
UNIT 5 CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (CAC)

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5.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, we will be able to:

- 1 describe organization and functions of CAC;
- 1 enlist functions of Codex Committees;

- 1 elaborate Codex standard development process; and
- 1 underline importance of national participation in standard development process.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) commonly referred as “Codex” was created in 1963 by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and World Health Organization (WHO) to develop food standards, guidelines and related texts such as codes of practice under the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme. Codex is an intergovernmental body, the purpose of which are:

- a) protecting the health of the consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade;
- b) promoting coordination of all food standards work undertaken by international governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs);
- c) determining priorities and initiating and guiding the preparation of draft standards through and with the aid of appropriate organizations;
- d) finalizing standards elaborated under (c) above and publishing them in a Codex Alimentarius either as regional or worldwide standards, together with international standards already finalized by other bodies under (b) above, wherever this is practicable; and
- e) amending published standards, as appropriate, in the light of developments.

The Codex Alimentarius is a product of a long evolutionary process involving a wide cross-section of the global community. Two landmark years in the foundation of the Codex Alimentarius were 1960 and 1961.

In October 1960, the first FAO Regional Conference for Europe crystallized a widely held view when it recognized that “the desirability of international agreement on minimum food standards and related questions (including labelling requirements, methods of analysis etc.). As an important means of protecting the consumer’s health, of ensuring quality and of reducing trade barriers, particularly in the rapidly integrating market of Europe.”

In November 1961, the Eleventh session of the FAO Conference passed a resolution to set up the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

In May 1963, the Sixteenth World Health Assembly approved the establishment of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme and adopted the Statutes of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. These Statutes provide the legal basis for the Commission’s work and formally reflect the concepts behind and reasons for its establishment.

5.2 STATUTES OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Article 1 – Mandate

- a) Protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade.
- b) Coordinating all food standards work undertaken by international governmental and non-governmental organizations.
- c) Determining priorities and initiating and guiding the preparation of draft standards.
- d) Finalizing standards and publishing them in a Codex Alimentarius either as regional or worldwide standards.
- e) Amending published standards, after appropriate survey in the light of developments.

Article 2 – Membership

Membership of the Commission is open to all Member Nations and Associate Members of FAO and WHO that are interested in international food standards. Membership shall comprise such of these nations as have notified by the Director-General of FAO or of WHO of their desire to be considered as Members.

Article 3 – Observers (FAO or WHO Member Nations)

Any Member Nation or Associate Member of FAO or WHO which is not a Member of the Commission but has a special interest in the work of the Commission may, upon a request communicated to the Director-General of FAO or WHO, to attend sessions of the Commission and of its subsidiary bodies and ad hoc meetings as observers. Members of either FAO or of WHO that does not wish to become full Members of the Commission are permitted to attend Codex sessions as observers. As observers they may address the Commission but cannot vote.

Article 4 – Observers (other UN Member Nations)

Nations that are not Member Nations or Associate Members of FAO or WHO but are Members of the United Nations may be invited on their request to attend meetings of the Commission as observers, in accordance with the provisions of FAO and WHO relating to the granting of observer status to nations.

Article 5 – Reports and Recommendations

The Commission shall report and make recommendations to the FAO Conference and the World Health Assembly of WHO through their respective Directors-General. Copies of reports, including any conclusions and recommendations, are circulated to interested Member Nations and international organizations for their information as soon as they become available.

Article 6 – Executive Committee

The Commission shall establish an Executive Committee whose composition should ensure an adequate representation of the various geographical areas of the world to which the Members of the Commission belong. Between sessions, the Executive Committee shall act as the executive organ of the Commission. The Executive Committee cannot make decisions on behalf of the Commission (e.g. authorize new work, adopt standards), but it has responsibility for strategic planning, budgeting and managing the standards elaboration process.

Article 7 – Other Subsidiary Bodies

The Commission may establish such other subsidiary bodies as it deems necessary for the accomplishment of its task, subject to the availability of the necessary funds. This article provides the Commission with the authority to create the various committees and task forces necessary to elaborate standards.

Article 8 – Rules of Procedure

The Commission may adopt and amend its own Rules of Procedure that shall come into force upon approval by the Directors-General of FAO and WHO, subject to such confirmation as may be prescribed by the procedures of these Organizations. This means that the Commission has the authority to amend its Rules of Procedure but cannot amend its States. Only the parent bodies (FAO and WHO) can amend the States. The Rules of procedure prescribe that a special quorum is required to amend the Rules. This special quorum consists of a majority (50 per cent + 1) of the Members of the Commission. In all other cases (e.g. to adopt a standard) a quorum consists of 20 per cent of the Members.

Article 9 – Expenses (Commission and subsidiary bodies)

The operating expenses of the Commission and of its subsidiary bodies, other than those for which a Member has accepted the Chair, shall be borne by the budget of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, which shall be administered by FAO on behalf of the two Organizations in accordance with the financial regulations of FAO. The Directors-General of FAO and WHO shall jointly determine the respective portion of the costs of the programme to be borne by each Organization and prepare the corresponding annual expenditure estimates for inclusion in the regular budgets of the two organizations for approval by the appropriate governing bodies. These expenses relate to secretariat costs (salaries, travel, operational expenses), costs of publication of adopted standards, infrastructure costs, etc.

Article 10 – Expenses (Preparatory work)

All expenses (including those relating to meetings, documents and interpretation) involved in preparatory work on draft standards undertaken by Members of the Commission, either independently or upon recommendation of the Commission, shall be defrayed by the government concerned. Within the approved budgetary estimates the Commission may recommend, however, that a specified part of the costs of the preparatory work undertaken by the government on behalf of the Commission be recognized as operating expenses of the Commission. The article does provide for the Commission covering some of these costs when warranted (e.g. if the host country is a developing country).

5.3 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CAC AND CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

To understand Codex it is very important to understand the difference between ‘Codex Alimentarius’ and ‘Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)’.

The Codex Alimentarius is a collection of internationally adopted food standards and other provisions of an advisory nature presented in a uniform manner to assist

in protecting consumer's health and ensuring fair practices in food trade. Its intention is to guide countries in the elaboration and revision of their food standards in order to promote the harmonization of these standards, in turn facilitating international trade.

The Codex Alimentarius includes standards for all the principal foods, whether processed, semi-processed or raw for distribution to the consumer. Materials for further processing into foods should be included to the extent necessary to achieve the purposes of the Codex Alimentarius as defined. The Codex Alimentarius includes general provisions in respect of:

- 1 contaminants
- 1 food additives
- 1 food hygiene
- 1 pesticide residues
- 1 veterinary drug residues
- 1 inspection and certification
- 1 labelling and presentation
- 1 methods of analysis and sampling

It also includes provisions of an advisory nature in the form of Codes of Practice, Guidelines and Other Recommended Measures.

