

## FROM THE DESK OF NATIONAL CODEX CONTACT POINT (NCCP)

India has crossed yet another milestone in the global endeavour of food safety by way of successfully hosting the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia (CCASIA20) in September in Delhi. The support from the Codex Secretariat and the offices of the FAO and WHO in the development of the technical content, and a smooth conduct, of the session was truly a facilitating factor.

With the agenda for the session having been set in the backdrop of Codex initiative of revitalization of Coordinating Committees, the Session featured very extensive discussions on, among others, food safety and quality situation and use of codex standards in the region. The region as a whole was discussing the challenges, opportunities and the way forward in improving the food safety scenario through an active collaboration among member countries. The delegations in general expressed their great satisfaction with the arrangements and the smooth conduct of the session. More details of the CCASIA20 are provided in this issue of the Newsletter.

In India, harmonization of domestic food standards with those of the Codex was initiated several years ago. However, the process received a major thrust in 2012 with the creation of more than sixty Electronic Working Groups by the FSSAI to work in different areas and to prepare specific proposals for harmonization of the standards under each of these commodities' specific and other general subject areas. One of the important harmonization tasks accomplished so far pertain to the area of food additives. Other areas are also being covered gradually. This process not only reflects India's commitment to meet the obligations under the relevant international protocols, but also facilitates enhancement of the food safety and quality situation at the domestic level.

In the recent past, Indian delegations successfully participated in the 28th Session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV28) held in September 2016, in Washington DC, USA and the 23rd Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (October 2016, Houston, USA) and the US-CCASIA Colloquium (August 2016, New Delhi, India). India also made specific proposals for new work in the CCPFV28. We also continued to successfully organize informal meetings of the CCASIA member countries on the sidelines of these Codex Committee meetings.

With many more Codex meetings to follow in the next few months, a continued support of our partners and other stakeholders is essential to ensure that India's concerns are duly addressed in such meetings. While such collaborative work at the national level is greatly appreciated, we look forward to a more active participation of our partners and others stakeholders in the Codex work.

This issue of the Newsletter also features an article detailing the origin and key elements of the Codex Guidelines for vitamins and mineral supplements. NCCP appreciates such contributions which make the Newsletter more informative and interesting to read.

## 20TH SESSION OF CCASIA

## **ABOUT CCASIA**

FAO/WHO CCASIA. Coordinating Committee for Asia is one of the Regional Coordinating Committees for Asia established by Codex Alimentarius Commission, which has 23 Asian Member countries as of 2016. It was established at the 11th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) held in Rome, Italy, in July 1976.

The main objective of CCASIA is to promote mutual communication among the Asian members as well as to develop regional standards for certain food products. Since its first session in 1978, CCASIA has been working under the purpose of the Codex of protecting the health of the and consumers ensuring fair practices in the food trade.

The 20th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating committee for Asia was conducted in New Delhi India, from 26th to 30th September 2016, under the Chairmanship of Shri Sanjay Dave, former Chair of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

The session was attended by delegates from 18 Member countries, four Member countries outside the Region, one observer country and seven international organizations

The Honourable Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda, welcomed the participants and opened the session.

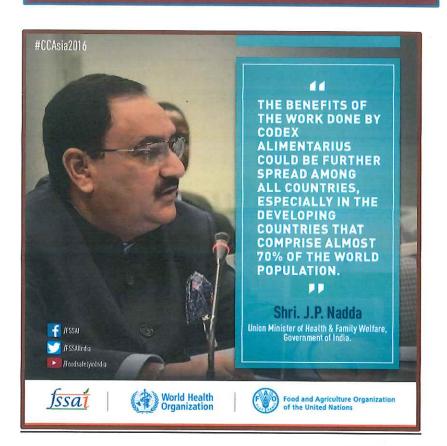
The Honourable Faggan Singh Kulaste, State Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, Mr Ashish Bahuguna, Chairperson of FSSAI, Ms Awilo Ochieng Pernet, Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Mr Shyam Bahadur Khadka, FAO Representative to India and Dr Poonam Khetrapalsingh, WHO Regional Director to India, also addressed the meeting.



