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News Letter of Codex-India

Volume II. Issue I (November 2014 - February 2015)

From the Desk of National Codex Contact Point (NCCP):

As the winter thaws and we await the onset of spring, there is a lot that we have to report to you. At the 19th Session of the Joint FAO/WHO Regional Committee for Asia meeting held in Tokyo, Japan in November 2014, **India was elected as the Regional Coordinator for Asia after 35 years.** It was a matter of great pride for the Indian delegation. However, we are also aware that this is an onerous responsibility for the country. We have already initiated steps with our stakeholders to put in place systems that will allow us to discharge this responsibility seamlessly from Thailand in July 2015 after the 38th session of Codex Alimentarius Commission.

There were two other important Codex Committee meetings that were attended by the Indian delegation. One was the 'Codex Committee on Food Hygiene' meeting held in Peru and the other was the 'Codex Committee on Nutrition and Food Special Dietary Use', held in Bali. The details about the participation are covered in detail in this issue.

We had lull in the Codex Alimentarius world at the international level in the months of December and January as the world celebrates the Christmas, the New Year and goes into a holiday mode. However, we utilized this period to convene our 2nd meeting of the National Codex Committee (NCC) in December 2014. The meeting was chaired by Shri K. Chandramouli, the then Chairperson, FSSAI and had a very strong participation from the stakeholders. A lot many subjects involving short as well as long term impact on the Codex work of the country were discussed. The Strategic Plan (2015-19) of Codex India was also approved by the NCC. It lays down the long-term strategic vision that Codex India wishes to achieve with clearly set measurable indicators. Another important area discussed was the need for India to submit data for various Committees, particularly contaminants and pesticide residues, so as to make the process of standard setting more inclusive. A Committee headed by Dr K.K. Sharma, Coordinator, All India Pesticide Residues Monitoring Programme, has been constituted to look into this important area.

There were two other Codex Committee meetings that were held in the month of February 2015, viz., Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO) in Malaysia and Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS) in Hungary.

A number of important meetings are scheduled to take place in the month of March 2015 beginning with the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP) from 9th to 13th March in Paris; Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF) from 16th to 20th March in Delhi, India; and then Codex Committee on Food Additives from 23rd to 27th March in China. This is really a jam-packed March !

Apart from the regular news on the meetings that we participated in and the forthcoming meetings, we also bring to you in this issue two articles prepared by the team of Codex Division, FSSAI. One article focuses on the principles of Risk Analysis and the other on Street vended Food. We hope you will find the articles useful and interesting.

Now, we are neck-deep busy preparing for the forthcoming 9th session of the CCCF that we are co-hosting with the Government of The Netherlands in Delhi from 16th to 20th March 2015. It is hoped that it will provide a platform for Indian scientists and experts to gain first-hand experience on the deliberations that take place in Codex meetings.

For us in Codex India this is a means of communicating with you one to one and we really enjoy bringing it you.

We look forward to receiving your comments/suggestions and contributions for the Newsletter at: codex-india@nic.in.

Happy reading.

A. National Codex Committee Meeting in December, 2014

1. The second meeting of the National Codex Committee (NCC) was held on 12th December, 2014 under the Chairmanship of Shri K. Chandramouli, the then Chairperson, FSSAI in the Conference Room, 4th Floor, FDA Bhawan.
2. The meeting was convened to apprise the NCC members about **Codex related Activities undertaken during the Period December 2013 to November 2014 and also approve Draft Strategic Plan of the National Codex Committee (NCC) 2015-2019. Other items included discussions on the Various Codex Committees and their status and collaboration between NCCP and Laboratories/ Educational Institutions to generate Data.**
3. The meeting was attended by stakeholders from across the sector and important policy decisions were taken in the meeting including approval of the Strategic Plan 2015-2019.
4. Shri Y.S. Malik, Chief Executive Officer, FSSAI highlighted the importance of getting associated with Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) work and harmonizing the National standards with the Codex Standards in the said meeting. He congratulated all the stakeholders on India's nomination as the CCASIA Regional Coordinator from July 2015 and also informed the stakeholders that India would also be co-hosting the 9th Session of Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF) with The Netherlands from 16th to 20th March, 2015 in New Delhi. He opined that India would have to be more focussed and pro-active in the activities of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.
5. Shri K. Chandramouli, the then Chairperson, FSSAI mentioned that the year 2013-14 had been fruitful for Codex Activities and the work was undertaken systematically and all the Electronic Working Groups (EWGs) were handled diligently. Delegates from India attended most of the Codex Committee meetings which was in line with the Country effort to make India's presence felt. The Chairperson further informed the stakeholders that the 1st Session of newly established Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) had been successfully held in Kochi in February 2014. He also informed that India had consciously taken a decision to co-host the horizontal Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food as the subject of contamination in food had been and would remain very important for India in view of our ultimate goal towards ensuring safe & wholesome food for the consumers.
6. As regards our greater role as the Regional Coordinator of CCASIA, the Chairperson observed that it placed an equally greater responsibility on India and it would call for an organised and sustained effort and approach to discharge this responsibility in an efficient manner. He further stated that the FSSAI would need to constitute a small Core Committee to examine the steps that would need to be taken to function as the CCASIA Coordinator and also

prepare SOPs for the purpose. “It is very important to work out the modalities of the Task in hand before the actual work of the Coordinator starts”, he said.

