

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Inputs for the 2018 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)

“Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”

Codex Alimentarius

The Codex Alimentarius Commission adopts international food standards to protect consumer health and promote fair practices in food trade. Codex is run in partnership with the World Health Organization as part of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme; the Secretariat is hosted by FAO. The Codex Alimentarius Commission contributes directly to SDGs 2, 3, 12, and 17.

Key messages on SDGs 12 and 17

SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

The application of Codex standards, guidelines and codes of practice, such as Good Agricultural Practices and Good Manufacturing Practices, are essential to reduce food losses along production and supply chains and to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

- Codex texts define the conditions for producing hygienic and non-contaminated foods which reduce food loss such as the sound use of pesticides to reduce pre-harvest losses.
- Codex maximum levels set for contaminants and veterinary drug and pesticide residues in food aimed at protecting consumers also curb food loss.
- Codex rigorous science-based standards for food additives, lead to less food waste by conserving foods.
- Codex recommends appropriate labelling practices, and the sell-by-date and use-by date of pre-packaged foods, in particular, reduces food waste.

Working within internationally agreed frameworks and developing international standards in Codex through consensus can enhance agricultural management and reduce adverse impacts of chemicals and waste on the environment.

- Codex provides guidance on heavy metals in food.
- Codex guidelines on GMOs also help to reduce agrochemical inputs and, in the future, will encourage the production of plant varieties that consume less resources and lead to more sustainable agriculture.

There is potential for Codex to contribute to target 12.5 as standards could be set for food packaging and to target 12.6 if Codex codes of practice were set, encouraging companies to adopt and report on sustainable practices.

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SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Access to science through international cooperation is key to promoting the effective participation of all countries in the specialized activities of the United Nations such as Codex Alimentarius, the central part of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards programme, at both regional and international level.

- FAO is working to consider options for increased and sustainable funding for its programme of food safety scientific advice provided by expert meetings such as The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA). FAO/WHO scientific advice programmes have provided the scientific basis for the international food safety standards set by Codex for over 50 years.

Coordinated and targeted capacity building programmes ensure national bodies can plan effectively for targeted participation in international standard setting in accordance with national needs.

- The Codex Trust Fund supports countries to build strong, solid and sustainable national capacity to engage in international food safety standards setting (Codex Alimentarius) which can be an integral part of national plans to implement SDGs (specifically SDGs 2 and 3).

Food that is not safe is not food. An equitable multilateral trading system must guarantee that food is safe, of expected quality and can be traded without interruptions or barriers.

- Codex texts are considered by WTO as the international reference for food safety and nutrition standards. Codex contributes as an international standard setting body whose food safety standards are developed by 189 members through consensus and on a scientific basis.

Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies, leaving no one behind: recommendations of Codex Alimentarius

SDGs were discussed in Codex for the first time at CCEXEC73 (2017). The Codex Alimentarius Commission noted the report of the Executive Committee that SDGs would greatly contribute to the overall advocacy values for the work of Codex; and that the SDGs would be taken into account when developing the next Codex Strategic Plan 2020- 2025.