23rd Session of Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO) held in Langkawi, Malaysia from 25 February-1 March 2013.

Report of Indian Delegation

The 23rd Session of Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO) was held at Langkawi, Malaysia from 25th February to 1st March, 2013. The Session was attended by 101 delegates from 35 Member countries and 1 Member Organizations and 4 international organizations and was chaired by Ms Noraini Mohd. Othman, Senior Director for Food Safety and Quality, Ministry of Health, Malaysia. A list of participants is enclosed as Annexe- I.

2. India participated in the above session and the Indian delegation consisted of the following 3 members:

- Dr. A. Madhavan
  (Assistant Director, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India)
  - Head of delegation,

- Ms. Sukhmani Singh
  (Technical Officer, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India)
  - Member of delegation, and

- Shri Prabodh Halde
  (Head- Regulatory, Marico Ltd., India)
  - Member of delegation.

3. Summary of the deliberations (agenda-wise) of the Committee is given below.

(i) Agenda Item No. 1: Adoption of agenda.

(ii) Agenda Item No. 2: Matters referred by the 34th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and other Codex Committees:
(a) **34th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission**: Code of Practice for the Storage and Transport of Edible Fats and Oils in Bulk: Draft and Proposed Draft lists of Acceptable Previous Cargoes:

The 34th Session of the Commission had adopted the Draft list at Step 8 and the Proposed Draft List at Step 5/8, and had directed the Committee on Fats and Oils to review the lists to identify the most critical substances for review by JECFA. In the present Session, the Codex Secretariat introduced the list in which JECFA Secretariat proposed a method for reviewing of the substances in the Codex List of Acceptable Previous Cargoes. The JECFA Secretariat suggested the Committee or the working group to classify the substances into those which fulfil the criteria 2, 3 and 4 contained in the Section 2.1.3 of the Code of practice and thus do not pose a food safety hazard and do not require action by JECFA and, those that do not fulfil at least one of those criteria which might have to be reviewed by JECFA. The delegation of European Union proposed four substances to be evaluated by JECFA, viz;

a) Calcium Lignosulphonate Liquid (CAS No 8061-52-7),
b) Carnauba Wax (CAS No 8015-86-9),
c) Montan Wax (CAS No 8002-53-7), and
d) Silicon Dioxide (CAS No 7631-86-9)

The Committee also proposed amendments as follows: ‘To restrict the entry “Molasses” (CAS No 57-50-1) to “Molasses obtained from citrus, sorghum, sugar beet and sugar cane” as the term “molasses” could be applicable to any liquid food or feed ingredient obtained from plants that contains in excess of 43% sugars.’

**Conclusion**: The Committee agreed to establish an **electronic Working Group (eWG)**, chaired by Malaysia to review available data, to compile available information for each substance, to identify substances that meet all criteria and recommend them as acceptable and to identify and if necessary, prioritise substances to be submitted to JECFA for evaluation. The Committee also agreed to consider proposals from Members on new substances to be added to the list provided and also to identify substances currently on the list not carried as previous cargoes and recommended to the Committee that they be removed from the list. There would also be a physical working group to consider the report of eWG, to receive additional comments/proposals and to prepare a report with recommendations to the Committee.
(b) 32nd and 33rd Sessions of CCMAS:- Provision for retaining relative density in the Standards for Named Animal Fats, and Named Vegetable Oils.

Committee observed that the provision for relative density should be retained in the Standards for Named Animal Fats, for Named Vegetable Oils and for Olive Oils & Olive Pomace Oils. Committee also recommended to CCMAS to look into it and to suggest an appropriate method.

(c) 5th Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods:- As CCCF considered Halogen Solvents as processing aids, the Committee clarified that halogenated solvents should be considered as contaminants (in olive pomace oil) because they were no longer used for the production of olive pomace oil.

Many countries argued to consider halogenated solvents as contaminants. Committee, thus, decided to consider halogenated solvents as contaminants and agreed to add other than halogenated solvents in the Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils.