The Codex Alimentarius is the collection of standards, guidelines and related texts whereas the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) is the body mandated to develop these texts.

5.4 IMPORTANCE OF CAC IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Different sets of standards arising from the spontaneous and independent development of food laws and standards by different countries inevitably gave rise to trade barriers that are of increasing concern to food traders. It was thus felt that if all countries harmonized their food laws and adopt internationally agreed standards, such issues could be dealt. This will impose less trade barriers and free movement of food products among countries in turn benefiting farmers and help reduce hunger and poverty.

The two World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements of most significance for international food trade are the "Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures" (commonly referred to as SPS Agreement) and the "Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade", known as TBT Agreement. The SPS Agreement is concerned with measures applied to protect human, animal and plant health. The TBT Agreement refers to technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures and applies to all commodities, not just food. WTO recognizes Codex standards as benchmarks for food safety for they are based on

science and risk assessment. We will read more about these agreements in Unit 2 of this Chapter i.e. CAC and its Implication.

5.5 FUNCTIONS OF CAC

A basic understanding of the structure and functioning of the CAC is essential to understand Codex.

The Codex consists of the following main organizational elements:

- 1 The Commission
- 1 The Executive Committee
- 1 The Codex Secretariat
- 1 Codex Subsidiary bodies
- 1 General subject committees (also known as horizontal committees)
- 1 Commodity committees (also known as vertical committees)
- 1 FAO/WHO coordinating committees
- 1 Ad hoc intergovernmental task forces

With the exception of the Codex Secretariat, all these bodies are made up of Codex Member representatives, endeavoring to ensure geographical balance and to reflect stakeholder views as appropriate.

5.5.1 Commission

CAC is the decision making body of the Joint FAO/WHO Food standards programme. CAC meets annually, with meetings alternating between Rome where FAO headquarters are located and Geneva where WHO headquarters is located.

5.5.2 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee (EC) consists of a Chairperson and three Vice-Chairpersons. They are elected from among the delegates of the Members of the Commission at the end of the session and continue to serve until the end of the following regular session. These officers can be re-elected for a maximum of one additional term. The EC is chaired by the Chairperson of the CAC. It is responsible for making recommendations about the general direction of the Commission's work. It meets between Commission sessions and acts as the executive organ of the Commission. It is the body responsible for managing the standards development process.

5.5.3 Codex Secretariat

The Secretary of CAC is appointed jointly by the Directors – General of FAO and WHO. The Secretariat is based at FAO headquarters in Rome. Commission and Executive Committee meetings are administered and serviced entirely by Codex Secretariat. In addition to this the Secretariat collaborates with subsidiary

committee staff in host countries to decide timing and venues for meetings, issue invitations to member countries, finalize agendas and papers, arrange the recording of meeting proceedings as well as the preparation and distribution of meeting reports and ensure that meeting decisions are acted on.

5.5.4 Codex Subsidiary Bodies

Codex Subsidiary Bodies, as the name suggests are the contributory committees/ coordinating committees that support CAC in accomplishment of its tasks and elaborate standards as necessary. The CAC is empowered to establish four kinds of subsidiary bodies:

- 1 General subject committees (also referred to as horizontal committees), which establish standards and guidelines applicable to all foods;
- 1 Commodity committees (also known as vertical committees), which prepare standards for specific commodities;
- 1 FAO/WHO coordinating committees, through which regions or groups of countries coordinate food standards activities in the region, including the development of regional standards; and
- 1 Ad hoc intergovernmental task forces, which are time-limited and prepare standards and guidelines on specific issues.

Each committee is hosted by a Member Country which is chiefly responsible for the cost of the committee's maintenance, administration and for providing its chairperson. Host countries are encouraged to hold their committee's meeting in developing countries from time to time. The FAO/WHO coordinating committees are exceptions, as there are provisions for the cost of these committees to be included in the Commission's estimate of expenditures under certain circumstances (e.g. when the regional coordinator is a developing country).

General Subject Committees

General Subject Committees (GSC), develop all-embracing concepts and principles applying to foods in general, endorse or review relevant provisions in Codex commodity standards and based on the advise of expert scientific bodies, develop major recommendations pertaining to consumer's health and safety. The Codex Committee on General Principles advises the Commission on such basic matters as definitions, the Rules of Procedure, rules and working procedures for the establishment and operation of Codex Committees and Task Forces in relation with other organizations and the general principles that underlie the preparation of all the Codex standards, codes of practice and other texts.

Six of the GSCs have the responsibility of ensuring that specific provisions in Codex Commodity standards are in conformity with the Commission's main general standards and guidelines in their particular areas of competence. These Committees may also develop standards, maximum limits for additives and contaminants, codes of practice or other guidelines for either general application or in specific cases where the development of a complete commodity standard is not required. For example, CCFH has developed a Code of Hygiene Practice for Spices and Dried Aromatic Plants. They are:

Global Scenario

- 1 Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)
- 1 Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF)
- 1 Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH)
- 1 Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL)
- 1 Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS)
- 1 Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)

Other GSCs are:

- 1 Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS)
- 1 Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP)
- 1 Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR)
- 1 Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF)

Commodity Committees

Commodity Committees have responsibility for developing standards for specific foods or classes of food and because of their exclusive food category responsibilities they are often referred to as “vertical” committees. There are 11 such committees. Following five committees meet regularly:

- 1 Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO)
- 1 Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP)
- 1 Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV)
- 1 Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV)
- 1 Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP)

Following Commodity Committees work through correspondence or are in recess:

- 1 Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene (CCMH)
- 1 Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes (CCCPL)
- 1 Codex Committee on Cocoa Products and Chocolate (CCCPC)
- 1 Codex Committee on Natural Mineral Waters (CCNMW)
- 1 Codex Committee on Sugars (CCS)
- 1 Codex Committee on Vegetable Proteins (CCVP)

Commodity committees convene as necessary and go into recess or are abolished when the Commission decides their work has been completed. The term “sine

die” is applied to those committees that the Commission adjourns (i.e. places into recess). Host countries call meetings of Codex subsidiary bodies at intervals of between one and two years, according to need.

FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees

FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees have no standing host countries. These committees are hosted by one of the member countries in each region that has indicated to the committee their willingness to take on the responsibility. There are six coordinating committees, i.e. one each for the following regions:

- 1 Africa (CCAFRICA)
- 1 Asia (CCASIA)
- 1 Europe (CCEURO)
- 1 Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC)
- 1 Near East (CCNEA)
- 1 North America and the South-west Pacific (CCNASWP)

These committees play an invaluable role in ensuring that the work of the Commission is responsive to regional interests and to the concerns of developing countries. They normally meet at two-year interval. The country that chairs the meeting is also the Regional Coordinator for the region concerned.

Ad-hoc Intergovernmental Task Forces

Ad-hoc Intergovernmental Task Forces are established with a specific mandate and for a limited period of time, not normally exceeding four years. As in the case of the horizontal and vertical committees, Codex task forces are hosted by a member country. The task force dissolves once the assigned task has been completed. To date Commission has established the following ad-hoc intergovernmental task forces:

- 1 Task Force on Animal Feeding (1999 – 2004)
- 1 Task Force on Foods Derived from Biotechnology (1995 – 2003 and 2005 – 2009)
- 1 Task Force on Fruit and Vegetable Juices (1999 – 2005)
- 1 Task Force on the Handling and Processing of Quick Frozen Foods (2006 onwards, end period not decided)
- 1 Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (2006 onwards, end period not decided)

If CAC decides to establish a Subsidiary Body for the purpose of elaborating an appropriate draft standard or related text or for the purpose of revising an existing standard(s) or related text(s), first consideration should be given to the establishment of an ad-hoc Intergovernmental Task Force.

5.5.5 Terms of Reference of Each Codex Subsidiary Committees

Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA):

- 1 to establish or endorse acceptable maximum levels for individual food additives;
- 1 to prepare priority lists of food additives for risk assessment by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives;
- 1 to assign functional classes to individual food additives;
- 1 to recommend specifications of identity and purity for food additives for adoption by the Commission;
- 1 to consider methods of analysis for the determination of additives in food; and
- 1 to consider and elaborate standards or codes for related subjects such as the labelling of food additives when sold as such.

Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF):

- 1 to establish or endorse permitted maximum levels, and where necessary revise existing guidelines levels, for contaminants and naturally occurring toxicants in food and feed;
- 1 to prepare priority lists of contaminants and naturally occurring toxicants for risk assessment by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives;
- 1 to consider and elaborate methods of analysis and sampling for the determination of contaminants and naturally occurring toxicants in food and feed;
- 1 to consider and elaborate standards or codes of practice for related subjects; and
- 1 to consider other matters assigned to it by the Commission in relation to contaminants and naturally occurring toxicants in food and feed.

Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH):

- 1 to draft basic provisions on food hygiene (which includes, where necessary, microbiological specifications for food and associated methodology) applicable to all food;
- 1 to consider, amend if necessary and endorse provisions on hygiene prepared by Codex commodity committees and contained in Codex commodity standards;
- 1 to consider, amend if necessary, and endorse provisions on hygiene prepared by Codex commodity committees and contained in Codex codes of practice unless, in specific cases, the Commission has decided otherwise;
- 1 to draft provisions on hygiene applicable to specific food items or food groups, whether coming within the terms of reference of a Codex commodity committee or not;

- 1 to consider specific hygiene problems assigned to it by the Commission;
- 1 to suggest and prioritize areas where there is a need for microbiological risk assessment at the international level and to develop questions to be addressed by the risk assessors; and
- 1 to consider microbiological risk management matters in relation to food hygiene, including food irradiation and in relation to the risk assessment of FAO and WHO.

Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL)

- 1 to draft provisions on labelling applicable to all foods;
- 1 to consider, amend if necessary, and endorse draft specific provisions on labelling prepared by the Codex Committees drafting standards, codes of practice and guidelines;
- 1 to study specific labelling problems assigned to it by the Commission; and
- 1 to study problems associated with the advertisement of food with particular reference to claims and misleading descriptions.

Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS):

- 1 to define the criteria appropriate to Codex Methods of Analysis and Sampling;
- 1 to serve as a coordinating body for Codex with other international groups working in methods of analysis and sampling and quality assurance systems for laboratories;
- 1 to specify, on the basis of final recommendations submitted to it by the other bodies referred to in (b) above, Reference Methods of Analysis and Sampling appropriate;
- 1 to specify Codex Standards which are generally applicable to a number of foods;
- 1 to consider, amend, if necessary, and endorse, as appropriate, methods of analysis and sampling proposed by Codex (Commodity) Committees, except that methods of analysis and sampling for residues of pesticides or veterinary drugs in food, the assessment of micro biological quality and safety in food, and the assessment of specifications for food additives, do not fall within the terms of reference of this Committee;
- 1 to elaborate sampling plans and procedures, as may be required;
- 1 to consider specific sampling and analysis problems submitted to it by the Commission or any of its Committees; and
- 1 to define procedures, protocols, guidelines or related texts for the assessment of food laboratory proficiency, as well as quality assurance systems for laboratories.

Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU):

- 1 to study specific nutritional problems assigned to it by the Commission and advise the Commission on general nutrition issues;
- 1 to draft general provisions, as appropriate, concerning the nutritional aspects of all foods;
- 1 to develop standards, guidelines or related texts for foods for special dietary uses, in cooperation with other committees where necessary; and
- 1 to consider, amend if necessary, and endorse provisions on nutritional aspects proposed for inclusion Codex standards, guidelines and related texts.

Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS):

- 1 to develop principles and guidelines for food import and export inspection and certification systems with a view to harmonizing methods and procedures which protect the health of consumers, ensure fair trading practices and facilitate international trade in foodstuffs;
- 1 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;
- 1 to develop guidelines for the utilization, 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;
- 1 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 harmonization;
- 1 to make recommendations for information exchange in relation to food import/export control;
- 1 to consult as necessary with other international groups working on matters related to food inspection and certification systems;and
- 1 to consider other matters assigned to it by the Commission in relation to food inspection and certification systems.

Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP):

To deal with such procedural and general matters as are referred to it by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Such matters have included the establishment of the General Principles which define the purpose and scope of the Codex Alimentarius, the nature of Codex standards and the forms of acceptance by countries of Codex standards; the development of Guidelines for Codex Committees; the development of a mechanism for examining any economic impact statements submitted by governments concerning possible implications for their

economies of some of the individual standards or some of the provisions thereof; the establishment of a Code of Ethics for the International Trade in Food.

Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR):

- 1 to establish maximum limits for pesticide residues in specific food items or in groups of food;
- 1 to establish maximum limits for pesticide residues in certain animal feeding stuffs moving in international trade where this is justified for reasons of protection of human health;
- 1 to prepare priority lists of pesticides for evaluation by the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR);
- 1 to consider methods of sampling and analysis for the determination of pesticide residues in food and feed;
- 1 to consider other matters in relation to the safety of food and feed containing pesticide residues; and
- 1 to establish maximum limits for environmental and industrial contaminants showing chemical or other similarity to pesticides, in specific food items or groups of food.

Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF):

- 1 to determine priorities for the consideration of residues of veterinary drugs in foods;
- 1 to recommend maximum levels of such substances;
- 1 to develop codes of practice as may be required; and
- 1 to consider methods of sampling and analysis for the determination of veterinary drug residues in foods.

Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO): To elaborate worldwide standards for fats and oils of animal, vegetable and marine origin including margarine and olive oil.

Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP): To elaborate worldwide standards for fresh, frozen (including quick frozen) or otherwise processed fish, crustaceans and molluscs.

Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV):

- 1 To elaborate worldwide standards and codes of practice as may be appropriate for fresh fruits and vegetables;
- 1 To consult with the UNECE Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards in the elaboration of worldwide standards and codes of practice with particular regard to ensuring that there is no duplication of standards or codes of practice and that they follow the same broad format; and

- 1 To consult, as necessary, with other international organizations which are active in the area of standardization of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV): To elaborate worldwide standards for all types of processed fruits and vegetables, including dried products, canned dried peas and beans, jams and jellies, but not dried prunes, or fruit and vegetable juices. The Commission has also allocated to this Committee the work of revision of standards for quick frozen fruits and vegetables.

Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP): To elaborate worldwide standards, codes and related texts for milk and milk products.

Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene (CCMH): To elaborate worldwide standards and/or codes of practice as appropriate for meat hygiene.

Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes (CCCPL): To elaborate worldwide standards and/or codes of practice as may be appropriate for cereals, pulses, legumes and their products.

Codex Committee on Cocoa Products and Chocolate (CCCPC): To elaborate worldwide standards for cocoa products and chocolate.

Codex Committee on Natural Mineral Waters (CCNMW): To elaborate regional standards for natural mineral waters.

Codex Committee on Sugars (CCS): To elaborate worldwide standards for all types of sugars and sugar products.

Codex Committee on Vegetable Proteins (CCVP): To elaborate definitions and worldwide standards for vegetable protein products deriving from any member of the plant kingdom as they come into use for human consumption, and to elaborate guidelines on utilization of such vegetable protein products in the food supply system, on nutritional requirements and safety, on labelling and on other aspects as may seem appropriate.

Task Force on the Handling and Processing of Quick Frozen Foods (2006 onwards):

To resolve all outstanding issues including quality and safety provisions with a view to the advancement of the Code to Step 8. The Task Force shall complete its work within two (2) years, with one session of the Task Force.

Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (2006 onwards)

To develop guidance on methodology and processes for risk assessment, its application to the antimicrobials used in human and veterinary medicine as provided by FAO/WHO through JEMRA, and in close cooperation with OIE, with subsequent consideration of risk management options. In this process work undertaken in this field at national, regional and international levels should be taken into account. The Task Force shall complete its work within four sessions, starting in 2007.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1



Note: a) Use the space given below for your answers.

b) Check your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1) Define Codex?

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2) Describe role of Codex in improvising free trade?

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3) Describe Codex Subsidiary Bodies and their functions ?

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5.6 FUNCTIONS OF CODEX COMMITTEES

Now let us understand the organization and functioning of the Codex Committee. All Codex committees consist of a chairperson, a body of members (i.e. those Codex Member countries present), observers who have speaking privileges but not voting rights, a secretariat and a host government that facilitates the work of the committee.

5.6.1 Preparations for Codex Meetings

Secretariat / Host Country: Preparations for meetings are mainly in the hands of the secretariat of the host country, working closely with the Codex Secretariat. Secretariat is not member of the host country's official delegation. Their primary function is to facilitate the functioning of the session and it is important that they be perceived as being neutral and not influencing the outcome of the discussions.

Invitations: Each session of a Codex committee or FAO/WHO coordinating committee is scheduled by the Codex Secretariat in Rome in consultation with the Codex Contact Point of the country hosting the respective Codex committee. The biennial schedule of Codex sessions is then tabled for consideration and endorsement by the Commission. The letter of invitation and provisional agenda for each Codex meeting are prepared by the Secretary of the CAC in consultation with

the committee secretariat of the host country or the National Codex Committee, and issued by the respective Director-General to all Members and Associate Members of FAO and WHO or, in the case of coordinating committees, to the countries of the region or group of countries concerned, Codex Contact Points and interested international organizations in accordance with the official mailing lists of FAO and WHO. As per Codex Rules of Procedure, the invitation and provisional agenda must be made available at least four months in advance. Invitations should include:

- 1 title of the Codex committee;
- 1 time and date of opening and date of closing the session;
- 1 place of the session;
- 1 languages to be used and arrangements for interpretation; and
- 1 if appropriate, information on hotel accommodation;

request to the Codex Contact Point for information on the country delegation, including the names of the chief delegate and other members of the delegation, and for information on whether the chief delegate of a government will be attending as a representative or in the capacity of an observer. Acceptance by a Codex Member to attend a Codex session should be channelled officially through the National Codex Contact Point (NCCP).

Provisional Agenda: A provisional agenda is prepared by the Codex Secretariat in consultation with the host country secretariat stating the time, date and place of the meeting. Provisional agenda would normally include these items in the following order:

- 1 Adoption of the Agenda and Rapporteurs;
- 1 Items relating to subject matter to be discussed. Reference should also be made to the committee papers relevant to the item, standard procedure being that items more advanced in the step process come first on the agenda, items related to public health come before items that are not;
- 1 Other business;
- 1 Consideration of date and place of next session; and
- 1 Adoption of draft report.

Preparation and distribution of working papers: Working papers (e.g. draft standards, country comment papers, discussion papers) for a committee session are normally distributed at least two months before the opening of the session. Usually this task is carried out by the Codex Secretariat with assistance (as necessary) from the host country secretariat. These working papers form the basis of discussion at the relevant committee meeting, and distribution in advance enables member countries to consult and develop national positions on issues of importance to their country. Relevant papers should be sent to all Codex Contact Points, International governmental and NGOs with observer status and other participants on the basis of replies received. Comments submitted by countries on

agenda items or items contained in a circular letter are circulated to all Members and observers prior to the Codex session. Documents received too late for circulation prior to a session will be circulated at the session itself as conference room documents (CRDs). NCCP is responsible for circulating the papers to concerned and submit comments by the deadline date.

5.6.2 Conduct of Codex Meetings

All Codex sessions follow the same format. Meetings are conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure (Guidelines for Codex committees and ad-hoc intergovernmental task forces) in the Codex Procedural Manual.

