Report of the U.S. Delegate, Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food, 5th Session

Introduction

The 5th session of CCCF met in The Hague, The Netherlands, March 21-25, 2011, at the kind invitation of the Government of The Netherlands. The meeting was attended by 184 delegates representing 62 member countries, one member organization, and 15 international organizations.

Matters Referred to the Committee by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and/or Other Codex Committee/Task Forces

- **Revision of Risk Analysis Principles Applied by the Codex Committee on Food Additives and the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods and the Code of Practice for Source Directed Measures to Reduce Contamination of Food with Chemicals as to their applicability to animal feed**
  The Committee agreed to establish an eWG led by The Netherlands with the following terms of reference:
- To prepare separate Risk Analysis Principles for contaminants and natural toxins in food and feed;
- To examine whether it was necessary to further specify the applicability to feed in the Principles as well as the Code of Practice as proposed in Annexes 1 and 2 of CS/CF 11/52, respectively; taking into account the proposal for the amendment of the definition of contaminant as presented in CRD 18; and
- To consider any other revisions that might be necessary to update the terminology in the Principles for consistency with the current risk assessment terminology.
- **Proposal for Revision of the Definition of Hazard in the Procedural Manual**
- Noting that the proposal was in relation to nutrient risk assessment and the decision of the 32nd session of the Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses not to amend the definition, the Committee agreed that further discussion on this matter was no longer necessary.

- **Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils**
  The Committee concluded that halogenated solvents could be considered as processing aids and therefore did not fall within the remit of the CCCF. The Committee also noted that solvents were only allowed for the production of olive pomace oils according to the *Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils* (CODEX STAN 33-1981) and that the presence of these solvents in olive oil and virgin olive oil would be considered as contaminants. The Committee agreed to request CCFO to consider whether the use of halogenated solvents in the production of olive pomace oils was necessary in view of the potential health

concerns associated with these compounds and the consequential general trend to reduce their industrial use.

- **Entries for fat spreads and blended spreads in the GSCTFF**
  The Committee agreed to replace "margarine and minarine" with "fat spreads and blended spreads" as proposed by CCFO.

Proposed Draft Code of Practice for the Reduction of Ethyl Carbamate in Stone Fruit Distillates
The Committee agreed to forward the proposed draft Code of Practice to the 34th Session of the Commission for adoption at Step 5/8 (with omission of Steps 6 and 7).

Draft Maximum Levels for Melamine in Food (Liquid Infant Formula) The Committee agreed to forward the draft ML of 0.15 mg/kg for liquid infant formula as consumed (with a note that the ML does not apply to liquid infant formula for which it can be proven that the level higher than the ML is a consequence of migration from food contact materials taking into account any nationally authorized migration limit) to the 34th Session of the Commission for adoption at Step 5/8 (with the omission of Steps 6 and 7). The Delegations of Costa Rica, Peru, and Nicaragua expressed their reservation to the inclusion of the note.

Proposed Draft Maximum Levels for Deoxynivalenol (DON) and its Acetylated Derivatives in Cereals and Cereal-based Products
The Committee agreed to proceed with the establishment of MLs for DON in cereals and that it would at the 8th Session of the Committee consider the extension of the ML to acetylated derivatives. The Committee reconfirmed that the ML would not be for cereals intended for animal feed as DON barely carries over to animal products for human consumption. The Committee also agreed to reconvene the eWG, led by Canada, to continue this work, including the development of associated sampling plans, exploration of the possibility to revise the existing *Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Mycotoxin Contamination in Cereals* (CAC/RCP 51-2003), and requesting CCMAS to identify methods for acetylated derivatives of DON.

The Committee agreed to return the propose draft MLs for DON to Step 2/3 for further development by the eWG, circulation for comments and further consideration by the next session of the Committee.

Proposed Draft Maximum Level for Total Aflatoxins in Dried Figs
The Committee agreed to return the Proposed Draft Maximum Level for Total Aflatoxins in Dried Figs to Step 2/3 so that the sampling plans according to the proposed ML of 10 mg/kg can be developed for further consideration by the next session of the Committee.

Editorial Amendments to the GSCTFF
The Committee agreed to discuss this Agenda Item at the next session as there was no

document available at this session.

Discussion Paper on Mycotoxins in Sorghum
The Committee agreed to re-establish the eWG, led by Nigeria, to update the discussion paper to screen the general part of the existing *Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Mycotoxin Contamination in Cereals* (CAC/RCP 51-2003) to ascertain whether it was relevant and feasible for the production of sorghum and to explore the feasibility of including an additional Annex for "Prevention and reduction of contamination by aflatoxins in grain sorghum" to the COP for consideration by the next session of the Committee.