Dr Noraini binti Dat' Mohan Othman, Senior Director, Food Safety and Quality Division, Ministry of Health, of Malaysia, delivered the Keynote address on the "Role of Codex in Strengthening National Food Control Systems in the Asian Region – A way forward".

The delegation of India was headed by Shri Sunil Bakshi, Advisor (Codex & Regulations), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.

## **OPENING REMARKS AT CCASIA20**

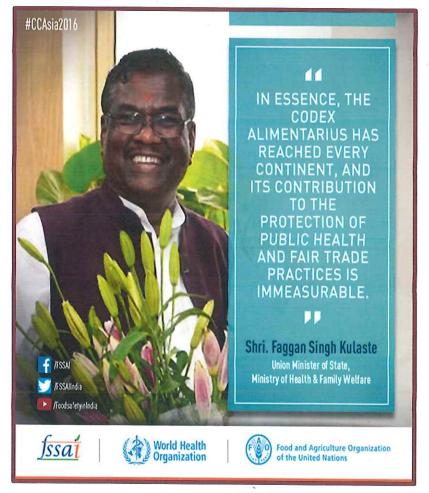


Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda, Honorable Minister for Health and Family Welfare, welcomed the participants and opened the session. In his inaugural address, he recalled the **10th Anniversary** of the implementation of **Food Safety and Standards Act** and the ten new initiatives announced by FSSAI to strengthen national food control system in India.

He recalled the important role of Codex to protect human health and ensure the fair practices in the international food trade and the importance of harmonization of national standards with Codex standards, which India had already embarked on.

## Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste,

Honourable Minister of State,
Minister for Health and Family
Welfare emphasized on the need
to build up the relations with
neighbouring countries, bridge the
gaps if any, bring forward the
regional concerns and promote
mutual communication among the
Asian members as well as to
develop regional standards for
certain food products.



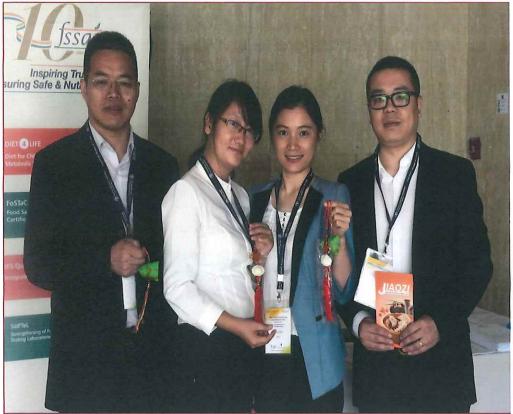
#### **NEW WORK PROPOSALS DURNG THE SESSION**

Four new work proposals were presented in the 20<sup>th</sup> session of CCASIA, as follows:

Delegation of China two new work proposals on:

"Jiaozi" - Quick Frozen Dumpling and

"Zongzi" - Rice Dumpling



Delegation of China presenting dummies of "Jiaozi" and "Zongzi"

Delegation of Japan presented Discussion paper on the development of a Regional Standard for Natto –"a traditional fermented soybean product"

Delegation of Republic of Korea presented Discussion paper on the development of a Regional Standard for Makgeolli- "fermented rice-based low alcohol beverages".

## Proposal on Cochairing the Codex sessions

The Chairperson CCASIA20, Shri Sanjay Dave also presented a proposal on Co-Chairing of Codex Committee Meetings which provided a brief account of the situation of capacity development activities and efforts made to enhance meaningful participation of developing countries in Codex.

General support was received from the members and India, as Regional Coordinator was requested to bring the proposal to the attention of the next session of CCEXEC (2017).

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## **IMPORTANT DELIBERATIONS DURING CCASIA20**

REGIONAL CODE OF HYGIENIC PRACTICE FOR STREET-VENDED FOODS, a proposal by India was discussed in detail and the Committee agreed after some amendments to forward the proposed draft regional Code of Hygienic Practice for Street-Vended Foods to CAC40 (2017) for final adoption.

