



Report of the 47th Meeting of the Codex Contact Points of the Arab and Near East Countries

Chaired by the CCNE Coordinator

As part of the preparations for the 29th session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF28), scheduled to be held from 23 to 27 March 2026 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States of America, a coordination meeting was held on Tuesday, 17 March 2026 for the Codex Contact Points of the Arab countries and the Near East region. The meeting, chaired by the Regional Coordinator, was conducted virtually and was attended by representatives from the following countries:

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

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 (GFoRSS)
- The Gulf Standardization Organization (GSO)

Dr. Intisar Al-Gharibi, the Regional Coordinator for the Near East, welcomed the participants and expressed her pleasure at the convening of the forty-seventh regional meeting. She emphasized the importance of this meeting as a valuable opportunity to review the achievements made during the past period and to discuss the key challenges faced by the technical working groups.

She also highlighted the pivotal role of the technical working groups in exchanging expertise and best practices, which contributes to supporting decision-making processes and advancing the work in line with the region's aspirations.

She extended her sincere thanks and appreciation to the technical working groups for their continuous efforts, which have had a significant impact on the results achieved, and which will be presented through the presentations delivered during the meeting.

She further affirmed that these achievements reflect the spirit of teamwork and joint cooperation among members, which contributes to improving the efficiency of outputs and enhancing the quality of results that the region seeks to achieve.

In closing, she expressed her hope that the meeting would be fruitful and would result in practical recommendations that support the region's efforts and strengthen the progress of work in the coming period.

Eng. Ahmed Eddouaicer, Coordinator of the Arab Codex Initiative, opened the meeting by welcoming the attendees from representatives of the Near East region, Arab countries, and experts from the Global Food Regulatory Science Society, emphasizing the importance of the meeting in enhancing coordination and consultation among Arab and regional countries, and in active participation in the development of international specifications and standards related to food safety.

He pointed out that the meeting focuses on the agenda items of the twenty-eighth session concerning residues of veterinary drugs in foods, which is an important technical committee for evaluating maximum residue limits of veterinary drug residues, in a manner that ensures the protection of consumer health and facilitates international trade, and reflects the importance of the topic as a vital issue related to food safety and public health.

He stressed that the meeting constitutes a platform for exchanging views and expertise among member countries and reviewing the submitted documents, thereby enhancing the unification of positions and strengthening the influence of the participating countries in the committee. He extended his thanks to the countries participating in delivering presentations, namely: Egypt, Qatar, Bahrain, Syria, Morocco, Iraq, Jordan, and Oman, praising their initiative in presenting on the work of the committee.

In conclusion of his remarks, he expressed his hope that the meeting would result in constructive outcomes that support Arab and regional coordination and enhance the participation of active countries in the work of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods, wishing everyone success and prosperity.

Eng. Ahmed Al-Basha, Head of the Standards Department at the Gulf Standardization Organization, then took the floor and welcomed the brothers and sisters, the member coordinators of the Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods, wishing everyone success. He noted that he had reviewed the comprehensive agenda prepared by the team, expressing his great appreciation for the efforts made, whether by the Near East Committee or the Arab Initiative, affirming that this reflects the work and broad participation of Arab countries and member states, and demonstrates the high level of cooperation and coordination in the region.

Eng. Al-Basha praised the good work and efforts made in the preparations for the meetings of the Codex technical committees, especially the committee concerned with residues of veterinary drugs in foods, wishing everyone success in this meeting. He also extended his thanks to all those who prepared the outstanding papers and presentations to be delivered during the meeting, emphasizing that these efforts represent a strong pillar for the success of the committee's work.

Eng. Asma Al-Hashmi, Coordinator of the Working Group for the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF), delivered a welcoming speech to the attendees, including the Regional Coordinator for the Near East, the representative of the Arab Organization for Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining, the representative of the Gulf Standardization Organization for the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, and the Contact Points of the Arab countries and the Near East region. She also congratulated the attendees on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr, wishing that fasting and good deeds be accepted.

She expressed her sincere gratitude to the regional team of experts for the distinguished efforts and high efficiency in performing the required tasks, despite the current circumstances in the region, pointing to the importance of cooperation and coordination among member states to enhance the effectiveness of the committee's work. She also extended thanks to the Contact Points for the rapid response in identifying priorities, and to the experts from the Global Food Regulatory Science Society for their technical support provided to the team.

