



MANUFACTURING CHEMISTS ASSOCIATION

1825 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N. W. • WASHINGTON, D. C. 20009 • (202) 483-6126

August 9, 1971

To: FOOD, DRUG, AND COSMETIC CHEMICALS COMMITTEE

Subject: Report on the Eighth Session of the
Codex Alimentarius Commission

Gentlemen:

This is the report of your secretary on the Eighth Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which was held in Geneva June 30 through July 9, 1971. It deals only with those aspects of the session judged to be of direct interest to the chemical industry, and is based on the draft report of this session.

ACCEPTANCES OF CODEX STANDARDS BY GOVERNMENTS

It was reported that 13 countries have indicated their positions with respect to the first four Recommended Codex Standards sent to governments for acceptance (General Standard for the Labeling of Prepackaged Foods, Standard for Canned Pacific Salmon, European Regional Standard for Honey, and the First Series of International Tolerances for Pesticide Residues), and that letters requesting acceptance of the remaining 40 or so Recommended Codex Standards also adopted by the Commission would shortly be sent to governments.

The Commission agreed that the task of reviewing the replies from governments should be entrusted to the Executive Committee which would recommend action by the Commission or other steps such as referral to the appropriate Codex Committees. It was recognized that experience in dealing with acceptances might call for referring some aspects to the Codex Committee on General Principles.

ADVANCEMENT OF CODEX STANDARDS

Standards for the following commodities were adopted at Step 8 of the Procedure for Elaboration of Codex Standards, the

step prior to sending to governments for acceptance at Step 9 as Recommended Codex Standards: Orange, Grapefruit, Lemon, Apple, and Tomato Juices; Apricot, Peach, and Pear Nectars; Canned Strawberries; Powdered Dextrose; Special Dietary Foods with Low Sodium Content Including Salt Substitutes; and Quick-Frozen Fillets of Cod, Haddock, and Ocean Perch. Also adopted at Step 8 were amendments to the Recommended Codex Standard for Canned Peaches, the Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Dehydrated Fruits and Vegetables, and the Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Dessicated Coconut.

Standards for Canned Plums, Raspberries, Fruit Cocktail, Mushrooms, and Asparagus before the Commission at Step 8 were returned to the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables for further consideration. The Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Quick-Frozen Fruits, Vegetables, and Their Juices was held at Step 8 pending the development of the Proposed Draft Code of Practice for Processing and Handling of Quick-Frozen Foods.

Adopted by the Commission at Step 5 were standards for Quick-Frozen Peaches, Bilberries, and Strawberries; Complete Infant Food; Canned Tuna and Bonito; and Canned Pork Shoulder as well as the Code of Hygienic Practice for Poultry and Poultry Parts.

REPORT OF CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES

The following matters arose during consideration of the report of the Seventh Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives which was held October 12-16, 1970 in The Hague.

Lists of Food Additives - During the discussion of a list of flour treatment agents which was before the Commission at Step 8, it was brought out that the CCFA had proposed that the list should be considered simply as an open list of additives which had been found acceptable from a toxicological point of view by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives. A number of delegations then stated they did not consider the substances on the list, other than ascorbic acid, necessary for flour treatment purposes, whereupon the U.S. delegation expressed the opposite view that the list was very incomplete and might even create misunderstanding as large quantities of flour, treated with other agents for different technological purposes, were being marketed throughout the world. The Commission agreed to treat the list as an "indicative" open list and decided to return it to the CCFA for reconsideration in light of the comments and additional information to be provided by the U.S. delegation concerning other flour treatment agents.

The CCFA chairman then stated that the CCFA was considering the development of lists for other classes of food additives and, in view of the action taken by the Commission regarding flour treatment agents, there appeared to be a need for clarification of the policy of the Commission on the status of such lists. The Commission agreed that this matter should be considered by the Executive Committee at its next session so that some guidelines could be drawn up to assist the CCFA in the preparation of such lists.