India also proposed "Conversion of the Regional Standard for Chili Sauce (CODEX STAN 306R-2011) to an International Standard", India had been requested to submit their proposal directly to CCEXEC for critical review. The committee expressed general support to the proposal.

## SIDE EVENTS DURING THE SESSION

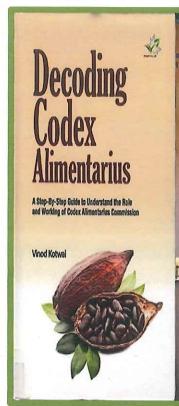
A total of four side events were organised during the session on the following

- Codex Communication Tool
- Codex Trust Fund 2
- 🖊 Feast, Flavours & fusion of India
- Revitalization of Regional Coordinating Committees and Strengthening Standard-setting and Implementation of Codex Standards
- 4 A trip to Taj Mahal was also organized by India for the CCASIA delegates on Thursday.



CCASIA delegates during visit to Taj Mahal

## **RELEASE OF THE BOOK "DECODING CODEX ALIMENTARIUS"**





# "DECODING CODEX

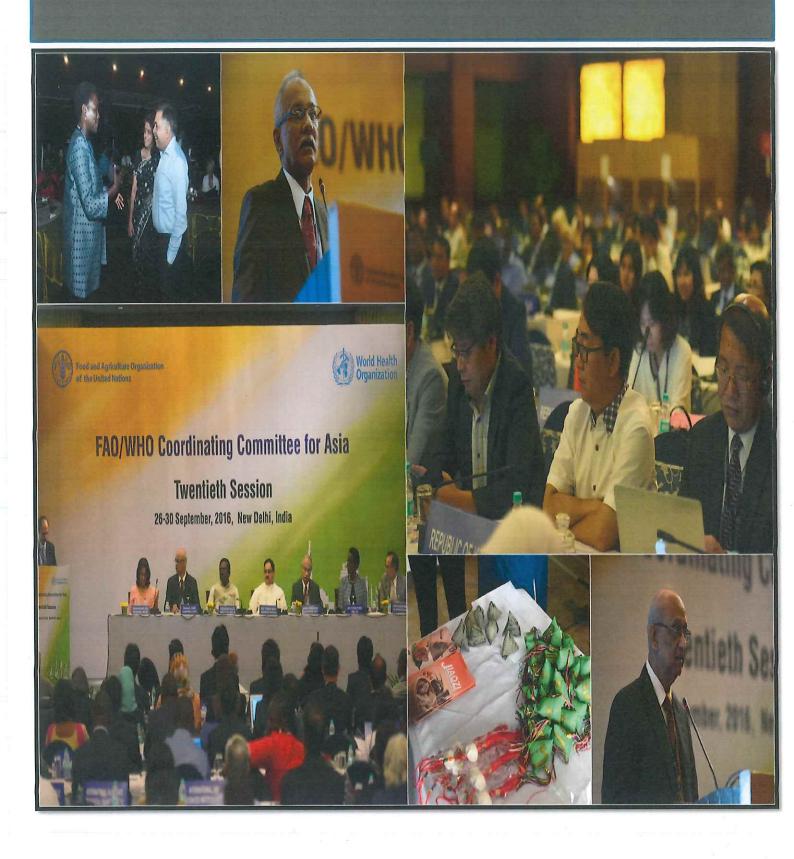
## ALIMENTARIUS"-

CCASIA20 also marked the release of book "Decoding Codex Alimentarius" written by Ms Vinod Kotwal, Former Director (Codex), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.

The book is a step to step guide to understand the role and working of Codex Alimentarius



## **MOMENTS OF CCASIA**





# INDIA, REGIONAL COORDINATOR FOR ANOTHER TERM OF TWO YEARS

The Coordinating Committee unanimously agreed to recommend to CAC40 that India be reappointed for a second term as Coordinator for Asia. India thanked all CCASIA members for their support and accepted the nomination.

