46th Joint Coordination Meeting of Arab and CCNE Codex Contact Points

PREPARATION FOR THE 45th SESSION OF The CODEX COMMITTEE ON METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING (CCMAS45)

Hanan Fouad Hamed, United Arab of Emirates (UAE)

[March] [4], 2026

Agenda Item 3.1: Endorsement of Methods of Analysis and Sampling Plans for Provisions in Codex Standards. Methods of analysis and sampling submitted by Codex subsidiary bodies.
Document Number: CX/MAS 26/45/3

Background

In accordance with the *Procedural Manual*, Codex subsidiary bodies (Commodity Committees, General Subject Committees, and Regional Coordinating Committees) must refer proposed:

- Methods of analysis
- Numeric Performance Criteria (NPC)
- Sampling plans

to CCMAS for technical review and endorsement before inclusion in CXS 234-1999 (Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling) or before final adoption by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC).

For CCMAS45, referrals originate from CAC48, CCCF18, CCASIA23, CCNE12 and CCSCH8 and invited to retain or to revoke provisions listed in the following table and the analysis.

Introduction :

- For the purpose of the analysis, particular attention is given to the referrals originating from the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF), the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNE), and the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH), as these items are of direct strategic and technical relevance to the CCNE and Arab region.
- The proposed sampling plans and numeric performance criteria for mycotoxins in spices (CCCF), the endorsement of methods for the Regional Standard for Maamoul (CCNE), and the analytical provisions in multiple spice standards (CCSCH) all concern commodities of high regulatory, trade, and production importance for Near East and Arab Member countries. A focused review of these items will therefore support coordinated regional positions and ensure that endorsed methods are scientifically robust, practically applicable, and aligned with the analytical capacities of laboratories within the region.

Table : Overview of Endorsement Requests Submitted to CCMAS45 under Agenda Item 3.1.

Codex Body	What is Requested from CCMAS45	Analysis
CCCF18	**Endorse:** • Sampling plans for total aflatoxins (AFT) and ochratoxin A in certain spices. • NPC for AFT using the "sum of components" approach. **Provide clarification** on: • Whether NPC should apply to AFT or individual aflatoxins. • How results (including LOQs) should be reported in databases (e.g., GEMS/Food).	**Part A: Sampling plans for total aflatoxins and ochratoxin A in certain spices (i.e. nutmeg, dried chilli and paprika)** The proposed sampling plans for total aflatoxins and ochratoxin A in nutmeg, dried chilli, and paprika are scientifically robust and consistent with Codex principles for heterogeneous contaminants, appropriately accounting for particle size–dependent variability through differentiated incremental sampling and large aggregate sample weights. The defined acceptance criterion (≤ Codex ML) ensures a clear, risk-based decision framework aligned with internationally recognized mycotoxin control methodologies. **Part B. Numeric performance criteria for total aflatoxins and ochratoxin A in certain spices** The proposed numeric performance criteria for total aflatoxins and ochratoxin A are technically proportionate to the ML (20 µg/kg), ensuring adequate method sensitivity (LOD/LOQ), precision, recovery, and working range consistent with Codex and AOAC requirements for complex spice matrices. Deriving the LOQ for total aflatoxins as the sum of individual component LOQs represents a conservative and scientifically coherent approach, aligned with established international analytical practice for sum-parameter residue definitions. **Part C: Numeric performance criteria for total aflatoxins in certain food matrices** The proposed numeric performance criteria for total aflatoxins in peanuts, tree nuts, and dried figs are technically aligned with the respective MLs (10–15 µg/kg), ensuring adequate method sensitivity, precision (<44%), and recovery consistent with established Codex performance expectations. Overall, the criteria are proportionate, analytically feasible, and scientifically coherent across commodities with differing contamination variability and intended uses.

Cont. Table : Overview of Endorsement Requests Submitted to CCMAS45 under Agenda Item 3.1.

Codex Body	What is Requested from CCMAS45	Analysis
CCNE12	**Endorsement Request from CCNE12** • Endorse methods of analysis for the Regional Standard for Maamoul.	The proposed analytical methods for the Regional Standard for Maamoul are based on internationally recognized AOAC and ISO references and appropriately address key quality and safety parameters using validated analytical principles, consistent with the CXS 234-1999 classification framework. Their referral for endorsement reflects prior technical review and regional consensus at CCNE12, with no apparent methodological inconsistencies identified.
CCSCH8	**Endorsement Requests from CCSCH8** • Endorse or revoke specific methods in spice standards (e.g., cardamom, turmeric, chilli, cloves). • Decide on endorsement of ISO 927 methods and clarify the principle for endorsement. • Consider whether to revoke an existing Type IV method if ISO 927 is endorsed as Type I. • Endorse methods in draft standards for vanilla, large cardamom, and coriander.	The CCSCH8 requests primarily constitute technical updates to enhance objectivity, reproducibility, and international harmonization, notably through the replacement of sensory-based methods with instrument-based or ISO-recognized analytical procedures. The adoption of standardized ISO methods (e.g., ISO 927 for extraneous/foreign matter) strengthens methodological coherence within CXS 234-1999 and aligns with best practices favouring scientifically robust and reproducible analyses.

Recommendations:

Considering the analysis of requests from CCCF18, CCNE12, and CCSCH8 under Agenda Item 3.1, the following recommendations may guide coordinated regional engagement at CCMAS45:

- Support endorsement of CCCF sampling plans and NPC for mycotoxins in spices and nuts, as they are scientifically coherent, proportionate to MLs, and aligned with established Codex analytical principles.
- Encourage clarification on the "sum of components" approach for total aflatoxins, particularly regarding harmonized LOQ determination and reporting, to ensure consistency in regional data submission.
- Reiterate support for the methods proposed for the Regional Standard for Maamoul, reflecting the consensus already expressed during CCNE12.
- Support endorsement and updating of methods proposed by CCSCH, including replacement of sensory methods with more objective analytical techniques and broader use of internationally recognized ISO methods.
- Encourage Member countries to assess laboratory readiness, especially regarding required LOQs and handling of larger aggregate samples, to ensure effective implementation of endorsed provisions.

المبادرة العربية للدستور الغذائي

ARAB CODEX INITIATIVE

https://gforss.org/networks/arabcodex/