Commercial Enzyme Preparations - Before the Commission was the Proposed Draft General Standard for Enzyme Preparations for Food Use for decision as to whether it should be developed as a mandatory or advisory text. It was noted that the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives had given in June detailed consideration to enzymes used in food processing and had developed a general specification for such enzymes together with a number of specifications for individual enzyme preparations. In view of this, the Commission decided not to proceed further with the present text, with the understanding that the specifications developed by JECFA would follow the steps of Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and in due course be submitted to the Commission.

Sulfur Dioxide Intake - With regard to the CCFA recommendation that the problem of high sulfur dioxide intake (resulting from its use as an additive, especially in wine) be brought to the attention of the International Wine Office to consider steps to reduce the maximum permitted loads of sulfur dioxide, the Commission requested the CCFA to follow the progress of the International Wine Office studies in this area already underway.

Codex Specifications for Food Additives - The Commission considered the procedure proposed by the CCFA for the elaboration of Codex Specifications for Food Additives, and adopted the following procedure:

Steps 1 and 2 - The Secretariat distributes the specifications, when available from the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives, and requests comments from governments and interested international organizations.

Steps 3 and 4 - The CCFA examines the specifications in the light of comments. The comments are also made available by the Secretariat to the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives. The Expert Committee's opinion is also placed before the CCFA.

Step 5 - Only those specifications which, in the opinion of the CCFA, are suitable for publication as recommended international specifications for food additives and for which Steps 6, 7, and 8 could be omitted, should be submitted to the Commission at Step 5 for final adoption.

Proposed Third FAO/WHO Conference on Food Additives - The conclusion of the CCFA that it could discuss the agenda items proposed for such a conference, provided its terms of reference were enlarged, was brought to the attention of the Commission. The Commission decided to adopt the recommendations of the Executive Committee which call for the proposed draft agenda items to be sent to all member governments to get their opinions as to the desirability for such a conference and as to the subject matter to be covered. The Commission also decided to request the CCFA to include in its list of priorities for the Expert Committee on Food Additives the need to establish an international acceptable daily intake for mercury. (Priorities for future work of the Expert Committee, especially in the area of food contaminants, is one of the agenda items proposed for the conference.)

REPORT OF CODEX COMMITTEE ON PESTICIDE RESIDUES

The following matters arose during consideration of the report of the Fifth Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues which was held September 28-October 6, 1970 in The Hague.

General - Several delegations expressed the view that practical residue limits only should be established for chlorinated hydrocarbons. The delegation of Australia emphasized that in a number of cases the continued use of chlorinated hydrocarbons was essential in agriculture and it was therefore important that tolerances be established for residues of these compounds arising as a result of good agricultural practice.

The delegation of Canada stated that some of the pesticides for which tolerances were proposed were not allowed to be used in Canada, but that importation of foodstuffs which complied with the recommended Codex tolerances and practical residue limits would be permitted.

The Canadian delegation also declared that in its opinion tolerances or practical residue limits should not appear again on the CCPR agenda until all data asked for have been provided to and evaluated by the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues and relevant monographs have been made available to governments well before the CCPR meetings at which the pesticide limits will be considered.

It was the opinion of the Commission that temporary tolerances might best be regarded as provisional recommendations sent to governments for acceptance but which would remain applicable until such time as the revised tolerances had been adopted by the Commission.

The delegation of Morocco drew attention to the need for the establishment of international methods of analysis and sampling for use in connection with the recommended tolerances and practical residue limits.

Proposals at Step 8 - The Commission adopted the draft tolerances, temporary tolerances, and practical residue limits for a number of pesticide applications as recommended standards. The practical residue limit of 0.1 ppm for aldrin and dieldrin in eggs on a shell-free basis, the temporary tolerance of 0.3 ppm for dichlorvos in fresh vegetables, and the practical residue limit of 0.1 ppm for heptachlor in carrots were returned to Step 7 for reconsideration by the CCPR.

Proposals at Step 5 - The Commission considered the tolerances, temporary tolerances, and practical residue limits submitted by the CCPR at Step 5 and advanced them to Step 6 of the Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standards.