Eng. Asma Al-Hashmi presented an overview of the team's activities during the past weeks, where the team, consisting of 12 experts representing 11 countries (Iraq, Yemen, United Arab Emirates, Syria, Sultanate of Oman, Libya, Jordan, Bahrain, Tunisia, Qatar, and Egypt), held three main meetings and two sub-meetings for the sub-teams to analyze the meeting items in preparation for the twenty-eighth session of the Committee scheduled from 23 to 27 March in the United States of America. During these meetings, the region's priorities were identified based on the results of the questionnaires sent to the Contact

Points, and technical analyses of the Committee's documents and the presentations that will be delivered during the meeting were prepared.

She concluded her speech by thanking everyone, wishing the meeting success, and a blessed Eid filled with goodness, security, and peace for all.

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

Fr	En	Ar	رقم البند
<p>Remarques d'ouverture et adoption de l'ordre du jour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinateur du CCNE • Coordinateur de l'Initiative Arabe du Codex • Organisation de normalisation du Conseil de coopération du Golfe (GSO) 	<p>Opening Remarks and adoption of the agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCNE Coordinator • Arab Codex Initiative Coordinator • Gulf Cooperation Council Standardization Organization (GSO) 	<p>كلمات افتتاحية واعتماد جدول الأعمال</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • المنسق الإقليمي للشرق الأدنى • منسق المبادرة العربية للدستور الغذائي • هيئة التقييس لدول مجلس التعاون الخليجية 	البند الأول
<p>Remarques de Dr Karima Zouine et Ing. Asma Al-Hashimi, facilitatrices du groupe de travail du Comité du Codex sur les résidus de médicaments vétérinaires dans les aliments (CCRVDF).</p>	<p>Remarks by Dr. Karima Zouine and Eng. Asma Al-Hashimi, Coordinators of the Working Group for the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF).</p>	<p>كلمة د. كريمة زوين وم. اسما الهاشمية منسقي مجموعة العمل الخاصة بلجنة الدستور الغذائي المعنية بمتبقيات الادوية البيطرية في الأغذية (CCRVDF).</p>	البند الثاني
<p>Analyse des points à l'ordre du jour de la 28^e session du Comité du Codex sur les résidus de médicaments vétérinaires dans les aliments (CCRVDF28) :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Élément 6: République arabe d'Égypte, République d'Irak • Élément 7.1: République arabe d'Égypte • Élément 7.2: État du Qatar, Royaume de Bahreïn • Élément 8.1: République arabe syrienne, Royaume du Maroc 	<p>Analysis of the agenda items of the 28th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF28) :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 6: Arab Republic of Egypt, Republic of Iraq • Item 7.1: Arab Republic of Egypt • Item 7.2: State of Qatar, Kingdom of Bahrain • Item 8.1: Syrian Arab Republic, Kingdom of Morocco 	<p>تحليل بنود جدول اعمال الدورة 28 للجنة الدستور الغذائي المعنية بمتبقيات الادوية البيطرية في الأغذية (CCRVDF28) :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • البند 6: جمهورية مصر العربية، الجمهورية العراقية • البند 7.1: جمهورية مصر العربية • البند 7.2: دولة قطر، مملكة البحرين • البند 8.1: الجمهورية العربية السورية، المملكة المغربية • البند 8.2: جمهورية مصر العربية 	البند الثالث

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Élément 8.2: République arabe d'Égypte • Élément 9: Émirats arabes unis • Élément 10: Royaume hachémite de Jordanie, Sultanat d'Oman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 8.2: Arab Republic of Egypt • Item 9: United Arab Emirates • Item 10: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Sultanate of Oman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • البند 9: دولة الامارات العربية المتحدة • البند 10: المملكة الاردنية الهاشمية، سلطنة عمان 	
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Analysis of the agenda items of the 28th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF28):

❖ Presentation of Agenda Item (6) by the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Republic of Iraq

The meeting reviewed agenda item six, which concerns the maximum residue limits for fumagillin DCH in fish (fillet) and honey. A comprehensive background on the subject was presented in light of the discussions held by the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF27), as well as the outcomes of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) evaluation, which established health-based guidance values (HBGVs) and proposed maximum residue limits.

Several technical and scientific challenges were also addressed, most notably the use of the DCH compound as a marker for fumagillin residues in honey. It was noted that this compound is not a specific marker, as it may originate from other environmental or industrial sources, which could lead to difficulties in monitoring and control processes, in addition to the potential impact on international trade due to possible misinterpretation of analytical results.