#### CODEX SESSIONS DURING THE PERIOD

## CCPFV28 Washington DC, USA – 12th to 16th September, 2016

The 28th Session of Codex Processed Committee on Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV) during 12-16 was held 2016 September, in Washington DC, USA. The session was attended by 27 Member countries, 1 Member 1 organization, UN organization and 5 observer organizations. The Indian delegation comprised of Dr Suresh Khurana, Consultant FSSAI and Shri Krishna Kumar Joshi, ITC Ltd. India made several interventions in the Committee meeting. Several Codex texts were adopted at final step 5/8, viz: Annex on **Pineapples** Canned inclusion in the Standard for Certain Canned Fruits) and Annexes for Certain Quick Frozen Vegetables (for inclusion in the Standard for Quick Frozen Vegetables and methods of analysis for quick vegetables) frozen were adopted at final step 5/8. Amendment to the scope of the Standard for Certain Canned Fruits: Amendments to the food additive provisions standards Codex for processed fruits and vegetables (subject to endorsement by CCFA) for adoption by the Commission. Committee agreed to take new work on standardization of dry and dried produce.

## CCRVDF23 Houston, USA- 16th to 20th October, 2016

The 23rd Session of Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary drugs in Foods (CCRVDF) was held during 16-20 October, 2016 in Houston, Texas, USA. The session was attended by 62 Member 1 Member countries, organization, 8 observer organizations and FAO & WHO.

The Indian delegation comprised of Dr Lokendra

Kumar, Assistant Director (T), Export Inspection Agency, India.

Following texts were sent to the Commission for adoption at Step 5/8 and Step 5 respectively: Proposed draft MRLs for ivermectin (cattle fat, kidney, liver, muscle) and teflubenzuron (salmon fillet, muscle) and the proposed draft Risk management recommendation (RMR) for gentian violet which prevents its use in food producing animals.

Committee requested FAO and WHO for scientific advice to address the issue of unavoidable and unintended residues of approved veterinary drugs in foods resulting from carry-over of veterinary drugs residues in feed.

## US-CCASIA COLLOQUIUM, 22-24th AUGUST 2016

The US-CCASIA colloquium was held from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> August 2016 in Hotel ITC Maurya, New Delhi, sponsored by the US. Codex Office and the Foreign Agricultural Service, US. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and co-hosted by India. 45 members from 13 Asian member countries, Chile (Regional coordinator of CCLAC) and the US participated in the Colloquium.

The Colloquium aimed at increasing cooperation among CCASIA delegates, exchange views, collaborate on strategies for advancing shared regional positions and enable participants to identify areas where CCASIA and the United States can collaborate to prepare for the then upcoming Codex Committee meetings on Food Hygiene and Codex Committee on Veterinary Drugs in Foods 2016.

Detailed discussion took place amongst the members particularly with respect to Agenda items on revision of General principles of Food Hygiene, histamine control and sampling plans for histamine under CCFH and Risk Management Recommendation (RMR) for gentian violet under CCRVDF. The discussion provided a clear viewpoint of various Asian members' in the agenda items and mutual concerns were identified.



## PARTICIPATION OF INDIA IN THE ELECTRONIC WORKING GROUP



## CCMAS

- \*Measurement On Uncertainity
- \*Codex General Guidelines On Sampling
- \* Review And Update Of CODEX STAN 234-1999

## CCFA



- \* Food Additives Provisions In The Category Of Grape Wines And Its Sub Categories
- \* General Standards For Food Additives (GSFA)
- \* Alginment Of Fod Additive Provisions Of Commodity Standards Of GSFA
- \* International Numbering System.



## CCFL

- \* Development of Guidance on the labelling of Non retail containers of foods
- \* Front of pack nutrition labelling

## FEATURED ARTICLE

# The Origin and the Key Elements of Codex Guidelines for Vitamins and Minerals Supplements

#### Dr. Sangeeta Chadha, FICCI\*

The role of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) is to study specific nutritional problems assigned to it and advise the Codex Commission on general nutrition issues. This includes developing standards and guidelines for Foods for Special dietary Uses and related categories. In late 1980s there was a proposal that the Committee should expand its work into the area of food supplements because of the global expansion of these products. In the 16th session of the CCNFSDU (1988) and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) at its 18th session in 1989 agreed to seek government views on whether work on vitamin and mineral supplements should be undertaken within the Codex system. An agreement was made in 17th session of the CCFNSDU (1991) that Guidelines rather than a Standard for supplements would be most appropriate.

