



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION
AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

Twenty-third Session

DISCUSSION PAPER ON CONSIDERATION OF EMERGING ISSUES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR
THE WORK OF THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION AND
CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

Prepared by Australia

Introduction

1. At its 20th Session in 2013, the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS20) recognised that emerging global challenges were impacting approaches and technologies relating to food safety controls, and these trends were likely to continue.
2. As a result, the Committee requested a discussion paper be prepared to enable CCFICS to take a strategic approach to its area of work. At its 21st Session (2014), the Committee considered the discussion paper (CX/FICS 14/21/7) and agreed that the Discussion Paper be retained as a standing item and updated ahead of each CCFICS meeting.
3. At its 22nd Session (2015), the Committee considered the updated discussion paper (CX/FICS 16/22/9). The paper included a Horizon scan of issues that could impact on food control systems and the work of CCFICS (para 20), as well as a list of potential areas of work (para 23). The Committee agreed to¹:
 - Develop a framework for the preliminary assessment and identification of priority areas that the Committee may need to work on in the future
 - Identify issues from the possible areas for new work described in para. 23 of CX/FICS 16/22/9 and then match them against the criteria to be developed for prioritisation. Issues to be considered should include further guidance on an appeals mechanism in the context of rejections, as requested by the Delegation of Nigeria and the issue of food integrity/authenticity as presented by the Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran
 - Consider the work of the World Customs Organization and the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) when developing guidance relating to the interaction between food control authorities and customs/border control agencies.
4. CCFICS23 is invited to consider the draft discussion paper as updated by Australia.

Approach

5. The purpose of this agenda item is to seek to facilitate a strategic, outward-looking committee, who regularly undertake a global scan, identifying potential future issues, challenges and advancements. This will ensure the Committee is strongly positioned to consider the new work or revision of Codex standards to ensure members are well prepared in advance of such events.
6. It is envisaged that this will be an ongoing agenda item for CCFICS. CCFICS22 agreed to the above action items being prepared by Australia in order to reshape the previous discussion paper to ensure priority areas of concern to CCFICS are clearly identified and prioritised.
7. Appendix A draws from the work previously conducted under this item by CCFICS (see para. 20 CX/FICS 16/22/9), with the subsequent identification of ten global issues, and their potential impact on the work of the Committee. Existing standards or new work proposals relevant to each issue have also been included, so as to highlight any gaps that the Committee may wish to consider addressing in the future.

¹ REP16/FICS

8. The topics highlighted at Appendix A are not all encompassing nor are they intended to limit the work of CCFICS to these items. They are only intended to inform the Committee of potential areas of new work in the global context as well as being beneficial contextually in comparing the merit of new items raised by the Committee.

9. In identifying and prioritizing its long-term work strategy, CCFICS will need to take into account the differing needs and capabilities of members and the need for future guidance to encompass the fundamental components of food control systems as well as the inclusion of newer approaches and technologies.

Prioritisation of new work

10. The Codex Alimentarius Strategic Plan 2014 to 2019 identifies the need for committees to be able to prioritise new work². In addition, given the potential areas of new work identified through the global environment scan, and the diversity of emerging issues, CCFICS22 agreed to develop a framework for the preliminary assessment and identification of priority areas.

11. Any future work priorities for CCFICS should consider:

- The strategic importance of the issue being considered
- Its relevance to the CCFICS mandate
- Impact with regard to food safety or ensuring fair practices in the food trade
- Is the issue addressed by existing CCFICS texts or where text does exist, does a gap analysis in the text justify more work is required.

12. To assist the Committee give effect to the above elements, a draft prioritisation framework has been prepared at Appendix B. The framework was developed in recognition of the criteria for new work contained in the *Procedural Manual*, along with existing guidance developed by other Codex Committees.

13. It provides a simple criteria for the prioritisation of new work and establishes a subjective self-rating scale to assist the Committee to identify new work proposals in order of merit. New work proposals should undertake a self-assessment against this criteria specific to CCFICS in addition to addressing the requirements for new work proposals outlined in the *Procedural Manual*.

14. Recognising that many CCFICS texts were developed a number of years ago, the framework will also be useful with regard to prioritisation of their review and update.

15. As noted in the discussions of CCFICS22, consideration should be given to the work of other intergovernmental bodies, for example the role of the World Customs Organisation and WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, when developing guidance relating to the interaction between food control authorities and customs/border control agencies.