7. Director (Codex), informed the members that the term of India as the CCASIA Regional Coordinator would commence from July, 2015. As this would entail additional responsibilities for India, she highlighted that following steps would need to be taken:
 - (a) It is important that a **Standard Operating Procedure** is evolved and put in place to be an efficient Coordinator. A Core Committee consisting of 12-14 members, who are actively involved in various Codex Activities in India, will be established. Each member will be assigned 01 Committee based on his/her expertise and then that member will assist NCCP in drawing up the strategy before each Codex Committee as the Regional Coordinator for that particular meeting;
 - (b) India’s nomination as the Regional Coordinator will also require the strengthening of the NCCP with manpower and resources.
8. CEO, FSSAI emphasised the need for a plan in this regard so that adequate supporting infrastructure, including manpower, was in place to handle these additional responsibilities.
9. Thereafter, the draft Strategic Plan for NCC-India (2015-19) was discussed. The strategic plan for NCC-India (2015 - 2019) has been formulated co-terminus with the Codex Alimentarius Commission Strategic Plan (2014-2019). The purpose of the Strategic Plan is mainly to meet the mandate of the Codex Alimentarius Commission during the period 2014-2019 keeping in view the country perspective.
10. The Strategic Plan for NCC has been formulated consistent with the goals finalized by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. This document presents the activities for the effective participation of National Codex Contact Point, Committee members and stakeholders in promoting science-based food standards and to enhance the participation of India in Codex Meetings and related activities.
11. On the basis of the goals mentioned in the Strategic Plan, two Expert Committees have been established by the Authority with the mandate of reviewing the work plan of the strategic plan on a quarterly basis and for collection and validation of data.

B. India’s participation in the Codex Committee meetings during November 2014 - February 2015.

1. Participation in the 19th Session of the FAO/ WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR ASIA (3rd- 7th November, 2014):

- 1.1 A three member delegation led by Ms. Vinod Kotwal, Director (Codex), FSSAI attended the 19th Session of CCASIA in Tokyo, Japan. The other two members of the delegation were Mr Bakshi from NDDB and Dr Reddy from EIC. The meeting was chaired by Mr Pisan Pongsapitch, Deputy Secretary General of the National Bureau of Agricultural Commodity and Food Standards of Thailand, and Dr Yayoi Tsujiyama, Director for International Affairs, Food Safety and Consumer Policy Division, Food Safety and Consumer Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan, served as Co-Chair. The Session was attended by delegates from 21 Member countries, 4 Members outside the Region, 6 international organizations and Representatives of FAO and WHO.
- 1.2 Prior to the Codex Session, the delegates attended the workshop on “**Prevention of food safety emergencies**”, which was held on 2nd November 2014 at the IINO Conference Centre, Tokyo. The specific objectives of the workshop were to: 1) share knowledge on the basic concept of risk analysis and relation between risk management and crisis management in food safety; 2) enhance understanding on application of food recall and traceability system in the national food control system with specific reference to food safety events and emergencies; 3) raise awareness on the FAO/WHO guides for applying risk analysis during food safety emergencies and for developing and improving national food recall systems; 4) discuss a possible roadmap for introducing traceability and food recall in emergency scenario in participating countries; and 5) strengthen regional collaboration on the topic. The workshop presented demonstrated best practices, elements for an effective national food recall system, and the process for establishing/reviewing/improving the national food recall system within the larger framework of a national food control system.
- 1.3 **Agenda wise discussion w.e.f 3rd November 2014 revolved around following items:**
- ❖ The draft Regional Standard for Non-Fermented Soybean Products was forwarded to CAC38 for adoption at Step 8 and noted that food additives and labelling provisions would be endorsed by CCFA and CCFL respectively.
 - ❖ The amendments to Regional Standard for Tempe to the CAC38 for adoption and to inform CCMAS regarding its decision on the conversion factor for the determination of protein content in Tempe.
 - ❖ The Coordinating Committee agreed to return the proposed Draft Regional Standard for Laver Products to Step 2/3 for redrafting by the EWG, circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next session.

- ❖ The Coordinating Committee also agreed to return the Proposed Draft Regional Code of Hygienic Practice For Street-Vended Foods, to Step 2/3, for redrafting by the EWG, circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next session.
- ❖ The Coordinating Committee agreed to discontinue work on development of the Strategic Plan for CCASIA 2015-2020, and to replace it with the List of Activities of Interest to CCASIA.
- ❖ With regard to the Nomination of the Coordinator, **on the proposal of the Delegation of Indonesia, the Coordinating Committee unanimously agreed to recommend to the CAC38 that India be appointed as Coordinator for Asia.** The Delegation of India thanked Indonesia and all the Countries for their support and accepted the nomination.
- ❖ The Coordinating Committee noted that sufficient data were not available to support new work on edible crickets. The Coordinating Committee agreed to discontinue consideration of this matter in view of the insufficient data availability to support new work and noted that this issue could be revisited when more information and data would become available.
- ❖ The Coordinating Committee also encouraged the interested members to propose new work on guidance on health claims for food supplements and revision of Guidelines for Vitamin and Mineral Food Supplements (CAC/GL 55-2005) to relevant Committees. In this regard, the Delegation of India was of the view that the increase trade in food supplements and functional food worldwide required further work of Codex on health claims. The Delegation of Philippines brought to the attention of the Coordinating Committee the possibility of revisiting the Guidelines for Vitamin and Mineral Food Supplements (CAC/GL 55 - 2005) as it currently refers only to the vitamins and minerals. There are emerging issues on functional food and nutraceuticals, which challenge the standardisation of food components other than vitamins and minerals. The Coordinating Committee noted that these issues were relevant to the work of the Committees on Food Labelling (CCFL) and on Nutrition and Food for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU).



Indian Delegation:-L-R: Dr. Reddy, Joint Director, EIA-Member, Shri Sunil Bakshi, DGM (QA), NDDB-Member AND Ms. Vinod Kotwal, Director, FSSAI.

