



FOOD SAFETY NEWS



Issued by the Food Safety Department
World Health Organization

<http://www.who.int/fsf>
foodsafety@who.int

No 6 – 29 May 2003

56th WHO World Health Assembly adopted a resolution on Codex Alimentarius

The Joint FAO/WHO Evaluation of the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission was discussed at the 56th World Health Assembly on 26 May 2003. The main thrusts of the adopted resolution are to urge the health sector to participate more actively in Codex; to request the Director-General of WHO to ensure that WHO takes a more active role in Codex, more particularly in the provision of scientific advice; to support developing country participation through capacity building (including the Codex Trust Fund) and to continue close collaboration with FAO, to ensure complementarity of the activities of the two organizations.

Full text of Resolution WHA 56/23 is available in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#) & [Russian](#) at: <http://www.who.int/gb/>

Planning meeting on scientific advice to Codex

The 2001 Codex Alimentarius Commission requested FAO and WHO to review the provision of scientific advice to Codex and Member States. The report of the evaluation of the Codex Alimentarius also considered this review as a matter of urgency. On 29 and 30 May WHO and FAO will meet for an informal planning meeting as the first step in a consultative process for a review of the provision of scientific advice. The ultimate goal is to improve current procedures including a more unitary and better coordinated approach to risk assessment and scientific advice. Progress will be reported to the Codex Commission meeting in July.

Meeting on SARS virus detection and survival in food and water

Following concerns about the persistence of the SARS virus in the environment, the shedding of the virus in patient stools and the possible role of contaminated sewage in a cluster of cases in Hong Kong, Government of Spain and WHO hosted a meeting in Madrid in collaboration with FAO and OIE. The purpose was to gain a better understanding of how the SARS coronavirus survives in the environment. Recommendations were made for relevant studies to be undertaken on the resistance, persistence and inactivation of the virus under conditions commonly found in food and water processing as well as sanitation and sewage treatments. A summary of the outcome of the meeting is available at: <http://www.who.int/csr/sars/guidelines/madridmeeting/en/>

WHO is organizing the first Global Conference on SARS in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 17-18 June 2003. The agenda includes sections on environmental survival, food safety and the potential role of animals. http://www.who.int/csr/sars/conference/june_2003/en/

Call for Data on Level of Acrylamide in Food and the Total Diet

In order to perform a risk assessment of acrylamide in food, FAO and WHO are calling for the submission of data on the levels of acrylamide in foods and the total diet. Data sought are necessary to provide an exposure assessment for the general population as well as certain vulnerable groups. Data will be used by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) in its safety evaluation of acrylamide in food. Data from developing countries is particularly encouraged. For further information, visit the FAO/WHO Acrylamide in Food Network Website <http://www.acrylamide-food.org/>.

NEWS FROM THE WHO REGIONAL OFFICES

Regional Office for Europe

EURO has a number of training activities in Food Safety in Eastern Europe, Southern Europe and Central Asia aimed at strengthening Food Safety agencies, food microbiological laboratories and surveillance of foodborne diseases. For further information, visit the EURO web site at: http://www.euro.who.int/foodsafety/Assistance/20021106_1

Regional Office for the Americas

Intergovernmental Forum Debates Food Safety Situation in the Americas

The 3rd Meeting of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA) held in April 2003, pointed to the importance of food safety as a priority area both in the region and in the world. COPAIA meets every two years. It is made up of a minister of health, a minister of agriculture, a representative of food producers and a consumer representative from each of the five sub-regions of the Americas.

Report of the meeting is available at: <http://www.paho.org/English/ad/dpc/vp/rimsa13index-e.htm>

Inter-American Network of food analysis laboratories (INFAL)

INFAL is a network, integrating 68 laboratories from 32 countries of the Americas, with the support of the Pan American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ-PAHO) and FAO. The Second INFAL Assembly, will be held in Cancún, México, June 11 to 13, 2003 preceded on June 9 and 10 by a "Workshop for strengthening of the INFAL". Provisional agenda can be found at: http://www.panalimentos.org/rilaa/i/News_b.asp

For more information, please e-mail: torrobaj@inppaz.ops-oms.org

FOOD SAFETY IN WHO REGIONS

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA

World Health Organization
Regional - Office for Africa
Professor Patience Mensah
B.P 6 Brazzaville (CONGO)
Tel: +47 241 39065
Fax: +47 241 39512
E-mail: mensahp@afro.who.int
<http://www.whoafr.org>

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE AMERICAS

Dr. Claudio R. Almeida
Director, Pan American Institute for Food
Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ)
Pan American Health Organization/
World Health Organization
Talcahuano 1660.
1640 Martinez, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Phone: +54 11 4836 0527
Fax : +54 11 4836 0927
E-mail: almeidac@inppaz.ops-oms.org
<http://www.panalimentos.org/panalimentos/index.asp>

Dr Genaro W. García
Pan American Health Organization
World Health Organization
525, 23rd Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037-2895, USA
Phone: +1 202 974 3193
Fax: +1 202 974 3331
E-mail: garciage@paho.org
<http://www.paho.org>

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Dr Mohamed Elmi
World Health Organization
Regional -Office for the Eastern Mediterranean
Abdul Razzak Al Sanhoury Street
P.O. Box 7608
Nasr City
Cairo 11371, Egypt
Phone : +202 27 65 384
Fax : +202 670 2492 / 202 67 2494
E-mail : elmim@emro.who.int
<http://www.emro.who.int>

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE

Dr Christina Tirado
WHO Regional Office for Europe
European Centre for Environment and Health(ECEH)
Rome Division
Via Francesco Crispi,
10I-00187 Rome, Italy
Phone: +39 06 487 751 (switchboard)
+39 06 487 7525 (direct)
Fax: +39 06 487 7599
E-mail: CTI@who.it
[Http://www.euro.who.int/foodsafety](http://www.euro.who.int/foodsafety)

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Mr Alexander Hildebrand
World Health Organization
Regional Office for South-East Asia World Health House
Indraprastha Estate
Mahatma Gandhi Road
New Delhi-110002, India
Phone: +91 112 337 08 04 Extension 26440 or 26426
Fax: +91 11 337 0197 or +91 11 337 8438
E-mail: hildebranda@whosea.org
<http://www.whosea.org>

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC

Dr Tommaso Cavalli-Sforza
World Health Organization
Regional Office for the Western Pacific
P.O. Box 2932
Manila 1000, Philippines
Phone: +63 2 528 9864 (direct)
+63 2 528 8001 (switchboard)
Fax: +63 2 521 1036 / 526 0279 / 526 0362
E-mail: cavalli-sforzat@wpro.who.int
Or: HazzardT@wpro.who.int
<http://www.wpro.who.int>