- 1) There is an official opening of the session. The country responsible for hosting the session officially opens the session. This task is often delegated to a senior official of the host government or a minister of the parliament of the host country.
- 2) After the session is officially opened, the chairperson proceeds to the adoption of the provisional agenda and invites observations from members of the committee concerning the provisional agenda. Any member country may include specific items in the provisional agenda. In the light of such observations, the chairperson requests the committee to adopt the provisional agenda or the amended agenda.

If a country has submitted written comments and is unable to attend the meeting, it would be wise to liaise with a like-minded country that is attending the meeting and can intervene and draw the committee's attention to the written comments.

- 3) Each agenda item is discussed in detail by the Committee delegates. Members and observers are permitted to speak (intervene) on the issues by holding up their country or organization nameplate, or placing it on one end. In some committees, delegates can indicate their desire to speak by pushing a button at their seat, which places their country or organizations name on a computer screen in front of the chairperson. Members always speak before observers and delegate speak only when acknowledged by the chairperson.

Normally, it is the head delegate who has the right to speak but with the chair's permission, another member of the delegation may speak on technical matters.

At all times comments are directed to the chair, never directly to another delegation. At the beginning of an intervention, the delegate must always acknowledge the chairperson and conclude by thanking the chairperson for the opportunity to speak. One must make short and clear interventions of maximum two or three minutes. Speak slowly to allow good interpretation.

In case any Member delegation wishes to disagree with committee's decision, it may ask the same to be recorded. This statement should not merely use a phrase such as: "The delegation of X reserved its position", but should make clear the extent of the delegations opposition to a particular decision of the committee and state whether they were simply opposed to the decision or wished for a further opportunity to consider the question.

When an objection has been recorded in the report at the time of adoption, the speaker should ensure the accuracy of the record of the objection, and that the country's position has not been misinterpreted.

There is no plenary session on the day prior to the adoption of the report in order to provide sufficient time for the reports preparation including translations.

4) A draft report of the committee's proceeding is prepared by the secretariat for consideration by the committee on the final day of the session. The report is reviewed and adopted by the committee, paragraph by paragraph or section by section. **Once adopted, the draft report becomes the official record of the committee session.** The review and adoption processes provide countries with an opportunity to ensure that the report is accurate. It is not an opportunity to reopen discussion on agenda items. What has been said and decided cannot be revisited. When requesting an amendment to the draft report, it is important to make a concrete proposal for changes (e.g. deletion or addition of words). The following points should be borne in mind:

- 1 committee decisions in the report should be clearly stated;
- 1 action taken in regard to economic impact statements should be fully recorded;
- 1 all decisions on draft standards should be accompanied by an indication of the step in the procedure that the standards have reached;
- 1 if action has to be taken before the next meeting of the committee, the nature of the action, who is to take it and when the action must be completed should be clearly stated; and
- 1 where matters require attention by other Codex committees, this should be clearly stated.

The report must have an executive summary which includes agreed action points and committees decisions. The report usually contain following annexures:

- 1 a list of participants with full postal and e-mail addresses, telephone numbers and fax numbers; and
- 1 the complete text of draft standards with an indication of the step in the procedure that has been reached.

The Codex Secretariat ensures that copies of the final report are sent to all Codex Contact Points as soon as possible and in no case not later than one month after the end of the session.

5) Like the opening session, there is an official closing of the session. The Chairperson thanks the host country for their support to the codex committee, Members present for attending and participating in the meeting and the FAO/WHO, JECFA Secretariat for facilitating conduct of the meeting. At the end, a senior official of the host government or a minister of the parliament of the host country thanks Chairperson for successful conduct of the meeting.

5.6.2.1 Responsibilities of Chairperson of the Codex Committee

Chairpersons must ensure that all questions are fully discussed, including comments on the possible economic implications of the standard being elaborated, when the committee considers submitted comments at Steps 4 and 7 (The eight-step

elaboration procedure is explained in following paragraph 5.7.1). They must ensure that the committee considers the written comments of Members not present at the session and that all issues are put clearly to the committee. During the discussion of each agenda item, the Chairperson must summarize the discussion by stating what appears to be the generally acceptable view and asking delegates whether they have any objection to it being recorded as the decision of the committee. The chairperson should always try to arrive at a consensus and should not ask the committee to proceed to voting if agreement on the committee's decision can be secured by consensus. In fact, voting at the committee level is extremely rare.

5.7 STANDARD FORMULATING PROCESS

Inclusiveness and Transparency are two important principles of Codex standard elaboration process and thus Codex has adopted step-wise process to develop standards.

5.7.1 8-Step Elaboration Procedure

Normal standard elaboration procedure adopted by Codex is the **8-Step procedure**. Following are the step descriptors:

- Step 1:** The Commission decides to elaborate a standard and assigns the work to a committee. A decision to elaborate a standard may also be taken by a committee.
- Step 2:** The Secretariat arranges preparation of a proposed draft standard.
- Step 3:** The proposed draft standard is sent to governments and international organization for comments.
- Step 4:** The Secretariat forwards comments to the committee.
- Step 5:** The Proposed draft standard is sent to the Commission through the Secretariat for adoption as a draft standard.
- Step 6:** The draft standard is sent to governments and international organization for comments.
- Step 7:** The Secretariat forwards comments to the committee.
- Step 8:** The draft standard is submitted to the Commission through the Secretariat for adoption as a Codex standard.

If situation arises that members of Codex agree on the necessary level of protection of public health but hold differing views about other considerations, members may abstain from acceptance of the relevant standard without necessarily preventing the decision by Codex.

5.7.2 5-Step Elaboration Procedure

Sometimes, the Commission may also approve the use of an accelerated procedure for the elaboration of these standards, using a **5-Step procedure**. It is often referred to as Step 5/8. Following are the step descriptors:

Global Scenario

Step 1: The Commission decides to elaborate a standard on the basis of consensus or a two-thirds majority of votes cast using the accelerated procedure and assigns the work to a committee.

Step 2: The Secretariat arranges preparation of a proposed draft standard.