2. **Participation in the 46th Session of CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE (17-21 November, 2014):**

- 2.1 The 46th Session of CCFH was held from 17-21 November, 2014 in Lima, Peru. Two member Delegation led by Dr. Meenakshi Singh, Scientist- IV, FSSAI attended the session. The Chair of the Committee was Mr. Emilio Esteban, Department of Agriculture, USA with Co-chair Ms. Monica Saavedra Chumbe, Chairperson of the National Codex Committee, Peru. A total of 182 delegates representing 58 member countries participated in the session. The Committee agreed to forward the amendments of five meat commodity standards to the hygiene section for adoption in the draft Guidelines for the Control of *Trichinella* spp. in Meat of Suidae; and also the proposed draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Moisture Foods for adoption at Steps 8 and 5/8, respectively.
- 2.2 The Committee returned the proposed draft Guidelines for Control of Nontyphoidal *Salmonella* spp. in Beef and Pork Meat; and on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Foodborne Parasites to Step 2 for redrafting, circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next session. The Committee agreed to continue work on the need to revise the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* (CAC/RCP 53-2003) and to consider a discussion paper on the revision of the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CAC/RCP 1-1969) and its HACCP annex.
- 2.3 With regard to the proposal from Egypt on **Development of a Standard for Frozen and Chilled Meat**, the Committee noted that the request from Egypt was to develop a commodity standard and as such was not within the mandate of CCFH. It was further noted that hygiene aspects could be addressed through the revision of the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat* (CAC/RCP 58-2005), which was already included in the Forward Work plan. The Committee agreed that Egypt could consider whether the *Code of Practice for the Processing and Handling of Quick Frozen Foods* (CAC/RCP 8-1976) addressed the scope of their proposal and submit a revised proposal to CCEXEC70 and CAC38 through the Codex Secretariat, if appropriate.
- 2.4 The Committee agreed with the recommendation of the PWG that Uruguay submit a discussion paper and a Project Document on verotoxigenic *E. coli* in beef.



Indian Delegation: R to L:- Dr. Meenakshi Singh and Dr. Bhoopendra Kumar.

3. ***Participation in the 36th Session of Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods For Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) - (24th to 28th Nov. 2014):***

- 3.1 The 36th Session of CCNFSDU was chaired by Dr Pia Noble, Head of the Division of Specific Foods, Food Supplements and Food Additives, Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture and Co-chaired by Professor Purwiyanto Nariyadi, Professor of Food Process Engineering, Bogor Agriculture University and Director of SEAFast. The Committee was attended by 299 delegates representing 54 Member Countries, 01 Member Organizations and 25 International Organizations.
- 3.2 Two member delegation led by Dr. Sandhya Kabra, Director (QA/PA), FSSAI participated in the Session. During the Session, the Committee agreed to adopt the Draft Revision of the *General Principles for the Addition of Essential Nutrients to Foods* (CAC/GL 9-1987), at Step 8, Proposed Draft Additional or Revised Nutrient Reference Values for Labelling Purposes in the *Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling* NRV-R for Vitamin C, zinc, selenium, molybdenum and manganese, at Step 5/8, and Proposed Draft Nutrient Reference Value for Potassium in relation to the risk of non-communicable diseases, at Step 5/8.
- 3.3 The Committee also adopted Amendments to the Annex of the *Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling* (CAC/GL 2-1985), Amendments to the *Standard for Foods for Special Dietary Use for Persons Intolerant to Gluten* (CODEX STAN 11-1979) to add the term “khorasan wheat”, Amendments to the *Advisory List of Nutrient Compounds for Use in Foods for Special Dietary Uses Intended for Infants and Young Children* (CAC/GL 10-1979) to include zinc citrates and Proposed Draft Revision of the list of food additives in CODEX STAN 72-1981 to include INS 472c and INS 1450.
- 3.4 The Committee agreed to discontinue consideration of amendment to the *Standard for Processed Cereal-based Foods for Infants and Young Children* (CODEX STAN 74-1981) to include a New Part B for Underweight Children. The Committee also returned the revision of the *Standard for Follow-up Formula* (CODEX STAN 156-1987) to Step 2 for redrafting, circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next session. With regard to UNICEF Discussion Paper- **on a standard for ready-to-use foods (RUF)**, the Committee agreed the request from UNICEF, with support of Senegal, to prepare a revised discussion paper and project document on a standard for ready-to-use food (RUF) to be presented at the next session.
- 3.5 In the session, new work on the establishment of a Codex NRV for eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) long chain omega-3 fatty acids was proposed by IADSA. The Committee agreed to propose to

CAC38 to begin new work on an NRV-NCD for omega-3 fatty acids based on EPA and DHA.



Indian Delegation: R to L:- Dr. Sandhya Kabra and Ms. Sukhmani Singh.

4. ***Participation in the 24th Session of Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO) - (9th to 13th February 2015):***

- 4.1 The Four member delegation led by Shri P. Kartikeyan, AD (Regulation) attended the 24th Session of CCFO. The session was chaired by Ms Noraini Mohd. Othman, Senior Director for Food Safety and Quality, Ministry of Health. The Session was attended by participants from 40 Member countries, one Member organization and 5 international organizations.
- 4.2 The proposed Draft Standard for Fish Oil, was forwarded to CAC38 for adoption at Step 5 and the provisions were forwarded for food additives and methods of analysis and sampling to the relevant committees for endorsement. With regard to review of the list of acceptable previous cargoes, the Committee forwarded the amendments to List of Acceptable Previous Cargoes in CAC/RCP 36-1987 to CAC38 for adoption. The discussion paper on **Sunflower seed Oils - Revision Of Limits Of Oleic And Linoleic Acids**, the Committee agreed to establish an EWG, led by Argentina and co-chaired by Brazil, with Terms of Reference: *“To revise the discussion paper and project document on the basis of the data received with respect to ranges of oleic and linoleic acids values and related quality composition factors in sunflower seed oil for consideration at its next Session.”* The discussion paper on **Addition of Palm Oil with High Oleic Acid (Oxg)**, the Committee agreed to request CAC38 to approve new work on the revision of the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CODEX STAN 210-1999) to add palm oil with high oleic acid (OxG) and to forward the revised project document to the Executive Committee for critical review. The Committee also agreed to establish an EWG, led by Colombia and co-chaired by Ecuador, to prepare,

subject to approval of the Commission, a proposed draft revision of the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils, for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next session.

