

# FAO/WHO CODEX COORDINATING COMMITTEE NEAR EAST



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

## Report of the 42nd Meeting of the Codex Contact Points of the Arab and Near East Countries –

### Chaired by the Regional Coordinator for the Near East

### Analysis of the Agenda Items of the 48th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC48)

As part of the preparations for the 48th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC48), the 42rd Meeting of Arab Countries /CCNE Codex Contact was held virtually on Thursday 16 October chaired by the CCNE Coordinator and attended by representatives from the following countries :

1. Arab Republic of Egypt
2. Kingdom of Bahrain
3. Kingdom of Morocco
4. People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria
5. Republic of Iraq
6. Republic of Lebanon
7. Republic of the Sudan
8. Republic of Tunisia
9. Republic of Yemen
10. State of Libya
11. State of Palestine
12. State of Qatar
13. Sultanate of Oman
14. Syrian Arab Republic
15. United Arab Emirates

In addition to representatives of the following organizations:

- The Arab Codex Initiative – Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization (AIDSMO)
- The Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GFRSS)
- The Gulf Standardization Organization (GSO)

## Item 1: Opening Remarks and adoption of Agenda

Dr. Intisar Al-Gharibi, Regional Coordinator for the Near East, opened the meeting with a statement in which she welcomed the participants, expressing her gratitude and appreciation for accepting the invitation and participating in this important event, which was held under the patronage of Omani women on the occasion of Omani Women's Day.

In her opening remarks, Dr. Al-Gharibi indicated that this meeting comes within the framework of the preparations to discuss the agenda items of the Forty-Eighth Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. She also extended her congratulations to Omani and Arab women on this occasion, praising the prominent role played by women in supporting scientific and regulatory work in the region.

She explained that the technical presentations during the meeting would be delivered by a group of Omani female experts, and then she reviewed the agenda items.

After that, Eng. Ahmed Eddouaicer, Coordinator of the Arab Codex Initiative, welcomed the participants, thanking Dr. Al-Gharibi for her remarks and wishing success to the meeting and the presentations. He also extended congratulations to Arab and Omani women on the occasion of Omani Women's Day.

Finally, Dr. Intisar passed the floor to Mr. Ahmed Al bashah, who expressed his appreciation for the invitation to participate in this meeting.

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>Analyse des points à l'ordre du jour de la 48<sup>e</sup> session de la Commission du Codex Alimentarius (CAC48):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCFFV23</li> <li>• CCFA55</li> <li>• CCMAS44</li> <li>• CCGP34</li> <li>• CCCF18</li> <li>• CCRP56</li> <li>• CCSCH8</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of the Agenda Items of the 48th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC48)</li> <li>• CCFFV23</li> <li>• CCFA55</li> <li>• CCMAS44</li> <li>• CCGP34</li> <li>• CCCF18</li> <li>• CCRP56</li> <li>• CCSCH8</li> </ul>	<b>تحليل بنود جدول أعمال الدورة الثامنة والأربعين لهيئة الدستور الغذائي CAC48:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCFFV23</li> <li>• CCFA55</li> <li>• CCMAS44</li> <li>• CCGP34</li> <li>• CCCF18</li> <li>• CCRP56</li> <li>• CCSCH8</li> </ul>	البند الثاني
<b>Discussion d'autres sujets relatifs aux activités de la région du Proche-Orient</b>	<b>Discussion of other topics related to activities in the Near East region</b>	<b>مناقشة مواضيع أخرى ذات صلة بأنشطة إقليم الشرق الأدنى المنسق الإقليمي للشرق الأدنى</b>	البند الثالث

## Item 2 : Discussion of other topics related to activities in the Near East region

### 1. Presentation of the Outcomes of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV23)

The Sultanate of Oman presented the outcomes of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

Eng. Essam, Codex Contact Point for Tunisia, highlighted the importance of coordination with the European Union regarding the date standard (old and new versions) to ensure consistency in implementation, particularly with reference to the EU commercial standard. He emphasized the need to hold a coordination meeting between the European Union and the Near East Region prior to the Forty-Eighth Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC48).