16. CCFICS22 agreed that the Delegation of Australia should match the issues identified in para. 23 CX/FICS 16/22/9 against the criteria (then yet to be developed). After drafting the Emerging Global Issues Relevant to CCFICS (Appendix A) and the Framework for Preliminary Assessment (Appendix B), the Delegation of Australia did not see it appropriate for a single Member alone to determine the prioritization of possible areas for new work in the absence of the Committee's agreement to the proposed criteria. It is recommended that this exercise is undertaken after the Committee considers the criteria at Appendix B.

Recommendations

17. CCFICS23 should consider the draft documents provided for consideration at Appendix A and Appendix B. Members and Observers are strongly encouraged to critically consider these draft documents given their importance in targeting and prioritising new work areas by the Committee. In this regard, it is important that CCFICS23 consider:

- a) the strategic areas of importance to the committee;
- b) the gaps that may still exist in existing guidance;
- c) the need to update existing guidance; and
- d) new areas for which guidance is needed.

18. It is recommended that the Committee agree that:

² Strategic Goal 1, Objective 1.2, Activities 1.2.1 and 1.2.2

- Appendix A become the standing document for consideration under this agenda item for future CCFICS meetings;
- Given the importance of global input in shaping the effectiveness of Appendix A, that its custodianship is rotated through members on a meeting by meeting basis to ensure its ongoing global and membership relevance;
- Appendix B is adopted as the prioritisation tool for CCFICS when appropriate, such as when more than one new work proposal is being considered;
- Issues identified in Appendix A be assessed against the prioritization tool at Appendix B, including further guidance on an appeals mechanism in the context of rejections as requested by the Delegation of Nigeria and the issue of food integrity/authenticity as presented by the Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (para. 65 REP16/FICS).

Appendix A**Emerging Global Issues relevant to Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems****Introduction**

1. There is vast array of global emerging issues that will likely impact on the current global food trade system, including opportunities and challenges for inspection and certification systems.
2. The Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) is charged with developing texts and providing recommendations relevant to the food import and export inspection and certification systems. Specifically, the CCFICS Terms of Reference¹ are:
 - a) to develop principles and guidelines for food import and export inspection and certification systems with a view to harmonising methods and procedures which protect the health of consumers, ensure fair trading practices and facilitate international trade in foodstuffs;
 - b) to develop principles and guidelines for the application of measures by the competent authorities of exporting and importing countries to provide assurance where necessary that foodstuffs comply with requirements, especially statutory health requirements;
 - c) to develop guidelines for the utilisation, as and when appropriate, of quality assurance systems to ensure that foodstuffs conform with requirements and to promote the recognition of these systems in facilitating trade in food products under bilateral/multilateral arrangements by countries;
 - d) to develop guidelines and criteria with respect to format, declarations and language of such official certificates as countries may require with a view towards international harmonisation;
 - e) to make recommendations for information exchange in relation to food import/export control;
 - f) to consult as necessary with other international groups working on matters related to food inspection and certification systems; and,
 - g) to consider other matters assigned to it by the Commission in relation to food inspection and certification systems.

Global Issues relevant to the Work of CCFICS

3. The below table identifies ten significant global issues that may impact on the work of CCFICS and recognises any existing texts or new work proposals relevant to each issue. These ten items have been drawn from the Discussion Paper on Consideration of Emerging Issues and Future Directions and subsequent discussions at CCFICS22. Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) has also been included given the prominence of its discussion at the CAC39 in 2016.
4. It may be the case that the existing text touches on, but does not fully address, the identified global issue. In this case, additional or clarifying guidance may be warranted. This may present an opportunity for the Committee to consider the appropriateness of potential new work. It may also present an opportunity to review existing text in light of new data, or new trading environments.
5. To assist the future development of this agenda item, it is suggested that the lead country should do a global scan of international material. The global scan should make reference to, where appropriate, prominent international discussions or issues of the day that may have been raised by various international organisations from which the challenge, issue or trend is identified. This would include Codex Alimentarius, WHO, FAO, UN, OIE, OECD etc. These potential areas of concern should be listed in order of importance and limited to 5 items where possible. If no new items are identified that is also acceptable. Where new items are included a short rationale should then be developed justifying to note their inclusion in the following table.
6. Members should refer to this table when considering the development of new work or revision of existing work. It provides useful guidance in linking member issues to broader global themes as well as existing CCFICS standards. As identified in Appendix B, further assessment in this regard will be required in the development of a new work proposal for consideration by CCFICS prior to its recommendation to the CAC.

