



# **Codex General Principles for the Use of Food Additives**

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# Outline

- **Codex Alimentarius**
- Overview of Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)
- CCFA Priority Issues
- Conclusions

\*Slides derived from materials developed by CPG Global

# Codex Alimentarius



## *1963 Joint UN FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme Dual Mandate*



### ***Science-based policies***

#### **Protect health of consumers**

- International standard setting



#### **Fair Trade Practices**

- Harmonization of global standards
- WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) agreement
- WTO Technical Barrier to Trades (TBT) agreement

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# Codex Committee on Food Additives (1964, 2007)

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

# General Standard for Food Additives

## Initial Charge to the Committee 1991

- Elaborate a GSFA that includes all foods
- Develop the GSFA
  - 1) CCFA should agree to accept science-based JECFA safety evaluations
  - 2) CCFA should recognize variability of technological need among different nations
  - 3) CCFA should not rely on individual government prohibitions on additives in specified foods, yet instead should rely more heavily on informative labeling
  - 4) CCFA members should rely on the GSFA as the single authoritative source on food additives

# General Principles for the Use of Food Additives (GFSA)

- Food Additive Safety
- Justification for the Use of Food Additives
  - an advantage
  - does not present an appreciable health risk to consumers
  - does not mislead the consumer
  - serves a Codex technological function
  - cannot be achieved by other means that are economically and technologically practicable
- Good Manufacturing Practices
- Specifications for the Identity and Purity of Food Additives

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# CCFA Priority Issues

## Science and Harmonization

- Codex General Standard for Food Additives –

Ensure scientific objectivity and integrity maintained, Regional differences/philosophies do not prevail

The 46<sup>th</sup> Session of the CCFA adopted over 800 provisions to the GSFA which now contains more adopted than pending provisions

- Note 161

Subject to national legislation of the importing country aimed, in particular at the consistency with Section 3.2 of the Preamble

# Note 161

- Note 161 undermines:
  - scientific base of Codex and
  - foundation of Codex as an international standard setting organization
  - and is inconsistent with WTO SPS agreement regarding scientific justification...“national governments can adopt more restrictive standards than those of Codex if there is scientific justification” and “Codex standards are voluntary and national governments may introduce a higher level of protection when justified”
  
- Codex “STATEMENTS OF PRINCIPLE CONCERNING THE ROLE OF SCIENCE IN THE CODEX DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH OTHER FACTORS ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT”
  - Recognized that some legitimate concerns of governments when establishing their national legislation are not generally applicable or relevant worldwide
  - Only those factors which can be accepted on a worldwide basis, or on a regional basis in the case of regional standards and related texts, should be taken into account in the framework of Codex

# Note 161

- 46<sup>th</sup> Codex Session reestablished an EWG on Note 161
  - Examine the impact of limiting artificial sweetener use to reduced calorie foods
  - Make recommendations on the use of Note 161
- Clear from EWG input thus far that Note 161 will have a significant impact on many (possibly hundreds) of currently permitted uses worldwide
- Concerns remain regarding technological need and consumer deception
- The technological need for artificial sweeteners is not and should not be limited to reduced calorie foods and foods with no added sugar
- If artificial sweeteners are deceptive, so are natural sweeteners?

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# Conclusions

- Increased participation from all Codex members will:
  - Ensure science-based international standards that are good for government, industry, and consumers
  - Ensure consumer health protections, and fair trade practices
  - Promote harmonization through stakeholder consultations
  - Promote technical advancements to build market opportunities



*... working together towards  
science-based Codex standards*