

# FAO/WHO CODEX COORDINATING COMMITTEE NEAR EAST



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

## Report of the 40<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Arab Countries Codex Contact Points - Chaired by the CCNE

### Coordinator

### Preparatory Meeting for the Twelfth Session of the Regional Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNE12)

As part of the preparations for the Twelfth Session of the Regional Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNE12), scheduled to be held in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, from 28 September to 2 October 2025, the 40<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Arab Countries /CCNE Codex Contact was held virtually on Monday, September 8, 2025, the meeting was chaired by the CCNE Coordinator and attended by representatives from the following countries :

1. Arab Republic of Egypt
2. Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
3. Kingdom of Bahrain
4. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
5. Lebanese Republic
6. People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
7. Republic of Iraq
8. Federal Republic of Somalia
9. Republic of Sudan
10. Republic of Tunisia
11. Republic of Yemen
12. State of Libya
13. State of Palestine
14. State of Qatar
15. Sultanate of Oman
16. Syrian Arab Republic
17. Islamic Republic of Iran

In addition, representatives of the following organizations participated:

- The Arab Codex Initiative – Arab Organization for Industrial Development and Mining (AIDSMO)
- Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GFoRSS)

Dr. Intisar Algharibi, Regional Coordinator for the Near East, opened the meeting with a welcoming address, expressing her gratitude and appreciation to the participants for accepting the invitation and attending this important gathering. In her remarks, she highlighted that this meeting falls within the framework of strengthening coordination and collective work to achieve common objectives. She also stressed that the success of the upcoming meeting depends on accurate coordination and proper preparation, which constitutes the main purpose of today's meeting through planning and discussing the proposed priorities. She further presented the agenda items of the Twelfth Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNE12). She concluded her statement by expressing her hope that the upcoming meeting will achieve fruitful results that contribute to supporting the work of the Codex Alimentarius and enhancing regional cooperation.

Following that, Eng. Ahmed Eddouaicer, the Arab Codex Initiative, welcomed the participants, extending thanks to Dr. Algharibi for her remarks and wishing success for the meeting and the presentations. He also announced the convening of the Colloquium on the Joint FAO / WHO Food Standards Program Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs, scheduled to be held on 22 September 2025. He noted that this Colloquium will be managed for the first time by the Coordinator of the Arab Codex Initiative.

**Following that, the agenda of the meeting was reviewed and its items approved as follows:**

Fr	En	Ar	رقم البند
<b>Remarques d'ouverture et adoption de l'ordre du jour</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinateur du CCNE</li> <li>• Coordinateur de l'Initiative Arabe du Codex</li> </ul>	<b>Opening Remarks and adoption of Agenda</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCNE Coordinator</li> <li>• Arab Codex Initiative Coordinator</li> </ul>	<b>كلمة افتتاحية واعتماد جدول الأعمال</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• المنسق الإقليمي للشرق الأدنى</li> <li>• منسق المبادرة العربية للدستور الغذائي</li> </ul>	البند الأول
<b>Présentation des points de l'ordre du jour de la douzième session du comité FAO/OMS de coordination pour le Proche-Orient (CCNE12)</b> Coordinateur du CCNE	<b>Presentation of the Agenda Items of the twelfth session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNE12)</b> CCNE Coordinator	<b>عرض بنود جدول الأعمال الدورة الثانية عشرة للجنة التنسيق المشتركة بين منظمة الأغذية والزراعة ومنظمة الصحة العالمية للشرق الأدنى (CCNE12)</b> المنسق الإقليمي للشرق الأدنى	البند الثاني
<b>Derniers développements concernant les sujets suivants :</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projet de norme sur le lait de</li> </ul>	<b>Updates on the following topics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project standard on Camel Milk               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ United Arab Emirates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>متابعة آخر المستجدات المتعلقة بالمواضيع التالية:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• مشروع إعداد مواصفة حليب النوق</li> </ul>	البند الثالث