- 4.3 For the **Peanut Oil** - fatty acid composition and other quality factors, the Committee agreed to request CAC38 to approve new work on the revision of the fatty acid composition and other quality factors of peanut oil in the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CODEX STAN 210-1999) and to forward the project document to the Executive Committee for critical review. The Committee also agreed to establish an EWG, led by Argentina, subject to approval of the Commission, the proposed draft revision for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next session. With regard to **Discussion Paper on Cold Pressed Oils**, the Committee agreed to establish an EWG, led by Iran, to revise the discussion paper including a project document, taking into account comments made at the present session and based on the Guideline for Application of the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities Applicable to Commodities and information as required by the CCFO when proposing the addition of new oils to the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils agreed by the CCFO16, for consideration at its next Session. The Committee agreed to amend the title of discussion paper and project document to read ***“Amendment to the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils to include walnut oil, almond oil, hazelnut oil, pistachio oil, flaxseed oil and avocado oil”***.
- 4.4 India’s proposal on proposed **Draft Amendment to the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CODEX STAN 210-1999): Inclusion of Quality Parameters of Crude Rice Bran Oil** - The Indian Delegation introduced the discussion paper and explained that it was not clear whether crude rice bran oil was covered under the specification for rice bran oil in the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CODEX STAN 210-1999). They pointed out that the values for the fatty acid composition ranges for rice bran oil in the Standard were the same as those for crude rice bran oil and proposed adding a footnote reading: “including crude rice bran oil”. **A number of delegations supported the new work**, while others were of the view that a detailed description of the problem was necessary to take a decision on new work. It was also suggested to: clarify whether crude rice bran oil was as intended for direct human consumption; and examine the need to cover all crude oils in a general way in the description section of the standard. The Committee agreed that India would prepare a discussion paper, including a project document, which clearly describes the problem together with an analysis of the implication of the suggested amendment with respect to crude bran rice oil to other parts of the standard, for consideration at its next session. The proposal should be based on the Guideline for Application of the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities Applicable to Commodities and include information as required by CCFO when proposing the addition of new oils to the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils, as agreed by CCFO16.



Indian Delegation: R to L:- Sh. P. Kartikeyan, K.D. Yadav, Prabodh Halde and Mrityunjay Anand.

5. Participation in the 36th Session of Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS) - (23rd to 27th February, 2015):

Two member delegation led by Dr. AK.Sinha, APPA (CIL), Faridabad, attended the 36th Session of CCMAS. The Comments on the various Agenda Items were forwarded to the Codex Committee for consideration and the same has been included in the Addendum of the Agenda Items.

6. Participation in the various Electronic Working Groups (eWG).

Sr. No.	Codex Committee	Name of the eWG
1.	CCFH	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposed Draft Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Foodborne Parasites. 2. Revision of the General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969) and its HACCP Annex. 3. Draft Annexes for the Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Moisture Foods. 4. COHP for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables.
2.	CCNFSDU	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FUF. 2. NRV-R.
3.	CCFICS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Guidelines for the exchange of information between countries on Rejection of Imported Food (CAC/GL 25-1997). 2. Draft Guidance for monitoring the performance of National Food Control System (NFCS). 3. Proposed Draft "Principles and Guidelines for the Elaboration and Management of Questionnaires Directed at Imported Countries.
4.	CCFFV	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft Standard on Aubergine. 2. Draft Standard Ware Potato.
5.	CCPR	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Classification of Food and Animal Feed.

[Informative Articles](#)

Principles of Risk Analysis

Prepared by Codex Division

Ensuring food safety to protect public health and promote economic development remains a significant challenge in both developing and developed countries. Considerable progress to strengthen food safety systems has been achieved in many countries, highlighting the opportunities to reduce and prevent food-borne disease. However, unacceptable rates of foodborne illness still remain and new hazards continue to enter the food supply. Food-borne risks to human health can arise from hazards that are biological, chemical or physical in nature. A key discipline for further reducing food-borne illness and strengthening food safety systems is risk analysis. During the last several decades, risk assessment, risk management and risk communication have been formalized and incorporated into the specific discipline known as food safety risk analysis.

What is risk analysis?

Risk analysis is a structured approach to assessing food safety risks and as mentioned above, consists of three interactive processes - risk assessment, risk management and risk communication. Risk analysis provides national food safety authorities with a systematic and disciplined approach for making evidence-based food safety decisions. It provides particular value in addressing complex, persistent and evolving hazards in different parts of the food supply chain. Risk analysis is used to develop an estimate of the risks to human health, to identify and implement appropriate measures to control the risks, and to communicate with stakeholders about the risks and measures applied.



Figure 1: Risk Analysis

Source: <http://foodrisk.org/>

Benefits of Food Safety Risk Analysis:

- ❖ **Internationally recognized**

Adopted by Codex; thus supports international food safety harmonization and thereby trade.

- ❖ **Based on science**

Risk assessment and science-based food safety measures are recognised and promoted by WTO.

- ❖ **Consumer protection focus**

Provides a scientific evaluation of where in the food chain to take the most effective control steps.

- ❖ **Adaptable**

Can be applied to address a range of food safety concerns including emerging food pathogens.

- ❖ **Inclusive**

Promotes stakeholder participation; facilitating balanced decision-making and compliance.

- ❖ **Enables tailored decisions**

Supports informed decision making and allows consideration of available resources and local situations.

History of Risk Analysis:

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have played a leading role in the development of food safety risk analysis. In 1991, the Joint FAO/WHO Conference on Food Standards, Chemicals in Food, and Food Trade recommended that the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) incorporate risk assessment principles into its decision-making process. The 19th and 20th sessions of the

CAC, in 1991 and 1993, endorsed the recommendation of the Conference to base its food safety decisions and standards on risk assessment and encouraged the relevant Codex Committees to harmonize their standard-setting methodologies. At the request of the CAC, FAO and WHO have convened a number of expert consultations to provide advice to Codex and member countries on practical approaches for the application of risk analysis to food standard issues. These have included expert meetings on risk assessment (1995), risk management (1997) and risk communication (1998).