Elaboration of Standards for Pesticide Residues - The Commission considered a proposal of the Executive Committee to allow for omission of Steps 6, 7, and 8 with respect to pesticide residues and contaminants by a two-thirds vote. The Commission did not adopt the proposal, but did request the views of the CCPR on this proposal as well as on an alternate proposal of the United Kingdom.

Ad Hoc Working Group on Pesticide Residues - The Commission was informed that the Danish government expected to be able to host this group in October 1971.

FOOD ADDITIVES AND CONTAMINANTS PROVISIONS

The following are excerpts taken from the draft report of the session which deal with the Food Additives and Contaminants sections of the standards considered at the session:

Draft Standards for Apricot, Peach, and Pear Nectars; Orange, Grapefruit, Lemon, Apple, and Tomato Juices - "The Commission noted that the maximum limits for tin in these standards had been temporarily endorsed and would be subject to review by the Codex Committee on Food Additives in two years time when it was

hoped to carry out a complete study of the levels of tin in all foods and make recommendations to the Commission in connection with all draft and recommended standards."

Draft Standard for Orange Juice - "The delegation of Spain proposed that the maximum limit of arsenic should be lowered to 0.1 mg/kg and the maximum limit for lead should be raised to 0.5 mg/kg. The delegation of France pointed out that children were among the highest consumers of orange juice and that a figure of 0.5 mg/kg for lead would be too high. The chairman of the Codex Committee on Food Additives informed the Commission that a figure of 0.3 mg/kg for lead had only been temporarily endorsed. This limit would be re-examined in two years. The Commission decided not to change the figures for contaminants. The delegation of Italy maintained the position it had taken at the Seventh Session of the Group of Experts, namely to reserve its position regarding lead content."

Draft Standard for Lemon Juice - "The Commission noted that the maximum level of lead of 1 mg/kg in lemon juice had been temporarily endorsed and would be subject to review by the Codex Committee on Food Additives within two years of the adoption of the standard at Step 8."

Draft Standard for Apple Juice - "The Commission was informed that the Group of Experts had agreed to a maximum level of tin at 150 mg/kg in apple juice. This figure had been temporarily endorsed. The Commission decided that this figure should be reviewed in two years time by the Codex Committee on Food Additives when the Committee made its general review of the maximum limits for tin."

Draft Standard for Apple Juice - "The delegation of The Netherlands considered that it was not appropriate to list processing aids such as clarifying agents and filtration aids in a commodity standard. In their view the Codex Committee on Food Additives should establish a list of suitable processing aids which could be used in food processing. Other delegations explained how the processing aids had come to be listed in the standard. Taking into account that the listing of individual processing aids in this standard might be taken as a precedent for other commodity standards, the Commission decided without dissent to amend Section 4 of this standard to read as follows:

4. Processing Aids

- 4.1 Clarifying and Filtering Agents as approved by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and used in accordance with the good manufacturing practice.

4.2 Others

- 4.2.1 Pure Vegetable Carbon
- 4.2.2 Pure Nitrogen
- 4.2.3 Pure Carbon Dioxide

The Codex Committee on Food Additives was asked to consider making the necessary arrangements."

Draft Standard for Quick-Frozen Strawberries - "The delegation of Ireland drew the attention of the Commission to the use of direct contact refrigerants in the quick freezing industry and that the use of such refrigerants caused residues in the food treated. As the use of these refrigerants was a comparatively new development and as the draft standard no longer contained a section on contaminants, this problem had not been previously considered by either the Joint Group of Experts or the Codex Committee on Food Additives. It was therefore suggested that the Group of Experts should study this problem, which would later need to be considered by the CCFA. The delegation of Belgium supported this proposal and added that they already had some experience in this field and they would inform these committees accordingly."

Draft Standard for Quick-Frozen Peaches - "The delegation of Austria proposed that the color type "green" should be added to the Proposed Draft Standard for Quick-Frozen Peaches as had been done in the Recommended Standard for Canned Peaches. The Commission agreed to amend the standard to include this color type."