<p>chamelle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Emirats Arabes Unis</li> <li>● Projet de la norme régionale sur le Maamoul (étape 7) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Arabie Saoudite</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Document de discussion sur le cadre de collecte de données concernant la note de bas de page c de la norme Codex CXS 33 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ La République arabe syrienne</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Document de projet : justification de l'élaboration d'une norme Codex pour l'eau de rose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ La République islamique d'Iran</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Document de discussion sur les matériaux au contact des aliments Union Internationale des Sciences et Technologies des Aliments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Draft regional standard on Maamoul (Step 7) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Saudi Arabia</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Discussion paper on a framework for collecting data on footnote c of Codex Standard CXS 33 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Syrian Arab Republic</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Project Document :justification for the drafting of codex standard for rose water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Islamic Republic of Iran</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Discussion Paper related to Food Contact Materials (FCMs) International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFoST)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ الامارات العربية المتحدة</li> <li>● مشروع المواصفة الاقليمية للمعمول (الخطوة ٧) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ المملكة العربية السعودية</li> </ul> </li> <li>● الورقة النقاشية الخاصة باطار جمع بيانات عن الحاشية ج من مواصفة الدستور الغذائي CXS 33 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ الجمهورية العربية السورية</li> </ul> </li> <li>● وثيقة مشروع: المبررات لإعداد مشروع مواصفة لماء الورد <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ الجمهورية الإسلامية الإيرانية</li> </ul> </li> <li>● الورقة النقاشية الخاصة بالمواد الملامسة للغذاء الاتحاد الدولي لعلوم وتكنولوجيا الاغذية</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Projet d'élaboration d'une feuille de route 2026–2028 pour les pays de la région du Proche-Orient dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre du Plan stratégique du Codex 2026-2031</b></p> <p>Coordinateur du CCNE</p>	<p><b>Project for Developing a 2026–2028 Workplan for Near East Region Countries within the Framework of Implementing the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031</b></p> <p>CCNE Coordinator</p>	<p><b>مشروع اعداد خريطة عمل 2026-2028 لدول اقليم الشرق الادنى في اطار تنفيذ الخطة الاستراتيجية للدستور الغذائي 2026-2031</b></p> <p>المنسق الإقليمي للشرق الأدنى</p>	<p><b>البند الرابع</b></p>

### Item 3: Updates on the following topics

#### **1. Draft Regional Standard on Maamoul (Step 7) – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

The electronic working group chaired by Saudi Arabia and Lebanon finalized the Draft Regional Standard for Maamoul, following its adoption at Step 5 by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC46). Improvements introduced included: quality factors such as pH, moisture content, water activity, control of foreign matter contaminants, and the addition of proposed methods of analysis. The group recommended considering the work as complete and forwarding it to the Committee for adoption at Step 8 by the Commission, with referral of matters relating to contaminants, additives, labelling, and methods of analysis to the respective specialized committees for endorsement.

#### **2. Discussion paper on a framework for collecting data on footnote c of Codex Standard CXS 33**

##### **– Syrian Arab Republic**

Syria presented a discussion paper focusing on mechanisms for data collection to evaluate the applicability of footnote (c) under paragraph 3.2.3 of the Codex Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils (CXS 33-1981), with emphasis on authenticity indicators such as sterol composition. The aim is to ensure that current revisions of the standard adequately reflect regional variations and prevent misclassification of authentic olive oils, particularly those produced in Syria and other areas with similar climatic and agricultural conditions. Syria noted that the paper has been submitted to the Codex Secretariat and encouraged member countries to review its details and provide support during the Committee meeting.

#### **3. Project Document :justification for the drafting of codex standard for rose water – Islamic**

##### **Republic of Iran**

Iran presented strong justifications for the development of an international standard for rose water, citing the significant growth of the global market (USD 477 million in 2024, projected to reach around USD 972 million by 2033). The document highlighted the need to harmonize quality standards, labelling, and contaminant limits in order to combat adulteration, ensure consumer confidence, promote fair trade, and facilitate access to international markets.

#### **4. Discussion Paper related to Food Contact Materials – International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFoST)**

The paper reviewed the role of food contact materials in food safety and the sustainability of food systems, and the challenges arising from the absence of a harmonized framework within Codex, particularly regarding non-intentionally added substances (NIAS) and recycled materials. Three options for Codex work were outlined:

- Through existing committees,
- Establishment of a dedicated working group,

- A phased approach (recommended), beginning with a comparative study and expert work in 2025, leading to core texts and an endorsed list by 2029.

#### Item 4: Project for Developing a 2026–2028 Workplan for Near East Region Countries within the Framework of Implementing the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031

Dr. Intisar Algharibi, Regional Coordinator for the Near East, presented a discussion paper outlining the regional priorities for 2026–2028 within the framework of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026–2031. She underlined the importance of developing scientific standards that address the region's needs, strengthening capacities and active participation in Codex work, and maximizing impact through the adoption and harmonization of regional standards. She invited participants to review the paper and share their proposals to help shape the region's plans for the coming phase.

She also highlighted the side events accompanying the Twelfth Session, noting that three events will be organized by FAO, WHO, and the Sultanate of Oman. She added that the detailed program schedule will be circulated once finalized.

In her closing remarks, she expressed her hope of seeing the participation of all countries in the next session, stressing the importance of such engagement for the region, and wished all participants success.

#### Lastly, the following recommendations were adopted:

All scientific documents and presentations shared during the meeting are to be uploaded to the interactive platform of the Arab Codex Initiative at [www.Arabcodex.com](http://www.Arabcodex.com) as well as on the website of the Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GForSS) <https://gforss.org/networks/arabcodex/>