Three Components of Risk Analysis:

The three main components of risk analysis have been defined by Codex as follows:

(a) **Risk assessment:** A scientifically based process consisting of the following steps: (i) hazard identification; (ii) hazard characterization; (iii) exposure assessment; and (iv) risk characterization. Risk assessment is considered to be the “science-based” component of risk analysis.

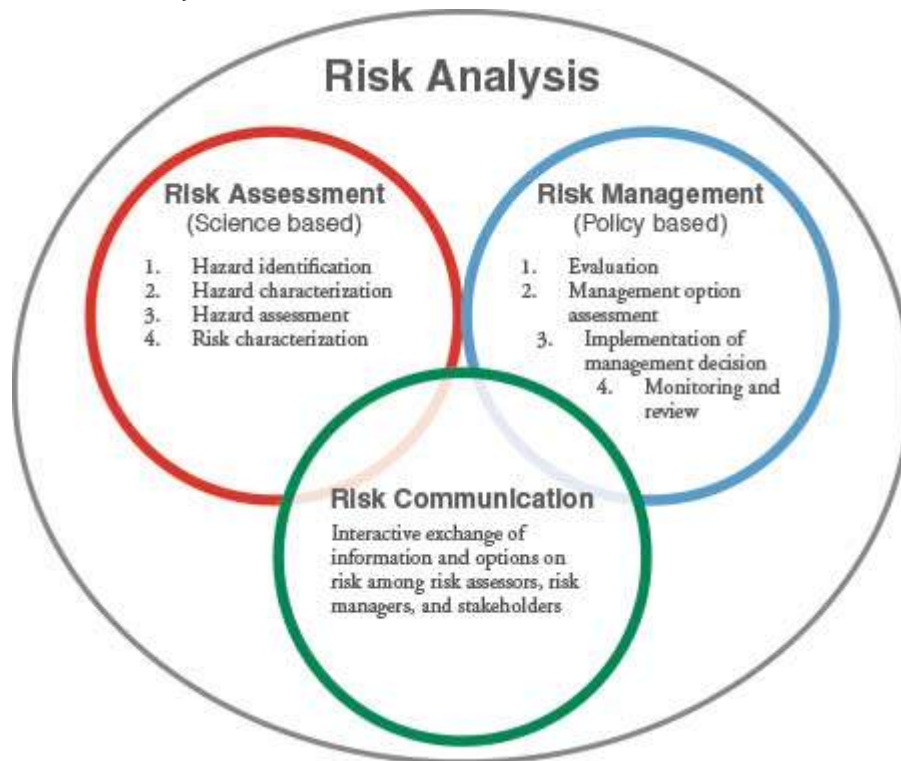


Figure 2: Three Components of risk analysis

Source: *Food Safety and Risk Analysis: A Guide for National Food Safety Authorities*, FAO Food and Nutrition Paper, 87.

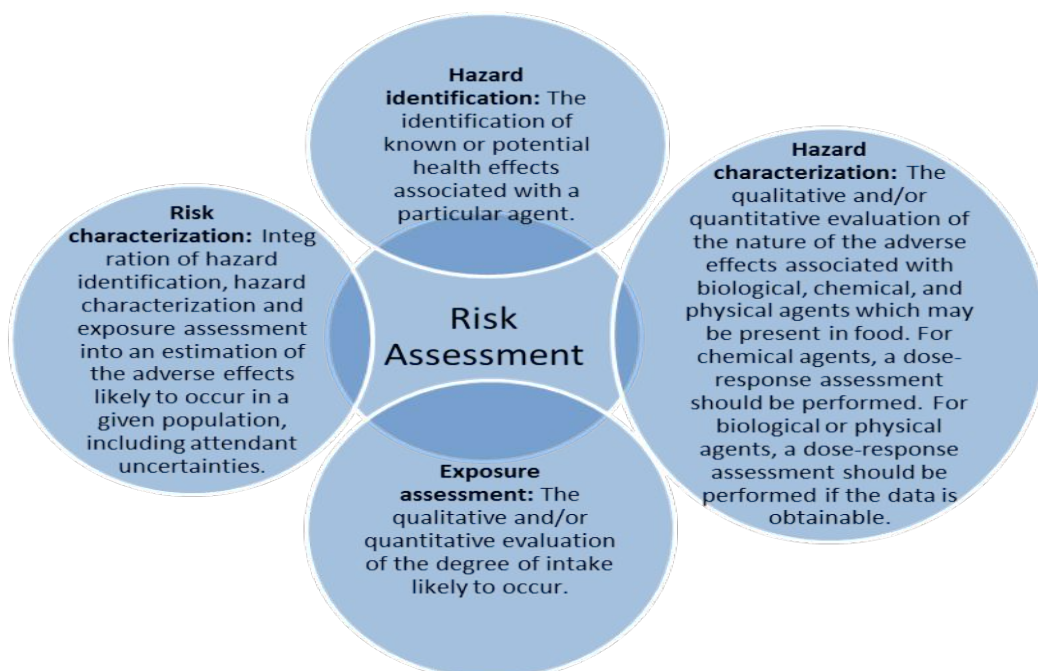


Figure 3: Steps involved in Risk Assessment

Source: *Food Safety and Risk Analysis: A Guide for National Food Safety Authorities*, FAO Food and Nutrition Paper, 87.

(b) Risk Management: The process, distinct from risk assessment, of weighing policy alternatives in consultation with all interested parties, considering risk assessment and other factors relevant for the health protection of consumers and for the promotion of fair trade practices, and, if needed, selecting appropriate prevention and control options.

The risk analysis process normally begins with a risk management step, to define the problem, articulate the goals of the risk analysis and identify questions to be answered by the risk assessment, if and when one is required. The science-based tasks of “measuring” and “describing” the nature of the risk being analysed are performed during the risk assessment phase. Risk management and risk assessment are performed within an open and transparent environment involving extensive communication and dialogue, in which a variety of interested parties may participate at appropriate points. The risk analysis process often culminates with the implementation of risk-reducing measures and continuous monitoring of their effectiveness by government, the private sector and other stakeholders.