¹ 24th Edition of the Codex Procedural Manual, Section V

Emerging Global Issue (<i>not in priority order</i>)	Related Impact on CCFICS / Codex	Related CCFICS text / new work proposal
New food production, processing, transport and distribution technologies	Impacts on the Competent Authority with regard to national food control systems, new national production processes, and imported food. Given the need to advance national standards will also impact on trade through equivalence and systems recognition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 20-1995 • CAC/GL 26-1997 • CAC/GL 34-1999 • CAC/GL 53-2003 • CAC/GL 60-2006 • CAC/GL 82-2013 • CAC/GL 89-2016 • Discussion Paper on System Equivalence
Given the rapidly changing technologies and processes supporting food production, globalisation, and the emergence of other risks - there is an ever increasing need to ensure consumers are protected from unsafe foods.	Links to national food control systems, their effectiveness, traceability, recall, imported food control systems, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 20-1995 • CAC/GL 19-1995 • CAC/GL 25-1997 • CAC/GL 26-1997 • CAC/GL 34-1999 • CAC/GL 38-2001 • CAC/GL 47-2003 • CAC/GL 53-2003 • CAC/GL 60-2006 • CAC/GL 82-2013 • CAC/GL 89-2016 • Draft Principles and Guidelines for Monitoring Performance of National Food Control Systems
Increased focus on food integrity / authenticity	The vulnerability of food systems to intentional manipulation for economic gain, for example.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 20-1995 • CAC/GL 19-1995 • CAC/GL 25-1997 • CAC/GL 26-1997 • CAC/GL 38-2001 • CAC/GL 47-2003 • CAC/GL 60-2006 • CAC/GL 82-2013

Emerging Global Issue (not in priority order)	Related Impact on CCFICS / Codex	Related CCFICS text / new work proposal
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 89-2016 • Discussion paper on Food Integrity/Food Authenticity
Improved analytics and testing technologies	The tools and methods used to measure performance of food safety systems and how and when they are applied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 47-2003 • CAC/GL 53-2003 • CAC/GL 25-1997 • CAC/GL 34-1999 • CAC/GL 82-2013 • CAC/GL 89-2016 • Draft Principles and Guidelines for Monitoring Performance of National Food Control Systems
Private standards	The application of private standards in the production and standardisation of food, which may be different to those established by a competent authority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 20-1995 • CAC/GL 26-1997 • CAC/GL 34-1999 • CAC/GL 38-2001 • CAC/GL 60-2003 • CAC/GL 47-2003 • CAC/GL 82-2013 • Discussion paper on Third Party Certification
Increasing electronic transactions and ICT capabilities	The use of information technology as applied to food control systems including use for data gathering and analysis, and electronic certification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 19-1995 • CAC/GL 26-1997 • CAC/GL 38-2001 • CAC/GL 82-2013 • CAC/GL 89-2016 • Discussion paper on the Use of Electronic Certificates by Competent Authorities and Migration to Paperless
Evolving role of competent authority and interactions between various government entities	Interaction among various governmental entities involved in food trade, in particular between food control authorities and customs/border protection agencies, and the ability to better leverage information from these interactions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 19-1995 • CAC/GL 34-1999 • CAC/GL 47-2003 • CAC/GL 82-2013 • CAC/GL 89-2016

Emerging Global Issue (not in priority order)	Related Impact on CCFICS / Codex	Related CCFICS text / new work proposal
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Principles and Guidelines for Monitoring Performance of National Food Control Systems
Anti-microbial resistance	Impact on certification or inspections / testing arrangements to identify the presence of anti-microbial.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 20-1995 • CAC/GL 38-2001 • CAC/GL 47-2003 • CAC/GL 82-2013 • CAC/GL 89-2016 • Draft Principles and Guidelines for Monitoring Performance of National Food Control Systems
Evolving global food production systems	Current and anticipated changes in food control systems and their component parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 20-1995 • CAC/GL 19-1995 • CAC/GL 26-1997 • CAC/GL 34-1999 • CAC/GL 38-2001 • CAC/GL 47-2003 • CAC/GL 60-2006 • CAC/GL 82-2013 • CAC/GL 89-2016 • Draft Principles and Guidelines for Monitoring Performance of National Food Control Systems
New approaches to food safety, including preventative and outcomes-based systems	Current and anticipated changes to the suite of tools used to provide assurances, and how and when they are applied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 20-1995 • CAC/GL 19-1995 • CAC/GL 25-1997 • CAC/GL 26-1997 • CAC/GL 34-1999 • CAC/GL 38-2001 • CAC/GL 53-2003 • CAC/GL 47-2003 • CAC/GL 60-2006 • CAC/GL 82-2013

