

**50** YEARS  
**1963-2013**

**CODEX ALIMENTARIUS**  
**SAFE, GOOD FOOD FOR EVERYONE**

**THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION:  
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE CAC**

**Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling  
Budapest, Hungary  
5.3.2013**

**Mrs Awilo Ochieng Pernet  
Vice-Chairperson, Codex Alimentarius Commission**

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## **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CAC**

The Codex Alimentarius Commission was established by **FAO and WHO in 1963** with the **mandate** to develop harmonised international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice to **protect the health of consumers** and to **ensure fair practices in the food trade.**

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**1<sup>st</sup> session of the CAC**

The 1<sup>st</sup> session of the CAC took place in **Rome (Italy)** from **25<sup>th</sup> June to 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1963**.

**120 delegates** including representatives from **30** countries and Observers from **16** International Organisations attended the first session of the CAC that was chaired by **Dr J.L. Harvey** (United States of America).

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**49 years later (2012) ...+503 Delegates and  
+118 Members at the CAC session**

**623 delegates** including representatives from  
**148 Members** and Observers from **37**  
International Organisations attended the **35<sup>th</sup>**  
**session of the CAC (2012)** that was chaired by  
**Dr Sanjay Dave (India).**

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50 years later ...

**The CAC remains fully committed to protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade (also refer to the Draft Strategic Plan 2014-2019).**

**Participation in CAC/Committee sessions has grown rapidly over the years following the global recognition of the important role played by the Codex Alimentarius in the field of food safety and quality.**

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**50 years later ...Increase in Codex membership  
and in participation in Codex**

**Members: 186 Codex Members** from all geographical regions (185 Member countries and 1 Member Organisation (EU)).

**Observers: 219 Codex Observers** (50 IGOs, 153 NGOs, 16 UN) *Status on 4.3.2013*

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**50 years later ...Increase in Developing countries' (DCs) participation thanks to the Codex Trust Fund**

The **Codex Trust Fund** that came into operation in 2003 has contributed to the increase in DCs participation in Codex Committee and Commission sessions.

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**1995 ... WTO recognition of the CAC**

The CAC has established itself as the internationally-recognised food standards setting body.

Since 1995, **the CAC is the international reference for food safety** recognised by the **World Trade Organisation's Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.**



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## **50 years of standard-setting: general aspects**

**Codex reflects the evolution of its Members and its parent organisations (FAO and WHO) as it is both:**

- ❖ An Intergovernmental organisation
- ❖ A Joint FAO/WHO programme which takes into account the mandates and objectives of both parent organisations: food security, public health

### **Codex Mandate: still relevant after 50 years**

- ❖ Protection of consumers' health = always a subject of concern
- ❖ Ensuring fair practices in the food trade = preventing fraud, deceptive practices, avoiding unjustified barriers to the food trade

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### **Achievements and Trends: Major focus areas**

- ❖ Ensuring food safety: Risk Analysis framework
- ❖ Improving the standard-setting process: procedures and related issues
- ❖ Relevance of standards to Codex Members:
  - ❖ Participation in the process
  - ❖ Use of Codex standards in national legislation and national food control systems
- ❖ Integration of food safety in the programmes and priorities of FAO and WHO

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### **Achievements: Risk Analysis in Codex: 50 years of Codex ... 20 years of Risk Analysis**

**Risk analysis is the basis for Codex food safety work.** The general approach to risk analysis was approved by the CAC in 1991-1993. Since then, Codex has developed several important texts such as the

- ❖ Definitions of terms related to Risk Analysis;
- ❖ Statements of principle relating to the role of food safety risk assessment (1997)
- ❖ Working Principles for risk analysis
  - ❖ for application in Codex (2003)
  - ❖ for application by Governments (2007)
  - ❖ for specific areas of food safety, for example chemical and microbiological contamination. In addition, all relevant committees have established their principles and procedures which are included in the Codex procedural manual e.g. CCPR, CCRVDF, etc.

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### **Risk Analysis and scientific advice in Codex: Trends and challenges**

**FAO/WHO Scientific bodies** provide independent scientific advice to the Codex Alimentarius Commission and to its subsidiary bodies. Three of these expert bodies are: JECFA: the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives; JEMRA: the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment and the JMPR: the Joint FAO/WHO Meetings on Pesticide Residues.

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Some of the challenges that FAO/WHO Scientific bodies face include:

- ❖ **Addressing emerging issues in a timely manner** in spite of the increasing demands;
- ❖ **Lack of sufficient funding for carrying out risk assessments:**

This is a **very critical issue**. At the 35<sup>th</sup> session, the Commission took note of the current challenges in meeting the funding gap for scientific advice and supported the conclusions of the CCEXEC and agreed with the **establishment of a sub-Committee of CCEXEC**, chaired by Professor Samuel Sefa-Dedeh, to consider funding options, for consideration at the next session of the CCEXEC and the Commission. (Para 234, CAC REP. 2012)

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Some of the challenges that **FAO/WHO Scientific bodies** face include:

- ❖ **Availability of experts** - Training of experts in developing countries in order to ensure a better geographical representation in FAO/WHO Expert bodies;
- ❖ **Data generation in developing countries**
- ❖ **Etc.**

All these aspects are critical to ensuring the relevance of Codex food safety standards worldwide (up-to-date, modern, address Codex Members' needs, etc.) and to allowing the application of Codex standards at country level.