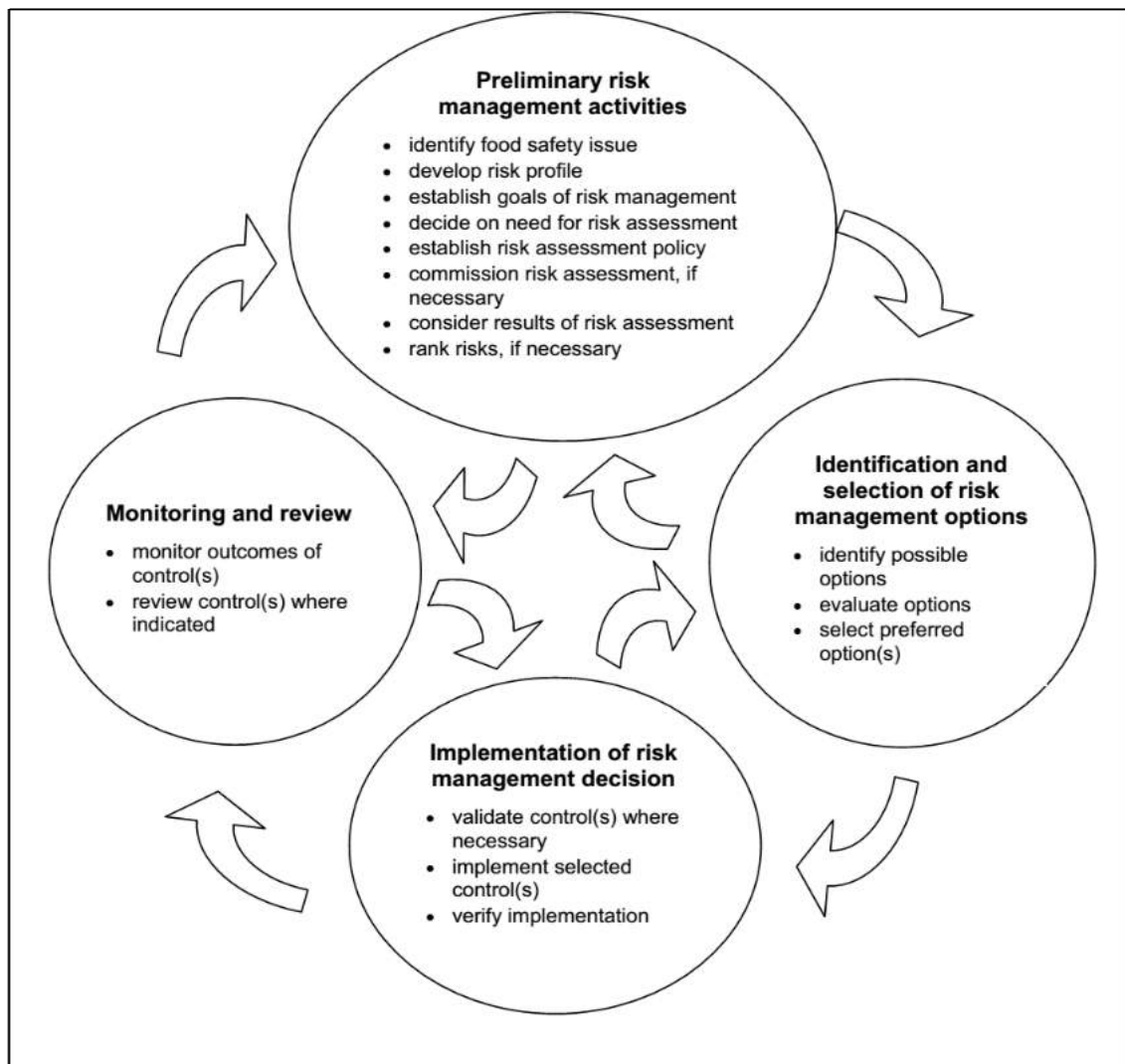


Figure 4: Generic Framework for Risk Management

Source: *Food Safety Risk Analysis: A Guide for National Food Safety Authorities*, FAO and Food Nutrition Paper 87.

(c) **Risk communication:** The interactive exchange of information and opinions throughout the risk analysis process concerning risk, risk-related factors and risk perceptions, among risk assessors, risk managers, consumers, industry, the academic community and other interested parties, including the explanation of risk assessment findings and the basis of risk management decisions.