Emerging Global Issue (not in priority order)	Related Impact on CCFICS / Codex	Related CCFICS text / new work proposal
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAC/GL 89-2016 • Draft Principles and Guidelines for Monitoring Performance of National Food Control Systems

Existing CCFICS texts

Reference	Title	Last modified
CAC/GL 19-1995	Principles and Guidelines for the Exchange of Information in Food Safety Emergency Situations	2016
CAC/GL 20-1995	Principles for Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification	1995
CAC/GL 25-1997	Guidelines for the Exchange of Information between Countries on Rejections of Imported Foods	2016
CAC/GL 26-1997	Guidelines for the Design, Operation, Assessment and Accreditation of Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems	2010
CAC/GL 34-1999	Guidelines for the Development of Equivalence Agreements Regarding Food Imports and Export Inspection and Certification Systems	1999
CAC/GL 38-2001	Guidelines for Design, Production, Issuance and Use of Generic Official Certificates	2009
CAC/GL 47-2003	Guidelines for Food Import Control Systems	2006
CAC/GL 53-2003	Guidelines on the Judgement of Equivalence of Sanitary Measures associated with Food Inspection and Certification Systems	2008
CAC/GL 60-2006	Principles for Traceability / Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System	2006
CAC/GL 82-2013	Principles and Guidelines for National Food Control Systems	2013
CAC/GL 89-2016	Principles and guidelines for the exchange of information between importing and exporting countries to support the trade in food	2016

Appendix B

Framework for the preliminary assessment and identification of priority areas for CCFICS

1. The following guidelines are established to assist the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) to identify and prioritise its work.

Proposals for New Work

2. Proposals for new work will typically address issues associated with food safety and fair practices in the food trade, within the mandate of CCFICS, including to establish new guidelines or revise existing guidelines.
3. Proposals for new work to be undertaken should follow the process outlined in the Procedural Manual for *'Proposals to Undertake New Work or to Revise a Standard'*¹, in addition to the criteria below.
4. Members proposing new work should also refer to the document prepared at **Appendix A** that may assist in development of the new work proposal.

Criteria for Evaluating and Prioritising New Work

5. In addition to the provisions applying to new work proposals in the Codex *Procedural Manual*, the following criteria and associated weighting factors will be used in evaluating and prioritising new work proposals undertaken by CCFICS:
 - a. the justification for new work, including how the area of work may fill a gap in the current CCFICS suite of texts, or provide clarity to them.
 - b. whether the work will amend existing CCFICS texts or develop new CCFICS text
 - c. the scope of the work and the extent to which the issue impact on CCFICS members and international trade.
6. To assist in quantifying (c) above, the criteria below should be used by the Member(s) proposing the new work. The criteria will be based on self-assessment and include a rationale to justify the rating. These details should be included in the proposal for new work for the consideration and agreement by the Committee.

Criterion	Rating
Immediate Urgency	High: 9 Medium: 6 Low: 3
Impact of Food Safety	High: 9 Medium: 6 Low: 3
Impact on fair trade practices	Global Trade Impact: 9 Regional Trade Impact: 6 No trade impact: 3

Form of New Work Proposals

7. New Work Proposals should be provided to CCFICS in the format of a project document and address the additional criteria outline above.

¹ CAC Procedural Manual, 24th Edition, Section II, Part 2, *Proposals to undertake New Work or to Revise a Standard addition*

Process for considering Proposals for New Work

8. The Committee will, normally, employ the following process with regard to the revision of existing guidelines or development of new guidelines:
 - a. CCFICS host secretariat will prepare a summary document presenting each proposal for new work and associated self-assessment against the above criteria for discussion at the next session of CCFICS.
 - b. The Committee will consider each new work proposal and, if accepted, a recommendation will be provided to CAC that new work commence. Where there is more than one new work proposal recommended for commencement by CCFICS in that session to the CAC, the new work will be listed in order of priority as determined by the above criteria.
 - c. Where two proposals recommended for approval by CCFICS to the CAC have equal scores under the above criteria, CCFICS will further assess their order of priority with reference to the above criteria to ensure a clear order of priority is established for CAC consideration.

Identification of priority areas

9. CCFICS will consider new work proposals and, where necessary, review of existing codes, in priority order based upon decisions made by CCFICS and using the criteria for evaluating and prioritizing work (see above).
10. The Committee may reassess the priority of each item where new data or other information is available relating to an item. Such data may be submitted for consideration and the priority for the new work proposal reconsidered.
11. CCFICS will continue to utilise all available resources, including the Discussion Paper on Emerging Issues, to identify emerging or imminent issues of relevance to the Committee.