Observations from several member countries were also reviewed regarding the limited availability of data, particularly in relation to toxicological studies, metabolism, and residue depletion, which adds a degree of uncertainty to the risk assessment. In this context, the importance of providing additional scientific data to support a more accurate evaluation was emphasized.

In conclusion of the discussion, reference was made to the recommendations of the Electronic Working Group (EWG) regarding the possibility of advancing the proposed maximum residue limits to the final steps for adoption, while emphasizing the need to strike a balance between consumer protection and facilitating international trade.

❖ Presentation of Agenda Item (7.1) by the Arab Republic of Egypt

The meeting addressed agenda item 7.1 concerning the extrapolation of maximum residue limits (MRLs) of veterinary drugs to include additional animal species, in particular camels. The general framework and criteria adopted by the CCRVDF for such extrapolation were reviewed. These criteria include the similarity of edible tissues, the use of the parent compound as a residue marker, and the availability of sufficient scientific data to support extrapolation between different animal species.

The outcomes of the Electronic Working Group (EWG) assessment were presented, which indicated that extrapolation of MRLs for both albendazole and ivermectin to camels was not supported, due to failure to meet the established criteria, particularly with regard to the availability of sufficient scientific data and the comparability of residue characteristics.

In contrast, extrapolation of oxytetracycline to camels (in edible tissues and milk) was supported, as it met the required criteria and was backed by consistent scientific evidence. It was also noted that other related compounds, such as tetracycline and chlortetracycline, may be considered for extrapolation based on the same scientific principles.

❖ Presentation of Agenda Item (7.2) by the State of Qatar and the Kingdom of Bahrain

The presentation addressed the extrapolation of maximum residue limits (MRLs) of veterinary drugs to include edible tissues other than liver and kidney, within the framework of the work of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF). It was noted that during the twenty-seventh session of the Committee, an Electronic Working Group (EWG) was established to develop scientific criteria for such extrapolation, in order to ensure consumer health protection and facilitate international trade.

The presentation explained that the Working Group proposed a risk-based framework relying on dietary exposure estimation models (TMDI/EDI) and comparison with the acceptable daily intake (ADI), while applying conservative assumptions to ensure safety. It also proposed the use of the term “other offal action levels (ooALs)” to distinguish extrapolated values from conventional maximum residue limits.

The proposed criteria were also reviewed, including limiting extrapolation to the same animal species, not relying on previously extrapolated values, and restricting the use of extrapolated values to import and export control purposes only, without their use in registration procedures or national programs.

❖ Presentation of Agenda Item (8.1) by the Syrian Arab Republic and the Kingdom of Morocco

The presentation reviewed the draft guidelines on dealing with residues of veterinary drugs resulting from unintended carry-over through feed in cases where no established maximum residue limits (MRLs) exist. It emphasized the importance of adopting a risk-based approach to ensure consumer safety and avoid impacts on trade.

It also addressed the proposed framework, which relies on “Action Levels” and a Risk Management Decision Tool (RMDT) to assess cases, whereby residues within acceptable limits are considered not of concern, while higher values require appropriate action.

Recommendations:

- Support the adoption of the proposed guidelines.
- Request practical guidance to facilitate implementation.
- Encourage the expansion of the scope of application.
- Request further clarification on certain methodological aspects.

❖ Presentation of Agenda Item (8.2) by the Arab Republic of Egypt

The meeting reviewed agenda item 8.2 concerning action levels for residues of the substances nicarbazin and lasalocid in poultry eggs, resulting from unintended and unintentional carry-over of these substances from feed into food products.

A technical presentation was provided explaining the nature of these two substances and their use in controlling coccidiosis in poultry, as well as the mechanism of residue transfer into eggs due to incidental contamination of feed. The methodology adopted by the CCRVDF for establishing action levels was also reviewed. This approach is based on risk analysis principles and includes the assessment of animal dietary exposure, estimation of residue levels in food, determination of appropriate action levels, and finally the assessment of human dietary exposure.

In light of the discussions, it was noted that there was no objection to advancing the proposed action levels to the next steps (5/8) for adoption within the Codex Alimentarius. It was further emphasized that this position does not affect Egypt’s right to adopt what it deems appropriate within its national legislation in the future.

A technical observation was also raised regarding the possibility of calculating dietary exposure based on a body weight of 70 kg instead of 60 kg, which may more accurately reflect certain population groups and could influence the estimation of safety levels associated with these residues.