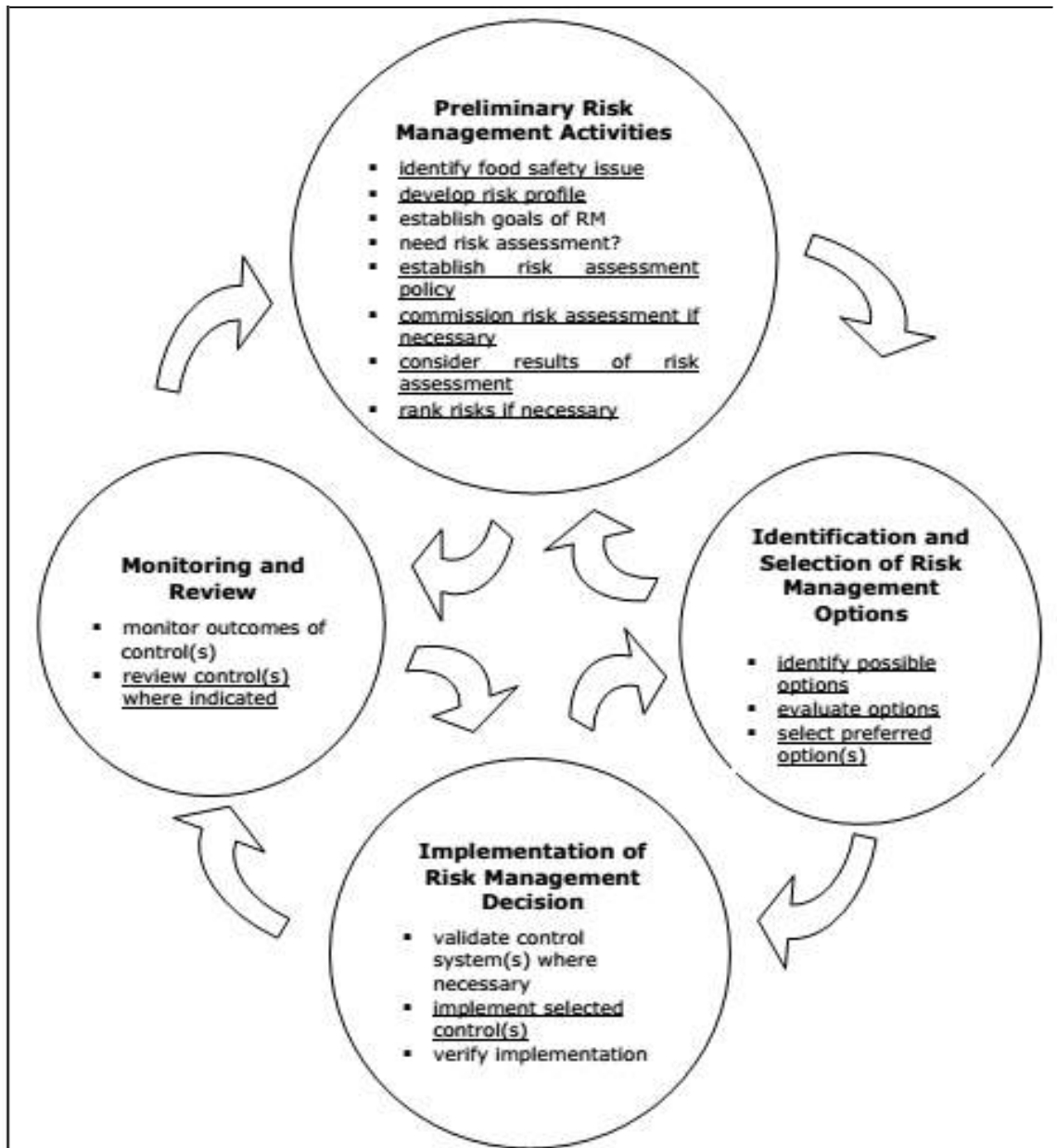


Figure 5: Risk communication and the generic RMF (Risk Management Factors)
(steps that require effective risk communication are underlined)

Source: *Food Safety Risk Analysis: A Guide for National Food Safety Authorities*, FAO Food Nutrition Paper 87.

Essential characteristics of risk analysis

Repeated interaction between and among risk managers, risk assessors and other participants

Regular monitoring of the success and impact of the decision

Follows a structured approach comprised of the three distinct components

Based on the best available scientific evidence

Applied consistently, for instance, to hazards of different types and from country to country

Carried out in an open, transparent and well-documented process

Clear in its treatment of uncertainty and variability

Risk analysis at the international and national levels:

Food safety risk analysis is carried out by national, regional and international food safety authorities. There are some important differences between these processes at the different levels. Internationally, Codex committees that recommend food safety standards (for example, the Committees on Food Hygiene, Meat Hygiene, Food Additives, Contaminants, Pesticide Residues, and Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods) act as risk managers. Risk assessments to support the development of Codex food safety standards are provided by the three Joint FAO/WHO Expert Bodies: the Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA); the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR); and the Joint Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA). Additional risk assessments may be provided, on occasion, by ad hoc expert consultations, and by member governments that have conducted their own assessments.

Risk Analysis at International Levels:

FAO is collaborating with WHO in the development of resource materials and tools to make the risk analysis approach more accessible. These include: a risk analysis toolkit, which will provide a range of practical tools, training materials tailored to specific audiences and information on the application of risk analysis to strengthen existing food

control systems; more focussed web-based tools to support risk management decisions, for example, to assess the performance of microbiological sampling plans, and the management options for the control of specific pathogens in chicken meat. These risk analysis programmes, guidelines and tools have been progressively contributing to enhanced understanding and implementation of risk analysis to improve consumer protection and trade outcomes both nationally and globally.

The principles of risk analysis that were approved by Codex Alimentarius Commission **“WORKING PRINCIPLES FOR RISK ANALYSIS FOR APPLICATION IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS”** are mentioned in the procedural Manual. The objective of these Working Principles is to provide guidance to the Codex Alimentarius Commission 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.

Codex Committees act as risk managers in the sense that they organize and direct the decision-making process, weigh the results of the risk assessments and other legitimate factors such as the feasibility of risk management options and the interests of Codex members, and recommend standards to protect public health and ensure fair practices in the food trade. Their activities may include developing risk management tools referred to as related texts, such as guidelines, codes of practice and sampling plans, and standards for specific food-hazard combinations. Draft standards and related texts prepared by these committees are forwarded to the CAC for final adoption and publication in the Codex Alimentarius. Codex standards and related texts are voluntary in nature and have no direct binding effect to CAC members unless they are adopted in national legislation. Codex does not implement risk-mitigating measures. Implementation, enforcement and monitoring activities are within the responsibilities of Codex members, governments and institutions. National food safety authorities, in contrast, generally are responsible for carrying out risk analysis in its entirety. Some governments have their own institutions and infrastructure for conducting risk assessments, choosing among risk management options, implementing and enforcing decisions, and monitoring and reviewing the impacts of decisions. Other countries may have fewer resources available to carry out risk analysis tasks. In such cases, and even where governments have their own capacities, components of risk analysis carried out at the international level can be very usefully applied in the national context.

International risk assessments done by JECFA, JMPR or JEMRA, for instance, can be partially or fully applied at the national level depending on particular. Similarly, international guidance on risk management for a particular hazard can identify an array of potential control options for national risk managers to consider in their own food control setting.

