

## SUMMARY INFORMATION ON THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE

The Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) has the primary responsibility for food hygiene matters within Codex. Food hygiene generally encompasses the areas of the hygienic portion of good production, manufacturing, distribution and marketing practices, the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system, microbiological criteria for foods, and microbiological risk assessment and risk management.

The terms of reference for CCFH are essentially three.

- To draft basic provisions on food hygiene applicable to all food. In practice this takes the form of the development (and revision when needed) of Codex Codes of Hygienic Practice for various food commodities.
  - Consider/review food hygiene provisions of Codex commodity standards or other texts.
  - To serve as a resource to Codex generally in the area of food hygiene and to respond to specific hygiene problems assigned to it by the Commission.
- Examples of specific guidance developed or under development by CCFH include:

- *Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods* [In Codex Alimentarius, General Requirements (Food Hygiene), Volume 1B, Supplement, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, pp 27-30, 1997].
- *Draft Principles and Guidelines for the Conduct of Microbiological Risk Assessment* [ALINORM 99/13A, Appendix II].
- *Draft Principles and Guidelines for the Conduct of Microbiological Risk Management*. (formerly titled *Discussion Paper on Recommendations for the Management of Microbiological Hazards for Foods in International Trade*), CX/FH 97/10. 1998].

### Codes of Hygienic Practice

Codex Codes of Hygienic Practice provide guidance on the hygienic production and processing of foods. The base reference document in this area is the *Recommended International Code of Practice: General Principles of Food Hygiene* [In Codex Alimentarius, General Requirements (Food Hygiene), Volume 1B, Supplement, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, pp 1-26, 1997].

In addition to introductory sections on objectives and scope, this general food hygiene code of practice contains detailed recommended food hygiene practices for the following areas.

- Primary production
- Establishment: design and facilities
- Control of operation
- Establishment: maintenance and sanitation
- Establishment: personal hygiene
- Transportation
- Product information and consumer awareness
- Training



**ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE**

**VIA U.S. CODEX OFFICE**

Dr. Edward Scarbrough, U.S. Manager for Codex  
Room 4861 South Building  
USDA South Building  
14<sup>th</sup> and Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
Phone: (202)205-7760  
FAX: (202)720-3157  
Email: [uscodex@usda.gov](mailto:uscodex@usda.gov)  
Website address: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/codex>

**VIA U.S. DELEGATION ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. H. Michael Wehr  
Office of Constituent Operations  
U.S. Food and Drug Administration  
Room 5816, HFS 550  
200 C St. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20204  
Phone: (202)260-2786  
FAX: (202)205-0165  
Email: [Mwehr@bangate.fda.gov](mailto:Mwehr@bangate.fda.gov)

This "General Principles" document also contains a HACCP annex which presents the recommendations of Codex for the application of HACCP to food production. The Codex approach to HACCP utilizes the seven internationally recognized principles of HACCP. The annex presents a detailed discussion on the application of each principle including the establishment of critical control points (CCP) and critical limits for each CCP. Also presented is a flow diagram for the application of HACCP ("Logic Sequence for Application of HACCP"), an example of a decision tree to identify CCPs and an example of a HACCP worksheet.

• The CCFH also undertakes the development of commodity specific codes of hygienic practice. These commodity specific codes reference the *Recommended International Code of Practice: General Principles of Food Hygiene* and are constructed so that only hygiene provisions supplemental to those present in the General Principles code and specific for the commodity type covered in the code are given. Examples of codes of hygienic practice that have been or are being developed by Codex include those for the following product areas.

- Canned Fruit and Vegetable Products.
- Processed Meat Products
- Milk and Milk Products
- Production, Harvesting and Packaging of Fresh Produce
- Fresh Cut Raw Fruits and Vegetables
- Packaged/Bottled Water other than Natural Mineral Waters
- Refrigerated Packaged Foods with Extended Shelf Life
- Transport of Foodstuffs in Bulk and Semi-Packaged Foods

Prepared by: H. Michael Wehr, Ph.D.  
Office of Constituent Operations  
U.S. Food and Drug Administration  
February, 1999