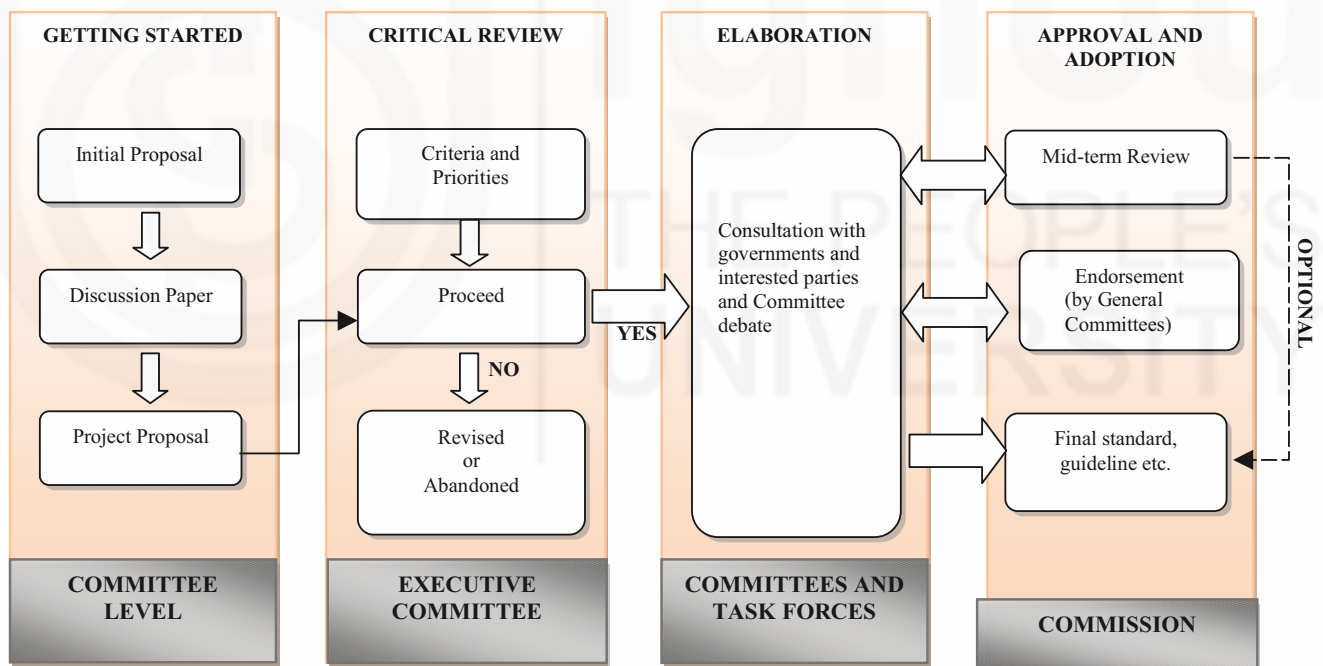
Step 3: The proposed draft standard is sent to governments and international organization for comments.

Step 4: The Secretariat forwards comments to the committee for consideration and amendments to the proposed draft standard.

Step 5: The Proposed draft standard subject to the accelerated procedure is sent to the Commission through the Secretariat together with any written proposals from Members and interested international organizations for adoption as a Codex standard.

It is also the responsibility of the Commission and its subsidiary committees to revise and keep the Codex up to date and ensure that they are consistent with current scientific knowledge and with needs of member countries. The procedure for revision or consolidation follows that used for the initial preparation of the standards.

THE CODEX STANDARD PROCESS



5.7.3 Understanding Horizontal and Vertical Codex Standards

Codex standards usually relate to product characteristics and may deal with characteristics appropriate to commodity or only one characteristic. For example, Maximum residue limits (MRLs) for residues of pesticides or veterinary drugs in foods are standards dealing with only one characteristic. These are also known as Codex General Standards or Horizontal standards. Codex general standard

for food additives, food contaminants, toxins and labelling of prepackaged foods contain both general and commodity provisions.

Another group of standards in Codex are the “Commodity Standards” or “Vertical Standards”. The major commodities included in the Codex are:

- 1 Cereals, pulses (legumes) and derived products including vegetable proteins.
- 1 Fats and oils and related products.
- 1 Fish and Fishery products.
- 1 Fresh fruits and vegetables.
- 1 Processed and quick-frozen fruits and vegetables.
- 1 Fruit juices.
- 1 Meat and meat products; Soups and broths.
- 1 Milk and milk products.
- 1 Sugars, cocoa products and chocolate and other miscellaneous products.

Commodity standards contain specific requirements for the commodity with respect to food additives, contaminants, hygiene, labelling and method of analysis and sampling. They also refer to general standards for these subjects as necessary.

5.8 DOMESTIC SHADOW CODEX COMMITTEES

Now that we have understood organization and functioning of CAC and its Committees, let's understand how our own Indian government is organized to develop and submit national position at Codex.

5.8.1 Codex India

“Codex India” the National Codex Contact Point (NCCP) for India, is located at the Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India. It coordinates and promotes Codex activities in India in association with the National Codex Committee and facilitates India's input to the work of Codex through an established consultation process.

Major responsibilities of NCC are to:

- 1 advise government on the implications of various food standardization, food quality and safety issues which have arisen and related to the work undertaken by the CAC so that national economic interest is taken into account, or at least considered, when international standards are discussed; and
- 1 provide important inputs to the government so as to assist in ensuring quality and safety of food to the consumers, while at the same time maximizing the opportunities for development of industry and expansion of international trade.

NCC cooperates with the other local/regional or foreign organizations dealing with activities relating to food standardization and facilitate formulation of national position in consultation in the matters of Codex. It also studies Codex documents, collect and revise all relevant information relating to technology, economics, health and control system, so as to give supporting reasons to the government in the acceptance of Codex Standards or otherwise. It also facilitates generation of data base or preparation of base paper projecting country's interest for interacting with the CAC.

5.8.2 Responsibilities of Domestic Shadow Codex Committees

The National Codex Committee (NCC) has appointed sub-committees (commonly referred to as Domestic Shadow Codex Committees i.e. DSCC) on subject matters related to the corresponding Codex Committees to assist in the study or consideration of technical matters. Major responsibilities of these committees are to:

- 1 advise the NCC on the implications of various food standardization, food quality and safety issues which have arisen and related to the work undertaken by the relevant Subsidiary Body/Task Force so that national economic interest is taken into account or at least considered when international standards are deliberated by the CAC; and
- 1 follow the Codex agenda of the relevant Subsidiary Body and provide important inputs to the government so as to assist in ensuring quality and safety of food to the consumers while at the same time safeguard national interests and maximize the opportunities for development of industry and expansion of international trade.

DSCC studies all relevant Codex documents, collect and revise information relating to technology, economics, health and control system so as to give supporting reasons to the government in the acceptance of Codex Standards. They formulate national position in consultation with the members of the Shadow Committee with respect to the agenda for the forthcoming meeting of the Subsidiary Body and transmit them same through the NCCP. DSCC also nominate delegates to attend Codex meetings.

