



FAO/WHO CODEX COORDINATING COMMITTEE NEAR EAST



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

Report of the 36th Meeting of the Arab Codex Contact Points- Chaired by the Regional

Coordinator for the Near East

Virtually

Thursday May 22, 2025

In preparation for the meeting (34) of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP34), the 36th Coordination Meeting of the CCNE/Arab Codex Contact Points, was held virtually on Thursday May 22, 2025, with the participation of representatives of the following countries:

1. Jordan
2. United Arab Emirates
3. Bahrain
4. Tunisia
5. Syria
6. Oman
7. Qatar
8. Egypt
9. Morocco
10. Yemen

In addition to representatives of:

- AIDSMO and GFoRSS

The CCNE coordinator launched the meeting with introductory remarks in which he welcomed the participants and expressed his thanks to them for accepting the invitation to participate in this meeting. The Arab Codex Initiative coordinator, also welcomed the participants and explained that the meeting would highlight the items on the agenda of the 34th meeting of the Codex Committee on General Principles, as well as the report of the CCGP Expert Group. He thanked all the experts of the Arab Codex Initiative. He pointed to the pivotal role played by the CCGP in ensuring the credibility and effectiveness of the international food

safety system, and contributing to the promotion of fair international trade and consumer protection at the global level, which constitutes the reference framework upon which international food standards are based.

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

Items
Opening Remarks and adoption of Agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCNE Coordinator • Arab Codex Initiative Coordinator
Overview of the agenda items of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP34)
Report from the Expert Group of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP)

Item 2: Overview of the agenda items of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP34)

The representative of Egypt in cooperation with experts from the Arab Codex Initiative, prepared and presented an overview of the agenda items for the CCGP34 Committee, as follows:

Presented by Eng. Mariam Barsoum: Egypt	Agenda Item 1: Adoption of the agenda. (CX/GP 25/34/1)
	Agenda Item 2: Matters arising from the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies. (CX/GP 25/34/2) This item outlines updates on the procedural amendments, strategic planning and new work proposals, including actions for improved consistency, inclusivity, and efficiency. CCGP34 is invited to review key items requiring further discussion and recommendations.
	Agenda Item 3: Information on activities of FAO and WHO relevant to the work of CCGP (CX/GP 25/34/3) FAO and WHO provided updates on key activities supporting Codex work, including the Codex Trust Fund, e-learning, strategic frameworks, and initiatives on food safety and agrifood systems transformation.

	CCGP34 is informed of ongoing efforts to enhance national capacities, promote science-based standards, and encourage investment in food safety systems.
	<p>Agenda Item 4 :Codex Procedural Manual: Review of inconsistencies in language and superseded content.</p> <p>4.1 Section 3: Guidelines for subsidiary bodies (CX/GP 25/34/4 & Add.1) This agenda item presents proposed updates to Section 3 of the Codex Procedural Manual to align guidelines for subsidiary bodies with current practices. CCGP34 is invited to resolve specific issues, consider revisions to PWG and EWG guidelines, and recommend the updated text for CAC48 adoption`</p> <p>4.2: Other inconsistencies apart from Section 3 (CX/GP 25/34/5) This agenda item reports on efforts to address language inconsistencies and outdated or superseded content in the Codex Procedural Manual. CCGP34 is invited to review Member proposals (Appendix I) and note editorial updates implemented or planned by the Codex Secretariat (Appendix II)</p>
	<p>Agenda Item 5 . Codex Procedural Manual: Update to the Guide to the procedure for amendment/revision of Codex texts. (CX/GP 25/34/6)</p> <p>This agenda item proposes refined procedures and clearer definitions for correction, amendment, and revision of Codex texts in Section 2.1 of the Procedural Manual. CCGP34 is invited to review the updated framework, which aligns with FAO publishing practices and promotes transparency, version control, and consistency across Codex documents.</p>
	<p>Agenda Item 6. Amendment to Principles on participation of international NGOs (CX/GP 25/34/7) This agenda item aims to enhance transparency, traceability, and consistency in updating Codex standards. It proposes clarifying the double representation rule for all INGOs with Codex observer status. The amendment ensures consistent application of this rule, regardless of an INGO's status with FAO or WHO.</p>
	<p>Agenda Item 7. Codex Procedural Manual: Review of resource efficient practices for new-work proposals. (CX/GP 25/34/8) Codex Procedural Manual: Review of the potential use of existing provisions to promote more resource-efficient practices in the review of new-work proposals which do not fall within the remit of an active Codex committee.</p>
	<p>Agenda Item 8. Review of the application of the Criteria and procedural guidelines for Codex committees and ad hoc intergovernmental task forces working by correspondence (CX/GP</p>

	25/34/9) Reviews the use of Codex Committees working by correspondence (CWBC), proposing clearer guidance and greater flexibility to incorporate virtual tools. Amendments aim to improve efficiency, clarify scope, and align practices with current technologies.
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Item 3: Report from the Expert Group of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP)

The representative of Egypt presented a report from the experts group of the Codex Alimentarius Committee on General Principles (CCGP), regarding the progress of the Working Group of Experts on the Use of “Reservations” within the Codex Alimentarius Procedure as follows:

Background: Initiation of the EWG work during the Fourth Arab Codex Colloquium, that was held in Muscat, Oman from 19-20 April 2025.

Participation of 11 Arab countries: Jordan, UAE, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, Oman, Qatar, Libya, Egypt, Yemen and Morocco.

Objective: Develop a Discussion Paper to be submitted to the 34th session of CCGP, that will be held from 2 to 6 June 2025 , 2025 – in Lille, France.

Aim: To highlight the issue, spark dialogue, and encourage more effective and informed use of “reservations” in the framework of Codex proceedings.

Expert Working Group Activities:

- First Meeting (Oman): Decisions were endorsed to start the work and in relation with the selection of committees of interest.
- Second Meeting (Virtually on May 14th): Discuss the methodology of work and to boost the efforts.
- Third Meeting (Virtually on May 21st): Progress review, and endorsement to proceed and generate the discussion paper for CCGP 34th Meeting (2nd June, 2025).

EWG Outputs:

1- Develop a Discussion Paper with the aim to:

- Review the use of “reservations” in Codex Alimentarius proceedings (i.e. CCCF, CCFA, CCPR and CCRVDF), examining their significance and potential impact on the relevance and understanding of Codex standards.
- have a clear understanding on the use of reservations / encourage more effective and informed use of “reservations” in the framework of Codex proceedings.

- be submitted to CCGP 34th session after endorsement by Arab/CCNE countries.

2- Develop a survey

about the use of “reservations” , to gain an overview about the current status of the use and understanding of “reservations” by Codex delegations.

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 Egypt, as well as the experts of the Arab Codex Initiative, for preparing the presentation on the agenda items of Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP34).