

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**Codex Committee on Food Hygiene Meeting, 2009**

1. This note summarises the main outcomes of the 41st session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) which was held in San Diego, 16-20 November 2009. The session was attended by over 100 member countries and organisations including representatives of FAO, WHO and OIE, observer bodies and the European Commission. 14 EU Member States attended with Sweden holding the Presidency.

2. The Committee had a productive session again, completing work on four texts and taking on two new pieces of work. In summary, the Committee:

Agreed to advance the following texts to the 33rd session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) for adoption.

- Proposed draft Annex on Leafy Green Vegetables Including Leafy Herbs to the Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.
- Proposed draft Code of Hygienic Practice for pathogenic *Vibrio* spp. in Seafood.
- Proposed draft Annex (to the above document) on control measures for *V. parahaemolyticus* and *V. vulnificus* in molluscan shellfish.
- Proposed draft Risk Analysis Principles and Procedures Applied by the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene, as requested by the CAC in the context of the Codex Strategic Plan.

3. The Committee recognised that important progress had been made in developing the draft Guidelines for the Control of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* spp. in Chicken Meat. The document had included new scientific advice from the FAO/WHO technical meeting on *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* spp. in chicken meat held in Rome in May 2009. However, the guidelines were not discussed with a view to their advancement in the Codex process due to divergent opinions regarding inclusion of chemical decontamination methods in the document. The European Community drew attention to the fact that the report of the FAO/WHO expert consultation on active chlorine was not yet available and that the guidelines should not be considered for advancement at this time. The Committee agreed to establish an electronic working group led by Sweden and New Zealand to revise the document based on the comments submitted.

4. The Committee was updated on progress in developing the guidelines document on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Viruses in Food. Extensive comments had been received on the current draft and the working group led by the Netherlands was requested to revise the document in the light of these comments prior to the next session.

5. The Committee considered the proposed draft standard for smoked fish, smoked flavoured fish and smoke-dried fish and the proposed draft standard for fish sauce which had been forwarded by the 30th Session of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products. Concerns were raised about the suggested temperature limits and

packaging with regard *Clostridium botulinum* and some of these products and the Committee agreed to consider the issue again at the next session.

6. The Committee agreed to take forward two new pieces of work:

- Revise the Code of Hygiene Practice for Collecting, Processing and Marketing of Natural Mineral Waters to be led by Switzerland.
- Revision of the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods to be led by Finland and co-chaired by Japan.

7. At the previous session the UK had presented a short paper outlining a possible proposal for the elaboration of a Code of Hygienic Practice for Cocoa and Chocolate Production and Processing. A circular letter seeking comments from Member Countries had produced a mixed response and the working group on new work proposed that this topic could be considered in the future, possibly as a broader piece of work addressing low moisture foods.

Other items of interest

8. The WHO representative informed the Committee that a scientific workshop organised by WHO in collaboration with FAO and OIE was held in Brisbane, Australia in September 2009. The workshop examined the research and public health aspects of Nipah and Hendra viruses and the recent discovery of Reston Ebola virus in swine in the Philippines.

9. The representative of FAO updated the committee on progress with development of a web-based risk management tool to support the implementation of the Codex guidelines for the control of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* spp. in chicken meat which they aim to launch in summer 2010.

10. The report of the 41st Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene will be published on the Codex website (<http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/archives.jsp?lang=en>) in due course.

Secretariat
December 2009