As a first issue they had to address was the many different terminologies in use, including 'food supplement', 'dietary supplement', 'health supplement' to name a few. In some countries products were regulated as foods or dietetic foods, in others under pharmaceutical law and in some it was very unclear where the products fit into the overall regulatory framework since there was no specific legislation.

It was between 1992 and 1996 that there were substantial discussions on many core issues in the text before, eventually, the 20th Session of the CCNFSDU in 1996 then advanced the proposal to CAC for adoption at Step 5 in the eight step Codex process. However, it was quickly clear that the necessary consensus had not been achieved and the text was returned to the Committee in 1997 for redrafting.

Some fresh thinking was now required on moving forward and this took the form of a Discussion Paper drafted by the delegations of Canada, the EU and the USA, with the assistance of the delegations of Brazil and Mexico. This identified the range of issues involved, the diversity of regulation and some of the potential options, with their advantages and disadvantages. This document had the effect of bringing all countries up to speed on what it would take to achieve consensus and had the positive effect of building confidence and trust in a number of the options that were finally agreed.

<sup>\*</sup> The views expressed in this article, if any, are of the authors and do not necessarily reflect views of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.

After a few more years of discussion at the CCNSFDU the Guidelines were moved up the Codex decision making process for adoption by the Codex Alimentarius Commission in 2005 in Rome. Many said that it had taken a long time. The factors responsible for the same were: A) Discussion on the draft text only occurred once a year at a Codex Nutrition Committee meeting and in the 1990's Committee meetings did not happen every year. B) Discussion in Committee was on occasions limited to only a few hours each meeting due to the volume of other issues that were on the agenda. C) At the time of adoption, there was still significant diversity in the regulation of food supplements worldwide and this was far from an easy sector to reach agreement on at the global level.

It needs to be mentioned that the adoption of the Codex Guidelines was far from the end of the story. Noting that according to the Guidelines, the maximum levels of vitamins and minerals would need to be developed based on scientific risk assessment; the FAO/WHO initiated a process to develop "A model for Establishing Upper Levels of Intake for Nutrients and Related Substances". This took the form of a report from a Joint FAO/WHO Technical Workshop on Nutrient Risk Assessment which took place in Geneva in May 2005. The report of this meeting was issued in January 2006 and still today provides an essential document for any government wishing to develop science-based maximum levels of vitamins and minerals in food supplements.

To complete the picture, in 2009 CCNFSDU adopted Nutrient Risk Analysis Principles for application by Codex. They specify that the FAO/WHO nutrient risk assessment report is the internationally accepted approach for the safety evaluation of nutrients. These principles are critically important for the setting of maximum levels based on risk assessment. This document is therefore an excellent basis for the potential future application of the risk assessment method by Codex and for the development of an internationally accepted table of maximum levels.

When the two reports and the CCNFSDU principles and guidelines are used in conjunction, regulators have much of the essential data to make key decisions on maximum levels.

# CHRONOLOGY OF KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN CCNFSDU RELATING TO THE VITAMIN AND MINERAL FOOD SUPPLEMENT GUIDELINES

