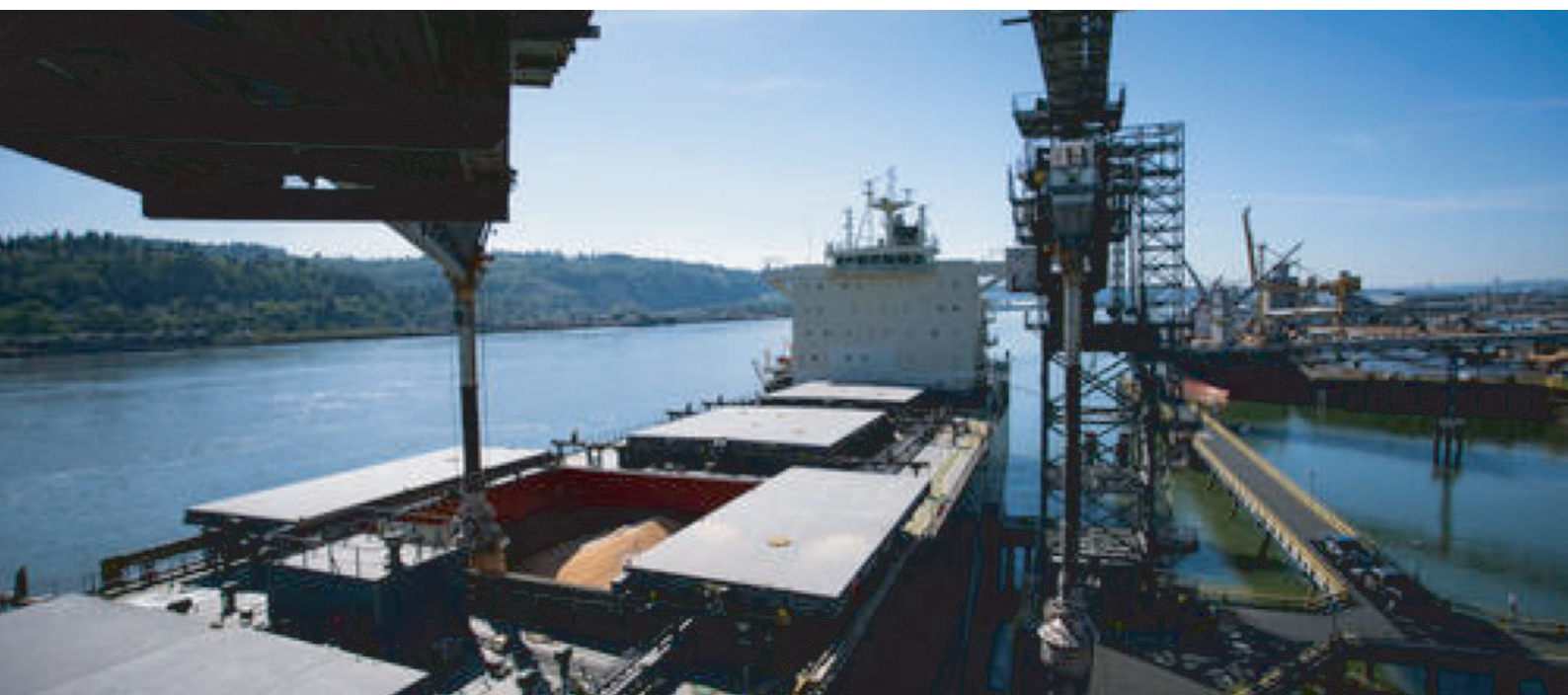


ABOUT CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS IS ABOUT SAFE, GOOD FOOD FOR EVERYONE - EVERYWHERE.

International food trade has existed for thousands of years but until not too long ago food was mainly produced, sold and consumed locally. Over the last century the amount of food traded internationally has grown exponentially, and a quantity and variety of food never before possible travels the globe today.



International Food Standards

The C O D E X A L I M E N T A R I U S international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice contribute to the safety, quality and fairness of this international food trade. Consumers can trust the safety and quality of the food products they buy and importers can trust that the food they ordered will be in accordance with their specifications.

Protecting Consumer Health

Public concerns about food safety issues often place Codex at the centre of global debates. Veterinary drugs, pesticides, food additives and contaminants are some of the issues discussed in Codex meetings. Codex standards are based on sound science provided by independent international risk assessment bodies or ad-hoc consultations organized by FAO and WHO.

