

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**Codex Committee on Food Hygiene Meeting, 2008**

1. This note summarises the main outcomes of the 40th session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) which was held in Guatemala City, 1 – 5 December 2008. The session was attended by 61 member countries and organisations, representatives of FAO and WHO, 12 observer bodies and the European Commission. 16 EU Member States attended with France holding the Presidency. The report can be accessed at http://www.codexalimentarius.net/download/report/714/al32_13e.pdf
2. The Committee had a productive session again, completing work on two texts and taking on two new pieces of work. In summary, the Committee:
3. Agreed to advance two texts to the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) for adoption.
 - Annex II on Microbiological Criteria for Powdered Follow-up Formula and Formulae for Special Medical Purposes for Young Children. No criterion for *Enterobacter sakazakii* (Cronobacter spp.) was set due to insufficient information but there was a stronger emphasis on labelling and education.
 - Annex II on Microbiological Criteria for *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready-to-Eat Foods and Annex III on guidance to competent authorities on environmental monitoring and process control. The document was accepted with only minor changes and preserves the approaches taken in Europe and the US.
4. The Committee agreed that the Guidelines for the Control of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* spp. in Chicken Meat required further elaboration as there were still significant gaps in the data needed to support the risk based element of the document and also some gaps in the hazard based controls. The WHO/FAO would be conducting an expert meeting in this area which would gather information and review the information gathered to date. A proposal by the Working Group to develop a web based risk management tool was also agreed. The Committee agreed to re-establish the Working Group led by Sweden and New Zealand which is expected to meet late summer 2009.
5. On the Annex on Leafy Green Vegetables Including Leafy Herbs to the Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, the Committee agreed that the document required further elaboration and agreed to re-establish the Electronic Working Group led by the USA. A circular letter will be issued to Member Countries with the aim of filling information gaps on small scale and other production and processing systems (e.g. watercress).

6. The Committee agreed to return the proposed draft Code of Hygienic Practice in Seafood for pathogenic *Vibrio* spp. in Seafood to the working group for further development led by Japan.
7. The Committee agreed to take forward two new pieces of work:
 - Elaboration of a Code of Hygienic Practice for the Control of Viruses in Food to be led by the Netherlands.
 - Annexes to the Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Pathogenic *Vibrio* species in Seafood to cover control measures for *V. parahaemolyticus* and *V. vulnificus*.
8. In response to the request of the 31st session of the CAC, the Committee agreed to establish an electronic Working Group led by Switzerland to consider whether the Committee should give high priority to updating the Code of Hygiene Practice for Collecting, Processing and Marketing of Natural Mineral Waters. The output from a Working Group will be prepared in the format for new work required by the Committee and will be considered by the 41st session of CCFH.
9. It was mentioned that India is expected to begin work agreed at the last session to develop a risk analysis principles document for the committee, as requested by the CAC in the context of the Codex Strategic Plan.
10. The UK presented a short paper outlining a possible proposal for the elaboration of a Code of Hygienic Practice for Cocoa and Chocolate Production and Processing. This attracted widespread interest and a Circular Letter was agreed to gather views and information to inform any possible proposal for new work.
11. The International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods (ICMSF) observed that consideration could be given to whether it is necessary to update the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods, which is 12 years old. New work would bring it into line with two recently adopted texts on Microbiological Risk Management and Risk Management Metrics. The USA supported this and indicated that it would consider proposing new work at the next session of the Committee.

Secretariat
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