



Agenda Item 3 (a)

CX/EURO 10/27/4-Add.1

**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME  
FAO/WHO REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE**

Twenty-seventh Session  
Warsaw, Poland, 5 to 8 October 2010

**ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO COMPLEMENTARY TO THE WORK OF  
THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION.**

**Part 2: Scientific advice activities  
(Prepared by FAO and WHO)**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. FAO and WHO elaborate scientific advice through JECFA, JEMRA, JMPR and *ad hoc* expert meetings based on requests from the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and member countries.
2. The CAC is an important client for this advice, where the results are used extensively in the development of Codex texts. However, this advice may be equally valuable for member countries and can be used to strengthen decision making processes on food safety and nutrition issues at national and regional level.

**OUTPUTS OF SCIENTIFIC ADVICE PROGRAMME**

3. All FAO/WHO scientific advice is available on the websites at <http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/> (FAO) and <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/> and <http://www.who.int/nutrition/en/> (WHO). The advice can be interpreted and applied to strengthen national food control systems and nutrition programmes. See Annex I of CX/NASWP 10/11/3 Part 2 ([ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/ccnaswp11/na11\\_03e\\_par2.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/ccnaswp11/na11_03e_par2.pdf)) for details of the outputs of the FAO/WHO scientific advice program since October 2008. Details of other related FAO/WHO activities can be found in Annex II of the same document.

**Current issues**

4. JEMRA is currently developing web-based tools to support i) decision making on the control of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* in poultry and ii) assessment of the performance of microbiological sampling plans. FAO/WHO are seeking to identify countries that would be interested in pilot testing of the tools in national settings and the development of case studies on their application. **Interested parties should contact FAO/WHO** at [jemra@fao.org](mailto:jemra@fao.org) and [foodsafety@who.int](mailto:foodsafety@who.int) for more details.
5. FAO/WHO will establish an "e-Discussion Group for the Development of a Tiered Approach Diagram for Risk Assessment of Nanomaterials (NMs)". A call for experts for this group will be issued in September/October 2010. The overall objectives of the group will be to develop a decision tool to support identification of the appropriate risk assessment approach for nanomaterial categories and to review the current risk assessment approaches that are used by FAO/WHO and Codex, in order to address the specific emerging issues associated with the application of nanotechnologies in the food and agriculture sectors. **Experts from all the regions will be invited to apply.** For more information contact FAO ([proscad@fao.org](mailto:proscad@fao.org)) and WHO ([foodsafety@who.int](mailto:foodsafety@who.int)).
6. FAO's recently established Emergency Prevention System for Food Safety (EMPRES Food Safety) is now becoming operational and work will be required on assessment of emerging risks. Effective pooling of scientific excellence will contribute significantly to this effort, thus a new **FAO Food Safety Expert Roster will be established** in 2011. For more information, see Para 17 of Annex II, CX/NASWP 10/11/3 Part 2 ([ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/ccnaswp11/na11\\_03e\\_par2.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/ccnaswp11/na11_03e_par2.pdf)), contact [empres-fs@fao.org](mailto:empres-fs@fao.org) or visit <http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/>.
7. **New call for data:** The call for data for the 74<sup>th</sup> JECFA meeting, to be held in Rome, 14-23 June 2011, has been published. Data for a number of food additives, including aluminium-containing food additives,

and for the food contaminants fumonisins and cyanogenic glycosides are requested by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010. For further details refer to: <http://www.who.int/ipcs/food/jecfa/data/en/index.html>

### RESOURCES FOR SCIENTIFIC ADVICE

8. FAO and WHO are continually striving to increase the resources available for the provision of timely and effective scientific advice and use various mechanisms to achieve this. One such mechanism is the **Global Initiative for Food-related Scientific Advice (GIFSA)**. For more information about GIFSA, contact FAO ([mary.kenny@fao.org](mailto:mary.kenny@fao.org)) and WHO ([tritschera@who.int](mailto:tritschera@who.int)).
9. In addition FAO has developed a Strategy for the Provision of Scientific Advice for Food Safety (2010 – 13) which aims to enhance the provision of scientific advice, facilitate dissemination of scientific information, strengthen national and regional scientific capacity and build scientific communities and networks. The strategy is available at [http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/advice\\_en.asp](http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/advice_en.asp) (English), [http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/advice\\_es.asp](http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/advice_es.asp) (Spanish) and [http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/advice\\_fr.asp](http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/advice_fr.asp) (French) or for more information contact [Mary.Kenny@fao.org](mailto:Mary.Kenny@fao.org).

### HOW TO USE FAO/WHO SCIENTIFIC ADVICE AT NATIONAL/REGIONAL LEVEL

10. The scientific advice can be used in setting up national, regional and international food-related **standards, policies and regulations** and building **food safety and quality systems** to ensure safe and nutritious food and afford adequate levels of consumer protection. As a result, the food production chain within countries can be better sustained and both local and global trade facilitated. FAO/WHO scientific advice is particularly useful **in cases where national or regional expertise or resources are lacking**.
11. Moreover, food-related scientific advice contributes towards important Millennium Development Goals, where food safety and nutrition not only enhances the health and wellness of populations, but also acts as a vital element to **ensuring food security, poverty alleviation and economic growth** through improved food production and trade.

### HOW TO REQUEST FAO/WHO SCIENTIFIC ADVICE

12. **Subject prioritization:** There is an overwhelming number of nutritional and food safety issues that need to be addressed to guide decisions of national authorities. Details of the current FAO/WHO priority areas for scientific advice can be found in Annex III of CX/NASWP 10/11/3 Part 2 ([ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/ccnaswp11/na11\\_03e\\_par2.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/ccnaswp11/na11_03e_par2.pdf)). It is important that regions identify the priority areas and issues that are relevant to them. The Committee is **encouraged** to discuss and identify scientific advice needs in the framework of the regional Codex Strategic Plan and regional food safety initiatives.
13. The requests for advice can be proposed through various Codex Committees as well as the FAO/WHO coordinating committees. Requests that are not relevant to Codex matters are also welcome and can be addressed directly to FAO ([proscad@fao.org](mailto:proscad@fao.org)) and WHO ([foodsafety@who.int](mailto:foodsafety@who.int)). It is important to note that coordinated requests from multiple countries and regions will be prioritized.

### HOW TO CONTRIBUTE TO FAO/WHO SCIENTIFIC ADVICE

14. **Generating relevant local data:** Data generated in the frame work of national food control systems are very valuable to support the work of experts in the provision of scientific advice. It is preferable to have data, on for example occurrence of contaminants in food, from as many sources as possible to underpin the evaluations at international level.
15. **Responding to and disseminating calls for data and experts:** Websites of FAO (<http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/>) and WHO (<http://www.who.int/foodsafety/en/>) announce calls for data and experts when needs arise. The calls are also issued through other channels including newsletters, Codex Contact Points, scientific communities and journals. Countries are strongly encouraged to be involved in this process since every single input can be valuable for the overall scientific advice. In order to adhere to the core principles for the provision of scientific advice of soundness, responsibility, objectivity, fairness, transparency and inclusiveness, it is important to include qualified experts from as many parts of the world as possible, so that geographical, cultural and gender balance can be achieved in addition to the technical and scientific qualification. Thus **countries are encouraged to disseminate FAO/WHO calls for data and experts** to a wide audience.