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## **Codex' Strategic Vision Statement**

***“To be the preeminent international food standards-setting body to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in the food trade.” (Draft Strategic Plan 2014-2019).***

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**“Codex Core Values**

*In fulfilling its Strategic Vision, Codex adheres to core values that include,*

- ❖ **Collaboration**
- ❖ **Inclusiveness**
- ❖ **Consensus building**
- ❖ **Transparency”** (Draft Strategic Plan 2014-2019).



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**Possible future challenges for Codex: Proactive and timely response to emerging food safety, quality and nutrition issues**

With the increased globalisation, Codex should be capable of responding in a timely manner to emerging food safety issues and factors that may impact on food safety and fair practices in the food trade (Draft Strategic Plan 2014-2019).

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**Possible future challenges for Codex: Drivers for Change**

“The environment in which Codex operates has also evolved. Food and food ingredients continue to be increasingly amongst the most traded commodities internationally.

Changes in the global feed and food supply chain system, resource optimisation efforts, innovation in food science and technology, climate change and consumer concerns represent some of the drivers of change that introduce new food safety and nutrition related challenges.” (Draft Strategic Plan 2014-2019).

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**The CCMAS: Hungary Host country since 1972:**  
40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of hosting CCMAS was in 2012,  
**Congratulations!!**

The first CCMAS session took place in **Berlin**  
(Germany) in September **1965**.

Hungary has been Host country to the CCMAS for  
41 years and this 34<sup>th</sup> session of the CCMAS is the  
27<sup>th</sup> session that has been organised by Hungary.

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**Possible challenges for CCMAS:**

This morning, under Agenda Item 5, the Committee considered a Discussion Paper on the up-date of references to methods of analysis within the Codex System.

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**Possible challenges for CCMAS: Ensure an efficient coordination between Codex committees.**

How can the Codex system ensure that work done by other committees is fully taken into account by the CCMAS and vice-versa?

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## **CCMAS' impact on international food trade**

As the WTO-SPS Agreement recognises Codex Standards as the reference for food safety, the methods of analysis and sampling endorsed by CCMAS thus become the reference methods for international trade in food. However, as other Codex Committees also develop/reference methods of analysis and sampling, **it is of paramount importance that the methods referenced within the Codex system are internally consistent and up-to-date.**

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## **CCMAS' impact on international food trade**

Therefore, the Codex Alimentarius Commission should strive to ensure that the way the methods are up-dated and referenced is facilitated by using a modern and consistent approach and a clearer process. This will promote their usefulness to all Codex Members and Observers as well as their relevance in international food trade.

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**50<sup>th</sup> Codex Anniversary: Codex is a success story!!**

The Codex Alimentarius has become the global reference point for consumers, food producers and processors, national food control agencies and the international food trade. Codex Alimentarius has had an enormous impact on the thinking of food producers and processors as well as on the awareness of the end users – the consumers. **Its influence extends to every continent, and its contribution to the protection of public health and fair practices in the food trade is immeasurable.** (Understanding the Codex Alimentarius)



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**50<sup>th</sup> Codex Anniversary: Codex is a success story**

## **Impact of Codex at the national level**

In general, Codex Members indicate that participation in Codex has a positive impact at the national level including the harmonisation of their national legislation with Codex standards as well as an increase in SPS awareness among stakeholders.

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**Codex is a success story: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations**  
(some information):

The preparations in view of the commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission are well underway. I will just highlight a few major aspects of the on-going preparations:

- ❖ **The Directors-General of FAO and WHO have confirmed their participation** at the official opening ceremony that will take place in Rome on Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013;
- ❖ **Several Ministers**, including those representing the Coordinators of FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committees, are expected to attend the official opening ceremony;

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### **Codex is a success story: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations**

(some information) contd:

- ❖ A **press conference** will take place on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013;
- ❖ The official **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reception** will take place at a wonderful venue: the Giardino degli Aranci (vis-à-vis the FAO buildings);

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### **Codex is a success story: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations**

(some information) contd:

- ❖ The development of the **Codex Communication Strategy** and the promotion of Codex during the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year will be part of this endeavour. In addition new updated material on Codex including **Fact sheets** as well as a **standard presentation on Codex in three/six languages** are currently being prepared by the Codex secretariat;
- ❖ A **special Codex video** highlighting the benefits of Codex to Members is under development;

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### **Codex is a success story: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations**

(some information) contd:

- ❖ **Side-events:** Several Host countries to Codex Committees including Regional Coordinating Committees have decided to organise side-events on subjects of importance to Codex. An account of all **these events will be put on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary homepage** and also be compiled in a **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Special Edition**;
- ❖ The **new Codex visual identity** will be unveiled by the two DGs on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013;
- ❖ **Codex 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary graphics** are being finalised and the **special 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary homepage** has started operating.

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**Codex is a success story indeed !**

**Thank you very much for your attention!**