

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD
INFORMATION PAPER

Codex Committee on Food Hygiene Meeting, 2012

1. This note summarises the main outcomes of the 44th session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) which was held in New Orleans, USA from 12 to 16 November 2012. The Session was well attended with 207 delegates representing 73 member countries, 1 member organization and 16 international organizations including FAO, WHO and OIE; 16 EU Member States attended. The Committee had a productive session completing work on several texts and taking on one new piece of work.
2. In summary, the Committee agreed to advance the following texts to the 36th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) for adoption:
 - proposed draft Principles and guidelines for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria to Foods; and
 - proposed draft annex on berries to the Code of Hygienic Practice for fresh fruits and vegetables (CAC/RCP 53-2003).
3. The Committee endorsed the hygiene provisions with amendments in the Draft Regional Code of Practice for street-vended foods (Near East) and requested further clarification on the scientific basis for the provisions regarding cleaning of utensils.
4. The Committee agreed to take forward one new piece of work subject to approval by CAC:
 - to develop an overarching code of hygienic practice for low moisture foods to be led by Canada with the assistance of the USA.
5. The Committee discussed the following ongoing work and need for two discussion papers:
 - proposed draft guidelines for control of specific zoonotic parasites in meat: *Trichinella spiralis* and *Cysticercus bovis* (*Taenia saginata*) led by the European Commission and New Zealand. The Committee returned the document to step 2 for redrafting;
 - the proposed draft revision of the Code of Hygienic Practice for Spices and Dried Aromatic Plants led by the USA was returned to step 2 for redrafting and India offered to assist the USA with the work; and
 - two discussion papers were requested, one on occurrence and control of parasites to be led by Australia and, the other on the need to revise the Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CAC/RCP 53-2003) to be led by Brazil.

6. FAO and WHO were requested to undertake the following:

- to develop a priority listing for microbiological hazards in relation to low-moisture foods to inform the proposed new work to be led by Canada.
- undertake a risk assessment to determine whether there is a significant public health risk from *Salmonella* associated with consumption of spices and dried aromatic herbs and to evaluate whether criteria for *Salmonella* are meaningful to ensure adequate consumer health protection; identify any other foodborne pathogens of concern in spices; and identify the range of spices to be covered in the Code of Hygienic Practice for Spices and Dried Aromatic Herbs;
- in relation to the recent CCFH work on microbiological criteria to peer review the practical examples for the establishment and implementation of microbiological criteria for possible posting on the FAO and WHO websites and to help develop an annex on statistical and mathematical considerations in relation to microbiological criteria; and
- to collect and review existing information on risk-based examples for *Trichinella* spp. and “*Cysticercus bovis*” (*Taenia saginata*) to illustrate the level of consumer protection likely to be achieved with different post-harvest risk management options.

7. The report of the 44th Session of the CCFH is available on the Codex website at:

http://www.codexalimentarius.org/download/report/787/REP13_FHe.pdf

**Secretariat
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