While being recommendations for voluntary application by members, Codex standards serve in many cases as a basis for national legislation.

Removing Barriers to Trade

The reference made to Codex food safety standards in the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures (SPS Agreement) means that Codex has far reaching implications for resolving trade disputes. WTO members that wish to apply stricter food safety measures than those set by Codex may be required to justify these measures scientifically.

Since its foundation in 1963, the Codex system has evolved in an open, transparent and inclusive way to meet emerging challenges. International food trade is a 2000 billion dollar a year industry, with billions of tonnes of food produced, marketed and transported.

Purpose of the Codex Alimentarius

The Codex Alimentarius is a collection of internationally adopted food standards and related texts presented in a uniform manner. These food standards and related texts aim at protecting consumers' health and ensuring fair practices in the food trade. The publication of the Codex Alimentarius is intended to guide and promote the elaboration and establishment of definitions and requirements for foods to assist in their harmonization and in doing so to facilitate international trade.

Scope of the Codex Alimentarius

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 provisions in respect of food hygiene, food additives, residues of pesticides and veterinary drugs, contaminants, labelling and presentation, methods of analysis and sampling, and import and export inspection and certification.

Nature of Codex Standards

Codex standards and related texts are not a substitute for, or alternative to national legislation. Every country's laws and administrative procedures contain provisions with which it is essential to comply. Codex standards and related texts contain requirements for food aimed at ensuring for the consumer a safe, wholesome food product free from adulteration, correctly labelled and presented. A Codex standard for any food or foods should be drawn up in accordance with the Format for Codex Commodity Standards and contain, as appropriate, the sections listed therein.

Revision of Codex Standards

The Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies are committed to revision as necessary of Codex standards and related texts to ensure that they are consistent with and reflect current scientific knowledge and other relevant information.

When required, a standard or related text shall be revised or removed in accordance with the Procedures for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts.

Each member of the Codex Alimentarius Commission is responsible for identifying, and presenting to the appropriate committee, any new scientific and other relevant information which may warrant revision of any existing Codex standards or related texts.

Pesticides

Growing demand for food has forced producers to maintain the quality of their livestock and crops in the most efficient way. This can involve the use of pesticides. Using these products on crops risks exposing consumers to harmful chemical materials through residues that remain as the animal is reared or as the crop is processed. Setting limits on the maximum levels of these residues ensures that the food is safe to eat.



The role of Codex in Pesticides



To protect consumer health, most countries have maximum legal limits for pesticide residues in foods. Trade difficulties can arise when limits differ between countries.

The Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) is responsible for establishing Codex Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for pesticide residues in specific food items or in groups of food or feed that move in international trade.

Before a Codex MRL can be established human health risk assessments must be conducted to ensure the food supply is safe. It is the responsibility of the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) to review the appropriate toxicology and data obtained mainly from supervised trials, that reflect approved pesticide use in accordance with "good agricultural practice." JMPR conducts dietary risk assessments and recommends specific MRLs to the Codex Committee.

For a chemical or commodity to be considered for review by the JMPR it must first be nominated by a Member Country to the CCPR Electronic Working Group on Priorities.

Related Codex Texts

Reference	Title	Committee	Last modified	EN-FR-ES-AR-ZH-RU
CAC/GL 33-1999	Recommended Methods of Sampling for the Determination of Pesticide Residues for Compliance with MRLs	CCPR	1999	
CAC/GL 40-1993	Guidelines on Good Laboratory Practice in Pesticide Residue Analysis	CCPR	2010	
CAC/GL 41-1993	Portion of Commodities to which Maximum Residues Limits Apply and which is Analyzed	CCPR	2010	     
CAC/GL 56-2005	Guidelines on the Use of Mass Spectrometry (MS) for Identification, Confirmation and Quantitative Determination of Residues	CCPR	2005	     
CAC/GL 84-2012	Principles and Guidance on the Selection of Representative Commodities for the Extrapolation of Maximum Residue Limits for Pesticides to Commodity Groups	CCPR	2017	     
CAC/GL 90-2017	Guidelines on Performance Criteria for Methods of Analysis for the Determination of Pesticide Residues in Food and Feed	CCPR	2017	   