It is important to understand the history of an agenda item to facilitate preparation of comments that are scientifically sound or supported by risk assessment data and also ensure that the positions promoted internationally are consistent with national policies while preparing national positions.

5.8.3 Structure of Domestic Shadow Codex Committees

DSCC is chaired by officers in the rank of Joint Secretary in the concerned Department/Ministry who handle the subject at the policy level and also serve as the members of the NCC. Members include representatives from the relevant Government departments/ministries, Consumer Organizations, Industry, Food Importers/Exporters, Academia, Research Institutions and Subject Experts.

Currently, DSCC assist the NCC in following areas:

- 1 Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)

- 1 Regional Coordinating Committee for Asia
- 1 General Principles
- 1 Food Labelling
- 1 Methods of Analysis and Sampling
- 1 Pesticides Residues
- 1 Food Hygiene
- 1 Food Additives
- 1 Food Contaminants
- 1 Food Export and Import and Certification Systems
- 1 Food Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
- 1 Fish and Fishery Products
- 1 Oils and Fats
- 1 Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
- 1 Processed Fruits and Vegetables
- 1 Milk and Milk Products
- 1 Cocoa Products and Chocolate
- 1 Mineral Water
- 1 Genetically Modified Food

It must always be remembered that the main purpose to develop national position is to enable the country delegation to present the position of their country during the relevant Codex meeting and also to form basis for submission of written comments in response to circular letter or request for written comments.

5.9 NEED FOR HARMONIZING NATIONAL STANDARDS WITH CODEX

Now that you are aware of Codex and its functions let us understand its impact to us. While formulating national policies and plans with regards to food, it is very important for any national government to consider need of all consumers for food safety and security.

Listed below are major challenges being faced by any national government to meet above stated objective:

- 1 International developments in food safety and quality.
- 1 New or pending technological developments.

- 1 New products entering the marketplace.
- 1 Up-to-date measures in the management of food safety and quality issues.
- 1 International movement of food products that may carry risks to human health.
- 1 Risk Management process for developing safe standards.
- 1 Ensuring fewer trade barriers for freer movement of food products.

We have read that the food standards, guidelines and other recommendations of Codex are based on the principle of sound scientific analysis and evidence, involving a thorough review of all relevant information, in order that the standards assure the quality and safety of the food supply. When elaborating and deciding upon food standards Codex considers as appropriate, other legitimate factors relevant for the health protection of consumers and for the promotion of fair practices in food trade.

Internationally, Codex is also recognized as Risk Management body. It has elaborated principles for risk analysis intended for application in the framework. The objective of these working principles is to provide guidance to the CAC and the joint FAO/WHO expert bodies and consultations, so that food safety and health aspects of Codex standards and related texts are based on risk analysis. Within the framework of the CAC and its procedures, the responsibility for providing advice on risk management lies with the Commission and its subsidiary bodies (risk managers), while the responsibility for risk assessment lies primarily with the joint FAO/WHO expert bodies and consultations (risk assessors).

Codex standard development process as elaborated in Section 5.7 of this chapter indicates that Codex standards are elaborated in thorough consultation with all interested parties, governments and Committee debate. This facilitates complete and systematic risk analysis. Further, it provides a forum to exchange information and share views on food safety, technological developments and quality issues internationally. Thus by adopting Codex standards policy makers can make substantial savings in time and money incurred in risk assessment and risk management process and ensure quality and safe food to consumers.

So, we can conclude by observing that a national government can meet all its major objectives as stated in the beginning of the section if choose to harmonize its food laws with internationally agreed standards like Codex. This will not only impose less trade barriers and freer movement of food products among countries but also benefit farmers and help reduce hunger and poverty.

 **Check Your Progress Exercise 2**

Note: a) Use the space given below for your answers.

b) Check your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1) Describe Codex Standard setting process?

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2) Describe the importance of DSCC in Codex?

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3) Describe your views on harmonization of Indian food laws with Codex?

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5.10 LET US SUM UP



Codex is an intergovernmental body created by FAO and WHO of the United Nations, the purpose of which is to protect health of the consumers and ensure fair practices in the food trade. The Codex Alimentarius is the collection of standards, guidelines and related texts whereas the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) is the body mandated to develop these texts. CAC is guided by its Statutes and General Principles.

Codex Executive Committee is responsible for making recommendations

about the general direction of the Commission's work and for managing the standards development process. Codex Subsidiary Bodies are the contributory committees/coordinating committees that support CAC in accomplishment of its tasks and elaborate standards as necessary. If CAC decides to establish a Subsidiary Body for the purpose of elaborating an appropriate draft standard or related text or for the purpose of revising an existing standard(s) or related text(s), first consideration should be given to the establishment of an ad-hoc Intergovernmental Task Force.

All Codex sessions follow the same format. Meetings are conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure (Guidelines for Codex committees and ad-hoc intergovernmental task forces) in the Codex Procedural Manual. All Codex committees consist of a chairperson, a body of members (i.e. those Codex Member countries present), observers who have speaking privileges but not voting rights, a secretariat and a host government that facilitates the work of the committee. Provisional agenda is made available almost four months prior to the scheduled meeting to facilitate submission of comments (if any) by Members. If a country has submitted written comments and is unable to attend the meeting, it would be wise to liaise with a like-minded country that is attending the meeting and can intervene and draw the committee's attention to the written comments. The Chairperson always tries to arrive at a consensus without the need of voting. Voting at the committee level is extremely rare.

Codex has adopted step-wise process to develop standards. This ensures development of the food standards, guidelines and other recommendations of Codex Alimentarius based on the principle of sound scientific analysis and evidence, involving a thorough review of all relevant information, in turn assuring the quality and safety of the food supply. Usual procedure is 8-step procedure but sometimes the Commission may also approve the use of an accelerated procedure for the elaboration of the standards, using a 5-Step procedure, often referred to as Step 5/8. In essence standard development process involves:

- 1 The submission of a proposal for a standard to be developed by a subsidiary committee. This is usually followed by a discussion paper that outlines what the proposed standard is expected to achieve. It also indicates the time frame for the work and its relative priority.
- 1 Decision by the Commission or the Executive Committee that a standard be developed as proposed. Criteria for the establishment of work priorities assist the Commission or the Executive Committee in their decision making and in selecting the subsidiary body to be responsible for steering the standard through its development. If necessary, a new subsidiary body (usually a specialized task force) may be created.
- 1 Preparation of the proposed draft standard is arranged by the Commission Secretariat and circulated to the member governments for comments.
- 1 Discussion and review of draft standard and the comments by the concerned subsidiary body for further submitting to the Commission or the Executive Committee as Draft Standard.
- 1 Adoption of the standard by the Commission and finally inclusion in the Codex Alimentarius.