Discussion Paper on Arsenic in Rice
The Committee agreed to initiate new work on maximum levels for arsenic in rice subject to approval by the 34th Session of the Commission. The Committee also agreed to re-convene the eWG led by China, who would prepare a working paper considering MLs for arsenic in rice based on the considerations made at plenary for deliberation at the next session of the Committee. The eWG should specify whether the MLs apply to total and/or inorganic arsenic in rice.

Discussion Paper on Guidance for Risk Management Options on How to Deal with the Results from New Risk Assessment Methodologies
The Committee agreed to re-establish the eWG, led by the United States of America and co-chaired by The Netherlands, to revise the discussion paper with the following terms of reference:

- Prepare a discussion paper for consideration at the next session of the Committee on risk management options, in addition to MLs and codes of practice, in light of different risk assessment outcomes focusing on:

- A description of different risk assessment outcomes in language understandable for risk managers; and
- Implications of different risk assessment outcomes and description of possible risk management options.

Discussion Paper on Ochratoxin A in Cocoa
The Committee agreed to re-establish the eWG, led by Ghana, to update the discussion paper with a view to the development of a code of practice for consideration by the next session of the Committee.

Discussion Paper on Furan
The Committee noted that to date research on furan had not been successful in identifying practical and consistently effective solutions for decreasing furan in food and that it was premature to develop a code of practice at this stage. The Committee agreed

that this work could be taken up in the future when more adequate data become available and that at that time the re-establishment of the eWG to further develop the discussion paper could be considered.

Discussion Paper on Pyrrolizidine Alkaloids
The Committee agreed to re-establish the eWG, led by The Netherlands, to undertake further compilation of existing management practices to evaluate the possibility to develop a code of practice for further consideration by the next session of the Committee.

Endorsement of Provisions for Health-related Limits for Certain Substances in the Standard for Natural Mineral Water
Noting that according to the Natural Mineral Water Standard, the compounds in sections 3.2.17 to 3.2.20 should not be present in natural mineral waters but permitted at levels below the LOQ, and the general sense of the Committee that the compounds in sections 3.2.17 to 3.2.20 should therefore be considered quality parameters, it was agreed to inform the Commission to remove footnote 3 in the *Standard on Natural Mineral Waters* (CODEX STAN 108-1981) as there was no need for the endorsement of these sections since there was no safety concern associated with these compounds at the proposed levels. The Committee took no further action on the integration of the safety parameters in sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.16 into the *General Standard on Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed*.

Priority List of Contaminants and Naturally Occurring Toxicants Proposed for Evaluation by JECFA
The Committee noted that fumonisins and cyanogenic glycosides were scheduled for evaluation by the 74th JECFA (June 2011) and therefore removed them from the priority list. The Committee endorsed the priority list of contaminants and naturally occurring toxicants for JECFA evaluation as noted below:

1. 3-MCPD esters - Full evaluation (toxicological and exposure assessments)
2. Glycidyl esters - Full evaluation (toxicological and exposure assessments) and bioavailability of free compounds
3. Pyrrolizidine alkaloids (PAs) - Identify most relevant PAs (occurrence and toxicity) for human health, full risk assessment, identify data gaps, consideration of PAs in food as it carries over from feed to animal products
4. Non dioxin-like PCBs

Other Business and Future Work

Report of the In-session Working Group on the Follow-up by CCCF on Recent JECFA Evaluations

- **Maximum levels for cadmium in various foods in the *Codex General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed and the related Code of Practice for Source Directed Measures to Reduce Contamination of Foods with Chemicals***

  The Committee agreed that no follow-up was necessary.
- **Maximum levels for lead in various foods in the *Codex General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed and the related Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Lead Contamination in Foods and the Code of Practice for Source Directed Measures to Reduce Contamination of Foods with Chemicals***

  The Committee agreed to establish an eWG, led by the United States of America, to (i) reconsider the existing maximum levels with a focus on foods important for infants and children and also on the canned fruits and vegetables and (ii) reconsider if other existing maximum levels should be addressed.
- **Maximum levels for mercury in natural mineral water and salt (food grade) and guideline levels for methylmercury in fish and predatory fish in the *Codex General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed and the related Code of Practice for Source Directed Measures to Reduce Contamination of Foods with Chemicals***

  The Committee agreed that no follow-up as regards the existing MLs for mercury was necessary. The Committee also agreed to consider the need to review the existing GLs for methylmercury in predatory fish when the full report of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on the Risks and Benefits of Fish Consumption becomes available.
- **Perchlorate**
  The Committee agreed that no follow-up was necessary since no health concern was identified at current estimated levels of exposure from food and drinking water.
- **Chlorine-containing disinfectants in food production and processing**
  The Committee took note of the report of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on the Benefits and Risks of the Use of Chlorine-containing Disinfectants in Food Production and Processing and agreed that no further action was necessary.