Draft Standard for Frozen Fillets of Cod and Haddock - "The delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany stated that the food additives as listed in the draft standard were not acceptable under the legislation of the Federal Republic of Germany."

Proposed Draft Standard for Canned Tuna and Bonito - "The Commission was informed by the Secretariat that the governments of China, Korea, and Japan had expressed concern about the result of the discovery of the presence of mercury in these products... The Commission was informed that the next session of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products would examine the problem of mercury and other metallic contaminants. The Secretariat had compiled information on mercury. The delegation of Japan also pointed out the need for the standardization at the international level of methods for determining mercury and methyl mercury in fish."

Draft Standard for Canned Strawberries - "The delegation of Yugoslavia reserved its position on the use of colors in canned strawberries and similar products. The delegation of New Zealand also stated that it was opposed to the use of colors in canned fruit and vegetable products, except in the case of cherries in canned fruit cocktail. The representative of the International Organization of Consumers Unions also expressed a doubt as to the need for artificial colors in this and similar products. It was pointed out that some countries permitted the use of artificial colors in canned strawberries and in various other canned fruit and vegetable products, while others did not. The Commission was informed that this subject had been thoroughly discussed by the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables. The Commission decided to make no change in the standard."

Draft Standard for Canned Strawberries - "The Commission agreed to provide for a maximum tolerance for tin at the level of 250 mg/kg in this standard and in any other standards to be considered at the session in accordance with the recommendation of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables at its last session held in May 1971. The Commission emphasized that this was a provisional tolerance which would be subject to review in two years time in the Codex Committee on Food Additives. A number of delegations reserved their positions on the maximum limit for tin."

Draft Standard for Canned Plums - "The Commission agreed that the provision on acidifying agents in the standard for Canned Strawberries should also be included in the standard for Canned Plums. As in the case of the standard for Canned Strawberries, some delegations reserved their position on the use of color for Canned Plums. The delegation of Belgium stated that the use of SO₂ was permitted in Belgium in the course of operations preceding the canning of yellow plums. This resulted in a residue of SO₂ up to a maximum of 10 mg/kg in the final product. As coloring was allowed in the standard for red and purple plums, the delegation of Belgium requested that a new provision be included in this section to permit the presence of SO₂ in amounts not exceeding 10 mg/kg for yellow plums only. The Commission decided not to amend the standard as requested by the delegation of Belgium, and the delegation of Belgium reserved its position. The delegation of Yugoslavia, in addition to reserving its position on the use of colors, also reserved its position on the use of flavors."

Proposed Amendment to the Recommended Standard for Canned Peaches - "The Commission further decided to advance to Step 3

of the Procedure for the Elaboration of World-Wide Codex Standards the proposed amendment to Section 3 - Food Additives where the following provision was added to the text:

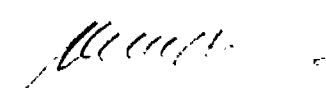
<u>Antioxidant</u>	<u>Maximum Level of Use</u>
Ascorbic Acid	Not Limited"

Proposed Amendment to the Recommended Standard for Canned Tomatoes - "The Commission considered the proposed amendment to Section 3.2 - Firming Agents of the Recommended Standard for Canned Tomatoes which read as follows:

<u>Firming Agents</u>	<u>Maximum Level of Use</u>
Calcium Chloride)	(0.080% total calcium ion
Calcium Sulphate)	(in styles "diced", "sliced",
Calcium Citrate)Singly	(and "wedges"; 0.045% total
Monocalcium Phosphate)or in	(calcium ion content in the
(Others to be listed)Combin-	(styles "whole", "whole and
in the light of government)ation	(pieces", and "pieces"
comments to be obtained)	
in due course at Step 3)	

The Commission decided to advance the amendment to Step 3 of the Procedure for the Elaboration of World-Wide Codex Standards."

Sincerely yours,


M. M. Hoover, Secretary
Food, Drug, and Cosmetic
Chemicals Committee

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