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Safety of Street Vended Foods

Prepared by Codex Division

According to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Street foods are ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors or hawkers especially in the streets and other similar places ¹.

Street foods serve millions of people globally, and are major source of livelihood as well as source of nutrition. The street foods have unique flavours, extensive variety depending upon on numerous factors like agro climatic zones etc. They are also inexpensive, conveniently available and in many cases alternative to home cooked food. Due to this, street food vending has become popular in the developing countries by providing a chance for self-employment for both men and women and has led to many opportunities for developing skills with low capital investment. At the same time, the Street vended foods have become a public health concern due to lack of an adequate understanding of the basic food safety issues , non-availability of basic infrastructure and services like access to clean water and solid waste management service.

Acknowledging the important role played by the Street Food , many United Nation bodies like WHO, FAO and Codex Alimentarius have established Guidelines, Code of Practice, Code of Hygienic Practice, Regulations and Reports on the safety requirements of Street- Vended Foods.

In the year 1983 and 1986, the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Safety felt the need of having safe street vended food, identified both the importance and potential hazards of street-vended foods. The microbiological, chemical and physical contamination in the street foods occurring under the street conditions were the main threat to the public health and to combat these risks, the Committee concluded that efforts must be made to educate and train the personnel involved in handling the food, to improve the environment where the street vended foods are sold and to provide essential services to assist street food vendors for assuring safe food by the local/ Government Authority^{2,3}. This was further strengthened by having simple techniques for regulation of street foods to be implemented and the work in this regard was extended to study street food practices and develop adequate strategies to improve the safety of street vended foods³.

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1. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Food for the Cities, Ensuring quality and safety of street foods note sheet.
 2. The role of food safety in health and development. Report of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Safety. TRS 705, WHO, Geneva, 1984.
 3. Food Protection for Urban Consumers. Report of a Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation, 1-5 December, 1986, Rome, Italy.

Codex Alimentarius has also established the Regional Codes of Practice for Street Vended Foods (Near East, 2013)⁴, Regional Code of Hygienic Practice for the preparation and sale of street foods (Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995)⁵ and Guidelines for the design of control measures for street-vended foods (Africa, 1997)⁶.

All the Regional Codes for the Street vended foods^{4,5,6} in the Codex Alimentarius have been imperatively designed for the sale of safe street vended foods. The Regional Codes consist of different sections and each section has been formulated keeping in mind the hygiene requirements of the food handlers which involves personal cleanliness, personal behaviours, the health status of the personnel, the clean environment where the street food is sold, the establishment, design, maintenance and sanitation of the street cart, street vended vans and street food centres, the transportation of the street foods, food storage, serving food to the consumers, the waste management which includes liquid and solid waste facilities, pest control systems etc.

The Regional Codes also mention about the training for the Street Vendors. All the Street vendors or food handlers should undergo basic training in food hygiene, training on how to handle food, pack and store food which makes them aware about their role and responsibility in protecting food from contamination or deterioration. They must also be educated with regard to buying the raw material for cooking from the authorized/licensed source, crockery to be cleaned while serving food, for packing the food the packing material should be food grade. The Regional Code also focuses on the Licensing/Registration of vendors. The Government / local authority ensure that no vendor shall conduct his/her business of preparation, packing, storage, display and sale of any street foods unless he/she is licensed/ registered under the relevant food regulations. This also leads to the sale of safe, hygienic and quality food to the consumers.

Apart from these essential components or determinants in the code of hygienic practice for safe street vended foods, the Regional Codes also discuss about the consumer awareness, education, which also covers the Health education programmes dealing with general food hygiene.

In particular, consumers should be informed of the relationship between time/temperature control and foodborne illness. The relevant authority should inform consumers through posters, the media and publicity campaigns about hazards associated with street foods and the steps the authority requires street food vendors to take to minimize those hazards.

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4. Regional Code Of Practice For Street-Vended Foods (Near East) Cxp 71-R-2013

5. Regional Code Of Hygienic Practice For The Preparation And Sale Of Street Foods (Latin America And The Caribbean) (Cac/Rcp 43r-1995)

6. Regional Guidelines For The Design Of Control Measures For Street-Vended Foods (Africa) Cac/GI 22r - 1997.

Consumers should also be informed of their responsibility in ensuring that they do not contaminate, dirty or litter street food vending sites. Street Food Advisory Services should have the leading role in the elaboration of information material and in the monitoring of consumers' education⁶.

In Indian subcontinent and other Asian Countries, the number of street vendors has increased sharply during the past few years. Therefore, India proposed in the 18th Session of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia, (CCASIA, 2012), **a draft code on the Regional Code of Hygienic Practice for the Street Vended Food (ASIA)**.

The Committee agreed with the proposal prepared by India and established an EWG to be chaired by India. The work on this EWG is ongoing and is at Step 3.

By looking at all the safety determinants of street vending foods, it is evident that International Organizations and National Authorities are making efforts to ensure that all these components are used aptly while preparation and sale of street vended foods. These Codes of practice, guidelines and Code of hygienic Practice are being used for the safety of street vended foods by many developing countries to curb the number of health hazards related to consuming of the street vended foods and thus the safety of the Street Foods has been made mandatory in some of the developing nations. These practices, guidelines are meant as a tool to help foster the safe, hygienic and quality food vision among those who have truly come to understand that we are what we eat !

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Upcoming Events

- ❖ 29th Session of Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP), 9th to 13th March, 2015 in Paris, France.
- ❖ 9th Session of Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF), 16th to 20th March, 2015 in New Delhi, India.
- ❖ 47th Session of Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA), 23rd to 27th March, 2015 in Xián, China.
- ❖ 47th Session of Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR), 13th to 18th April, 2015 in Beijing, P.R. China.
- ❖ 22nd Session of Codex Committee on Residues of veterinary Drugs In Food (CCRVDF), 27th April to 1st May, 2015 in San Jose, Costa Rica.

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