Year	Discussion	Result
1988	Agreement to seek approval of the CAC to undertake work on food supplements.	Committee requested approval
1991	Agreement reached for the development of Guidelines on vitamin and mineral supplements as foods.	Committee advised Commission that work would be progressing.
1992	Draft Guidelines submitted by Germany. Agreed that supplements should be treated as foods in the Codex system. Range of issues raised including maximum levels, lists of nutrients and	German delegation asked to redraft Guidelines.
1995	Revised version introduced. UK and US delegations expressed concern about development of the Guidelines. Most delegations were however supportive of moving forward.	Revised text circulated to Member States for comments at Step 3.
1996	Exchange of view on proceeding with the Guidelines. Canada and Netherlands emphasized importance of applying risk assessment methodology if maximum levels were to be set. The Committee agreed to focus on safety considerations based on scientific evidence. The Committee could not agree on a minimum level of vitamins and minerals of 15% of RDI. Opposition expressed to maximum level of 100% of RDI for vitamin and minerals. Committee agreed to include an alternative proposal to establish a safe level based on risk assessment.	Committee agreed to forward the proposed draft Guidelines to the Codex Commission at Step 5, despite recommendation from Australia, Canada, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, United States and United Kingdom to keep at Step 3 for further discussion.
1998	Guidelines returned to Step 3 by the Codex Commission requesting the Committee to hold a fundamental discussion on the need for the Guidelines. In particularly, extensive debate was held on the basis for establishing maximum levels for vitamins and minerals.	Canada, EU, USA with support from Brazil and Mexico to develop Discussion Paper.

2000	Discussion paper submitted prior to the meeting was presented and discussed. This addressed many issues including positive and negative lists labelling and maximum levels. After discussion on the need for the Guidelines, Committee concludes that necessary to proceed. Progress made on the wording of many aspects of the Guidelines.	Committee agrees to return the draft Guidelines to Step 3 for discussion at the next session for the Committee.
2001	Revised text discussed. Proposal to expand the Guidelines to cover herbs traditionally used in supplements was rejected, based on previous agreement. Both options for establishing maximum levels maintained.	Committee agrees to return the draft Guidelines to Step 3 for discussion at the next session of the Committee.
2002	Revised text discussed. Final name 'vitamin and mineral food supplements' agreed. Proposal to expand to other ingredients once again rejected. It was noted that when the Guidelines were completed the extension to other substances could be considered.	Committee agreed to return the draft Guidelines to Step 3 for discussion at the next session for the Committee.
2003	Revised text discussed. The Committee clarified in the text that products containing vitamins, minerals and other ingredients were also covered by the Guidelines in respect of their vitamin and mineral content. It was agreed to retain 15% since it corresponded to the value for "source" in the Guidelines for Use of Nutrition Claims. Detailed discussion on the establishment of maximum levels for vitamins and minerals: Committee agreed to delete the option to establish maximum levels based on a maximum of the RDI/RDA. Establishment of maximum levels based on scientific risk assessment retained and committee discussed the need to take into account the reference intake for the population during this risk assessment process.	Based on considerable progress made, Committee forwarded the draft Guidelines to the Codex Alimentarius Commission for adoption at Step 5. Adoption at the CAC was achieved.

2004	Revised text as adopted at Step 5 discussed, focusing solely on the areas where consensus still not achieved Clarity provided in the text that the establishment of maximum levels should not be solely based on recommended nutrient intakes.	Recommendation of the text to the Codex Alimentarius Commission for Adoption of the Guidelines.
2005	Codex Alimentarius Commission adopts the Codex vitamin and mineral food supplement Guidelines at their 28th Session.	

## THE CONTENT OF THE GUIDELINES: WHY OPTIONS WERE CHOSEN

## Scope and Definition of the Guidelines

It has been observed that the scope of food supplement regulation worldwide is very wide and generally includes in addition to vitamins and minerals ingredient categories ranging from amino acids to botanicals and from fish oils to glucosamine. While the diversity of ingredients used in supplements was in the CCNFSDU, Member States were well aware that with the recognized diversity of regulation, tradition and experience, it would be a significant challenge just to agree Guidelines on the vitamins and minerals or the vitamin and mineral content of supplements. It was however noted that this may be the first stage process, not the end of the process and that other substances could be added later if that was the will of the Committee. In addition, it was accepted that the Guidelines should not be seen as restricting supplements to vitamins and minerals only. In addition, it is important to note that while the scope of the Guidelines is only vitamin and mineral supplements, paragraph 1.2 states clearly that food supplements containing vitamins and/ or minerals as well as other substances should also be in conformity with the specific rules on vitamins and minerals laid down in these Guidelines.