❖ **Presentation of Agenda Item (9) by the United Arab Emirates**

The presentation reviewed mechanisms for strengthening coordination between the two committees, particularly with regard to dual-use compounds, through the Joint Electronic Working Group (EWG). It also addressed progress made in developing a definition for these compounds, as well as the development of a stepwise methodology for harmonizing maximum residue limits (MRLs), in addition to standardizing food descriptors.

The presentation explained that the proposed methodology is based on the use of existing scientific assessments to derive harmonized values, ensuring consumer health protection and avoiding duplication of evaluations. It also emphasized the importance of holding virtual joint meetings to enhance engagement and improve alignment between the two committees, in addition to the role of harmonizing food descriptors in supporting the application of unified values.

Recommendations:

- Support the work of the Joint Electronic Working Group.
- Endorse the holding of virtual joint meetings between the two committees.
- Support the harmonization methodology based on scientific assessment.
- Strengthen national coordination among relevant authorities.

❖ **Presentation of Agenda Item (10) by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Sultanate of Oman**

The presentation reviewed the relevant documents related to the list of priority veterinary drugs, which include proposals from member countries and submitted comments, in preparation for review by the relevant working group and submission of its recommendations to the Committee. It explained that the priority list is a key element within the Codex risk analysis framework, as it identifies substances requiring scientific evaluation by JECFA in order to establish health-based guidance values (HBGVs) and maximum residue limits (MRLs), thereby supporting public health protection and facilitating international trade.

The presentation also reviewed the criteria used for setting priorities, which include the extent of drug use, its impact on public health, antimicrobial resistance risks, availability of scientific data, and trade implications.

Recommendations:

- Support the updating of the priority list.

- Encourage the submission of scientific data to support JECFA evaluations.
- Emphasize consideration of public health and antimicrobial resistance when setting priorities.
- Support continued discussions on priority-setting criteria.

Closing Remarks

The meeting concluded with closing remarks, during which Eng. Ahmed Eddouaicer expressed his appreciation for the efforts made in organizing the meeting, wishing the continuation of such gatherings and the strengthening of interaction among participants, including through electronic platforms and communication channels, in a way that contributes to clarifying inquiries and effectively discussing agenda items. He also prayed that the remaining days of the holy month would be filled with goodness and blessings, and that God would accept the fasting and prayers of everyone. He further congratulated the participants on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr.

Eng. Ahmed Al-Basha also expressed his gratitude for the meeting management and the positive outcomes achieved, commending the efforts of the speakers and participants, especially given that the meetings were held during the month of Ramadan. He wished them success and a safe return to their home countries, extended his Eid Al-Fitr greetings, and expressed his hope that peace and goodness would prevail in the region.

In conclusion, Dr. Intisar Al-Gharibi, the Regional Coordinator for the Near East, expressed her appreciation for the participation of member countries and their contributions to enriching the discussions, emphasizing the importance of continuing joint work and implementing the agreed recommendations in a manner that strengthens regional harmonization. She also commended the efforts of the working groups, wished everyone success, extended her Eid Al-Fitr greetings, and prayed for security and stability across the Arab countries.

Appreciation and thanks were extended to the representatives of the (Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Iraq, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Kingdom of Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and the Sultanate of Oman) for their valuable efforts and effective contributions to the success of the meeting.

Participants in the meeting:

- intisar salim
- IUFoST-GFORSS/Nayra Elshe...
- syria D ABEER HADDA
- AIDSMO - Ahmed Eddouaicer
- GSO - Ahmed Albasha
- UAE- Sonia Baldi
- UAE- Sonia Baldi
- GFORSS-IUFoST/Amine Kass...
- IUFoST\GFORSS - Ruba Gous...
- Asma Alhashmi
- GFORSS-IUFoST -Guilder Mo...
- UAE - Dr.Moha...
- UAE - Dr.Mohamed Taha
- Hosam Saleh
- Eng.Redá Ismail-EOS-Egypt
- Qatar - Dr Aymen Mamlouk
- CCP TUNISIA/ CTAÁ , ISSAM ...
- qalaraibi
- Magdi Salih
- Maisaa Syria
- Syrian-CCP: Eng.Maisaa abu...
- Sudan /Ehsas Elawad
- Syria -Dr .Balsa...
- Syria -Dr .Balsam Jreikous
- HODA ABBAS
- HODA ABBAS
- Sabah Hassan A...
- Sabah Hassan Abdelgadir
- IRAQ-CCP/Nag...
- IRAQ-CCP/Nagham Hameed
- DANIYA's iPhone
- DANIYA's iPhone
- FSQC/Naela Alhinai