Mr. Adeb from Palestine added that there is a need to reconsider the study of the moisture content parameter, as it was not reviewed in the recent updates. Dr. Amin Qassouf recalled that the work on updating the draft standard was conducted through a Working Group of the Arab Codex Initiative, where data related to moisture content had been collected, and the draft standard in its current form had been agreed upon during the previous session of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

The discussion also referred to the comment made by the European Union (through Eng. Essam) during the Mexico meeting regarding the “insects” clause in grading, which states that the “Extra Class” must be completely free from insects. Participants noted the need to discuss the possibility of increasing the allowable limit or defining a minimal acceptable level, in line with the recommendations of the Intersessional Working Group (IWG) (India and Saudi Arabia).

Dr. Intisar concluded by emphasizing that coordination will take place to hold a joint meeting with the European Union prior to CAC48 as part of the interregional coordination meetings, with the aim of addressing this issue and reaching consensus before presenting the matter to the Commission.

### 2. Presentation of the Outcomes of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)

The Sultanate of Oman presented the outcomes of the Codex Committee on Food Additives. No additional comments or interventions were made regarding the recommendations of this committee.

### 3. Presentation of the Outcomes of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS)

The Sultanate of Oman delivered a presentation on the outcomes of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling, highlighting key related developments.

During the discussion, Lebanon referred to the luncheon meat standard currently being developed by their team and raised a question regarding testing methods used to determine the percentage of meat in the product, clarifying that the currently available methods do not directly specify how to measure the amount of meat used in manufacturing.

In this regard, Dr. Amin indicated that communication will be established with the Lebanese side to provide the necessary technical support. Egypt also explained that it is currently compiling data related to the estimation of meat proteins using DNA analysis and will share the testing methods with Lebanon upon completion of the evaluation process.

### 4. Presentation of the Outcomes of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP)

The Sultanate of Oman presented the outcomes of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP34), highlighting the main points discussed during the session.

During the presentation, Dr. Amin referred to the Conference Room Document (CRD) submitted by Egypt, Oman, and Tunisia concerning the discussion paper entitled “A discussion paper on the use of ‘reservations’ in Codex proceedings.” He noted that

the Committee on General Principles agreed that the use of reservations should be discussed informally among Committee Chairs to exchange experiences and perspectives before the matter is brought back to the Committee (CCGP) for further consideration in its next session.

#### **5. Presentation of the Outcomes of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF)**

The Sultanate of Oman presented the outcomes of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods. No additional comments or interventions were made regarding the recommendations of this committee.

#### **6. Presentation of the Outcomes of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR)**

The Sultanate of Oman presented the outcomes of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues. No additional comments or interventions were made regarding the recommendations of this committee.

#### **7. Presentation of the Outcomes of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH)**

The Sultanate of Oman provided a summary on the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs, noting that the Committee is currently in session in India. No additional comments or interventions were made regarding the recommendations of this committee.

### **Discussion of other topics related to activities in the Near East region**

The following recommendations were adopted:

- To include all scientific documents and presentations delivered during the meeting on the interactive platform of the Arab Codex Initiative: [www.Arabcodex.com](http://www.Arabcodex.com).
- To also publish these documents on the website of the Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GFoRSS) via the following link: <https://gforss.org/networks/arabcodex>.
- The upcoming meeting, which will be dedicated to coordination with the industrial sector and stakeholders, was also discussed. Egypt requested permission to invite representatives from the industrial sector in Egypt. It was confirmed in response that national Codex Contact Points are the entities responsible for coordination and that each country has the right to invite the relevant parties it deems appropriate. The representative of the Gulf Standardization Organization (GSO) also noted that the Secretariat will send invitations to its partners from the industrial sector to participate in this upcoming meeting.

The meeting concluded with the Regional Coordinator and the Coordinator of the Arab Codex Initiative expressing their gratitude and appreciation to all participants for their valuable contributions and efforts in supporting regional coordination and strengthening the Arab presence in the work of the Commission.