The definition of Food Supplements used in Codex has been used as a key reference point for the development of legislation across the world and in many cases the wording from it can be found in the national legislations, with a broader scope to cover the full supplement category, not just vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin and mineral food supplements for the purpose of these guidelines derive their nutritional relevance primarily from the minerals and/or vitamins they contain.

Vitamin and mineral food supplements are sources in concentrated forms of those nutrients alone or in combinations, marketed in forms such as capsules, tablets, powders, solutions etc., that are designed to be taken in measured small-unit quantities\* but are not in a conventional food form and whose purpose is to supplement the intake of vitamins and/or minerals from the normal diet.

\* This refers to the physical forms of the vitamin and mineral food supplements not to the potency of the supplements.

#### Content of Vitamins and Minerals

There are four key issues which form the basis of most discussion in the development of legislation on vitamins and minerals.

- a. CCNFSDU accepted that it was not necessary to create single lists of vitamins and minerals for the purpose of the Guidelines and member states were free to develop their own list according to lists of vitamins and to minerals in the existing codex texts related to other categories.
- b. Regarding sources of vitamins and minerals it was accepted that lists already developed by national and regional bodies can be referenced.
- c. In order to provide clarity to member states it was made clear that natural as well as synthetic sources were permitted in international trade.
- d. Minimum and Maximum Levels of Vitamins and Minerals-This took multiple years to resolve and 15%minimum level was established to ensure coherence with existing texts. Regarding maximum levels it led to debates and initially having two options in the draft Guidelines: 100% of the RDI or a maximum level based on scientific risk assessment. The final outcome which was agreement of the CCNFSDU and Codex Alimentarius Commission was that scientific risk assessment was the only route that could be taken in the light of the science-based approach to food regulation required by the international bodies.

#### The Guidelines state that:

The minimum level of each vitamin and/or mineral contained in a vitamin and mineral food supplement per daily portion of consumption as suggested by the manufacturer should be 15% of the recommended daily intake as determined by FAO/WHO [....]

Maximum amounts of vitamins and minerals in vitamin and mineral food supplements per daily portion of consumption as recommended by the manufacturer shall be set, taking the following criteria into account:

Upper safe levels of vitamins and minerals established by scientific risk assessment based on generally accepted scientific data, taking into consideration, as appropriate, the varying degrees of sensitivity of different consumer groups;

The daily intake of vitamins and minerals from other dietary sources. When the maximum levels are set, due account may be taken of the reference intake values of vitamins and minerals for the population. This provision should not lead to setting of maximum levels that are solely based on recommended nutrient intakes (e. g. Population Reference Intake or Recommended Daily Allowance values).

#### Labelling requirements

In addition to the relevant Standard for labeling; the Codex Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (Codex-Stan 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991) as well as according to the General Guidelines on Claims (CAC/ GL 1- 1979), the CCNFSDU also agreed to have specific labeling requirements for food supplements under the following heads:

- a. Name of Category: Declaration of Vitamins and Minerals:
- b. Declaration per portion
- c. Amounts expressed as percentage of NRVs.
- d. Conditions of Use.
- e. Advice on excess
- f. Meal or varied diet replacement
- g. Children safety

<u>Conclusion</u>: While the Codex Guidelines are over 10 years old today, they remain as valid and important today as they were when they were adopted. In addition, they have been used particularly widely, together with the WHO guidance, on helping countries establish safety- based maximum levels. The regulatory landscape has changed significantly over the past decade across the world and these Guidelines have played a key part in this.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- \* 48th Session of Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) 05th November to 09th November, 2016 in Los Angeles, United States of America.
- ❖ 38th Session of Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) 05th December to 09th December, 2016 in Hamburg, Germany.
- ❖ 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs(CCSCH)- 06<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2017 in Chennai, India
- ❖ 25<sup>th</sup> Session of Codex Committee on Fats and Oils(CCFO)- 27<sup>th</sup> February to 03<sup>rd</sup> March, 2017 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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