Codex India i.e. the National Codex Contact Point (NCCP) of India is responsible for developing and submitting national position on various Codex matters. It coordinates and promotes Codex activities in India in association with the National Codex Committee and its sub-committees or Domestic Shadow Codex Committees. Circulate working documents, solicit inputs from stakeholders, draft a position, obtain national endorsements of the position and submit the position as written comments to NCCP are five basic steps in the development of a national position.

It is important to understand the history of an agenda item to facilitate preparation of comments that are scientifically sound or supported by risk assessment data and also ensure that the positions promoted internationally are consistent with national policies while preparing national positions. It must always be remembered that the main purpose to develop national position is to enable the country delegation to present the position of their country during the relevant Codex meeting and also to form basis for submission of written comments in response to circular letter or request for written comments.

While formulating national policies and plans with regards to food, it is very important for any national government to consider need of all consumers for food safety and security. This includes keeping abreast with recent international developments in areas concerning food and also developing standards based on

sound scientific evidence. Codex is also recognized as risk management body. It has elaborated risk analysis principles for application in its framework. The objective of these working principles is to provide guidance to the CAC and the joint FAO/WHO expert bodies and consultations, so that food safety and health aspects of Codex standards and related texts are based on risk analysis.

Today, growing world interest in all Codex activities clearly indicates global acceptance of the Codex philosophy – embracing harmonization, consumer protection and facilitation of international trade. Although in practice it is difficult for many countries to accept Codex standards in the statutory sense due to differing legal formats, administrative systems, varying political systems and sometimes the influence of national attitudes and concepts of sovereign rights also impede the progress of harmonization.

We can thus conclude by saying it is advisable for a national government to harmonize its food laws with internationally agreed standards like Codex. This will impose less trade barriers, freer movement of food products among countries, benefit farmers and ensure safe and quality food to consumers.

5.11 KEY WORDS

- Adopted Text** : Text finally approved by the Commission for incorporation into the Codex Alimentarius.
- Circular Letter** : Circular letters are mode of communication from the Codex Secretariat in Rome to Codex member countries and interested international non-governmental organizations.
- Codex Alimentarius** : It is the collection of standards, guidelines and related texts. It is also known as Food Code.
- Codex Alimentarius Commission** : It is an intergovernmental body whose purpose is to develop international food standards. It is commonly referred as Codex.
- Codex Codes of Practice** : These define the production, processing, manufacturing, transport and storage practices for individual foods or groups of foods that are considered essential to ensure the safety and suitability of food for consumption.
- Codex Guidelines** : These are principles that set out policy in certain key areas. For example, addition of essential nutrients to foods, food import and export inspection and certification, establishment and application of microbiological criteria for foods, conduct of microbiological risk assessment, risk analysis of foods derived from modern biotechnology.
- Codex Procedural Manual** : It contains the Statutes of the Commission, the Rules of procedure and information on how the Commission carries out its work.

- Conference Room Documents** : These are documents that are circulated at a Codex session and are not circulated more broadly to all Codex Members and Observers.
- Interpretative Codex Guidelines** : These are defined as guidelines for the interpretation of Codex principles or for the interpretation of the provisions of the Codex general standards. For example, interpretative guidelines on regulations of claims made on the label, guidelines on the conduct of safety assessments of foods from DNA-modified plants and micro-organisms.
- Statutes of the Codex Alimentarius Commission** : The Statutes provide the legal basis for the Commission's work and formally reflect the concepts behind and reasons for its establishment.

5.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Your answer should include the following points:

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

- 1)
 - 1 The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) commonly referred as “Codex”.
 - 1 Codex is an intergovernmental body.
 - 1 The purposes of Codex.
- 2) Different countries have different standards.
 - 1 Trade barriers.
 - 1 WTO agreements and their description.
 - 1 Harmonization of national standards with Codex.
- 3) Codex Subsidiary bodies support CAC in completing its tasks and elaborating standards.
 - 1 Describe four kinds of subsidiary bodies and their major function. For example, General Subject Committee develop all-embracing concepts and principles applying to foods in general, endorse or review relevant provisions in Codex commodity standards and based on the advise of expert scientific bodies, develop major recommendations pertaining to consumer's health and safety.
 - 1 Name few committees in each type of subsidiary committee.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

- 1)
 - 1 Codex has adopted step-wise process to develop standards.
 - 1 Step-wise process ensures development of the food standards, guidelines and other recommendations of Codex Alimentarius based on the principle of sound scientific analysis and evidence, involving a thorough review of all relevant information, in turn assuring the quality and safety of the food supply.

- 1 Usual procedure is 8-step procedure but sometimes the Commission may also approve the use of an accelerated procedure for the elaboration of the standards, using a 5-Step procedure, often referred to as Step 5/8.
- 1 Briefly define following main points of standard development process.
 - 1 The submission of a proposal.
 - 1 Decision by the Commission or the Executive Committee that a standard be developed as proposed.
 - 1 Preparation of the proposed draft standard.
 - 1 Discussion and review of draft standard and the comments.
 - 1 Adoption of the standard.
- 2) 1 DSCC is an integral part of Codex Member countries National Codex Contact Point.
 - 1 DSCC studies all relevant Codex documents, collect and revise information relating to technology, economics, health and control system so as to give supporting reasons to the government in the acceptance of Codex Standards.
 - 1 DSCC circulates working documents, solicit inputs from stakeholders, draft a position, obtain national endorsements of the position and submit the same as written comments to NCCP.
 - 1 DSCC submits nomination of delegates to attend Codex meetings.
- 3) 1 National government has to face many challenges to ensure safe and quality food to consumers.
 - 1 Codex is an internationally recognized risk management body.
 - 1 Codex provides forum to interact and be updated with international developments in areas concerning food.
 - 1 Harmonization can reduce trade barriers.

5.13 SUGGESTED READING

Codex Committee Session Reports (<http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/archives.jsp?lang=en>)

Codex e-Learning Centre (http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/capacity_elearning_codex_en.asp)

Codex India (<http://www.codexindia.nic.in/index.htm>)

Codex Procedural Manual, 17th Edition (www.codexalimentarius.net)

Enhancing Participation in Codex activities, a FAO/WHO training package. (<http://www.fao.org/docrep/008/y5884e/y5884e00.htm>)

FAO Guide for Conduct of Plenary Meetings. (ftp://ftp.fao.org/unfao/bodies/conf/c2005/GuideConduct_en.pdf)

Understanding CODEX (www.codexalimentarius.net)