use of Paprika Extract (INS 160c (ii)) in FC 02.2.2 of the GSFA Revocation of the adopted provision for annatto extracts, bixin based (INS 160b(i)) in FC 01.2.1;

		<p>The adopted provision for aspartame (INS 951) in FC 07.1 for comment on the actual use level and application of the alternative Note;</p> <p>The draft, and proposed draft provisions, respectively, for colours in FCs 01.0 through to 08.0 and their subcategories</p> <p>Provisions entered at Step 2 of the GSFA contained in CRD02 Annex 5 (also presented in REP24/FA (Appendix IX).</p>
	<p>5(b): GSFA: Proposals for new and/or revision of food additive provisions</p>	<p>The background of the item was discussed as follows:</p> <p>The CCFA is invited to consider the proposals of member countries and observers to new and/or revision of food additive provisions. Replies to CL 2024/ 58-FA, submitted from China, South Africa, International Food Additives Council (IFAC), International Special Dietary Food Industries (ISDI)</p>
	<p>6: Proposed draft revision to the Class names and the international numbering system for food additives (CXG36-1989)</p>	<p>The background of the item was discussed and the EWG proposed recommendation as follows:</p> <p>The EWG recommends CCFA55 to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider the additions and deletions to the Class Names and International Numbering System for Food Additives (CXG 36-1989) as presented in the Annex, including adding a clarification for INS 183. • Update the Information document/table on INS for deleted and re-used numbers with the deletion of INS 231 and INS 232. • Find out why ortho-phenylphenol is listed as 2-phenylphenol in the list of flavorings in the List of Codex specifications for food additives (CXA 6-2023) and decide whether this entry needs to be deleted. • add the point on deletion of azodicarbonamide (INS 927a) again in the mandate of the EWG on INS in a few years time, e.g. in 2030, to investigate whether it still needs to remain included in the INS because of national authorization(s).
<p><u>Presented by Eng. Amira Shams El-Din (Qatar)</u></p>	<p>7: Proposals for additions and changes to the Priority List of Substances proposed for evaluation by JECFA (replies to CL 2024/59-FA)</p>	<p>Toxicological Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Metabolic and pharmacokinetic studies. - Short-term toxicity, long-term toxicity/carcinogenicity, reproductive toxicity, and developmental toxicity studies in animals and genotoxicity studies. - Epidemiological and/or clinical studies and special considerations. <p>Technological data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specifications for the identity and purity of the listed substances. - Technological and nutritional considerations relating to the manufacture and use of the listed substance. <p>Dietary exposure assessment data</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Levels of the listed substance used in food or expected to be used in food based on technological function and the range of foods in which they are used. - Estimation of dietary exposures based on food consumption data for foods in which the substance may be used.
	8: Standard for baker's yeast (Step 4)	<p>Recommendations of the Expert Group of the Arab Codex Initiative: Given the significant role yeast plays in the region's food systems, Arab Codex delegations might give their support to advancing Codex Standard for Baker's Yeast</p>

Lastly, the following 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) and on GFORSS Website: <https://gforss.org/networks/arabcodex/>
2. Thanking The representative of Tunisia, Oman and Qatar, as well as the experts of the Arab Codex Initiative for preparing and presenting the review and analysis of agenda Items of Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA55).