

Indian delegation participates in the 47th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling

Press Release

New Delhi, May 23, 2023:

An Indian delegation, led by Dr. Harinder Singh Oberoi, Advisor (Science & Standards, CODEX), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), took part in the 47th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling held from 15th to 19th May, 2023 in Gatineau (Ottawa), Québec, Canada.

The delegation participated in various discussions at the global meet that saw the participation of delegates from 59 Countries and 23 International Government and Non-Governmental Organisations, including representatives from WHO and FAO. The issues that were discussed at the session included standards related to food labelling norms, use of new technologies in labelling, labelling of food allergens, labelling for e-commerce etc. Further, India has been made the co-chair in two E-working groups (EWGs) on labelling for E-commerce and the use of new technology in labelling.

The Indian delegation also included Sh. Ajith Kumar, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Dr. Aditya Jain, Senior Manager, National Dairy Development Board, and Dr. Heena Yadav, Technical Officer, FSSAI, which brought diverse expertise on the table.

During their visit, the team also met His Excellency Shri Sanjay Kumar Verma, High Commissioner of India to Canada, and a discussion took place on wide issues ranging from harmonization with the Codex standards to import and export of food items, with an emphasis on the export of traditional food products, keeping in mind the sizeable and growing Indian population in Canada. Shri Verma stated that he is likely to meet the President of CFIA soon to discuss about the mutual recognition of food certification system to improve the export of Indian Food products to Canada.

During the visit, Dr. Oberoi also met Dr. Harpreet Kochhar, President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and discussed about signing of MoU between FSSAI and CFIA. During his meeting with Dr. Kochhar, Dr. Oberoi also emphasised on the mutual recognition of few of the Food Testing Laboratories in India and Canada for facilitating trade of food products. The Indian delegation also got an opportunity to have a detailed discussion with the officials of CFIA on the labelling of food allergens, use of technology in labelling, etc. and visited the Food Emergency Response Centre and a Food Testing Laboratory in Ottawa, Canada. Previously, India has signed an MoU with Canada for the mutual recognition of food labs in both the countries.

During the visit, Dr. Oberoi also visited the Ontario Food Terminal at Toronto to get an insight into the inspection system for imported fresh fruits and vegetables.