(iii) Agenda Item No. 3: Proposed Draft Standard for Fish Oils:

The proposed draft standard was prepared by Switzerland and was circulated at step 3 for comments. The amendments on the proposed draft standards were discussed section by section. Some of the countries wanted to have a clear distinction between crude and refined fish oils and to give an indication of the processes to obtain fish oil. The definition of fish oils was amended keeping in view about the large number of named fish oils, and so, the description of oils was rephrased to accommodate the species and then the family. In the Food Additive section, different countries wanted to delete antioxidant synergists and amend the term “chelating agents” to “sequesterant”. Delegation of Germany, expressed that the Committee refer to CCFA to include “rosemary extract” as an antioxidant in the standard for fish oils. In the contaminant section, delegates of United States of America, Canada and Malaysia requested the Committee to fix the maximum levels in fish oils for: Cadmium, Mercury, Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB), Dioxins and Furans. India supported the Proposed Draft Standard for Fish Oils.

Conclusion: The Committee agreed to return the Proposed Draft Standard to Step 2 for redrafting and circulation at Step 3 and to establish an electronic Working Group chaired by Switzerland to revise the proposed draft standards on the basis of the discussion in the
present session. The Codex Secretariat will send a circular letter for information on the volume and patterns of trade for different fish oils and information on quality and composition. The physical working group will also be convened chaired by Switzerland to consider the report of the electronic Working Group and comments submitted to the working document and discussion at Step 4 at the next session of the Committee.

(iv) **Agenda Item No. 4:** Proposed Draft Amendment to Parameters for Rice Bran Oil in the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils:

In the present session of CCFO, the delegation of Thailand introduced and explained the proposed amendments of the level of sterols and fatty acid composition for rice bran oil which were based on the data available from other countries. India had earlier, through correspondence, supported the proposals made by Thailand.

The Committee agreed to amend the level of Brassicasterol from “ND” to “ND-0.3” and also of Desmethylsterol from ND to “7.5-12.8”. A good amount of discussions took place in respect of suggestions to amend the standards on fatty acids in refined rice bran oil. Indian delegation, with the permission of the Chair, briefed the Committee on the situation as under:

- "India, with its vast land and gigantic population, is deficient in edible oils. We, as on now, import a large quantity of edible oils. Thanks to the host country of this meeting- Malaysia and its neighbour- Indonesia, from where we import majority of our edible oil need.

- At this juncture, I would like to impress upon the Committee that in India, we undertake to develop edible oils from all possible indigenous sources and by importing raw materials for oil extraction, including rice bran.

- With its unique fatty acid structure and combination of very useful substances in the form of unsaponifiable matter, rice bran oil has acquired a very important place in ensuring food safety and nutritional safety in India - like in Thailand, Japan and other few countries. India now foresees increased international trade on rice bran and on rice bran oil, both in its crude as well as in refined forms."
India supports the proposal made by Thailand for amending parameters for rice bran oil by revising Document No. CX/FO/13/23/4. During our endeavour towards updating our knowledge on quality attributes of rice bran oil, we have come across certain discrepancies within the established factors, which are presented in writing before this Committee for consideration as CRD-12 & 19. The results of analysis of 55 samples of refined rice bran oil by AOCS method, are shown at CRD-19 suggesting that the range of C-18:2 be stretched from the now recommended 25 – 42% to 21-42% .

Similarly, considering future prospects of international trade on rice bran oil especially among south Asian countries, India proposes that standards for crude rice bran oil being too narrow, also be made at par with those of refined rice bran oil.

We thank Thailand for sharing our responsibilities."

The delegation of Japan, though supported the fatty acid composition proposed by Thailand and India, expressed its concern on the accuracy in calculation as the calculation was based on ± 3 Sigma since Japan does not use this method. Indian Delegation explained the accuracy of ranges based on standard deviation, ±3 sigma, which is the accepted practice under AOCS method. The Committee agreed with this, but decided to request CCMAS to consider whether mean±3SD is appropriate to establish ranges for all fats and oils.

The Committee, finally, agreed to amend the fatty acid composition of rice bran oil in table 1 of the Standard as follows:

- Amend C14:0 from ‘0.1-0.7’ to ‘ND-1.0’
- Amend C 18:2 from ‘29-40’ to ‘21-42’
- Amend C22:0 from ‘ND-0.5’ to ‘ND-1.0’
- Amend C24:0 from ‘ND-0.6’ to ‘ND-0.9’

Delegates from Japan, USA, EU, Iran, Russia, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Spain, Canada and Australia supported the work on Proposed Draft Amendment to Parameters for Rice Bran Oil in the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils.
Conclusion: The Committee agreed to advance the Proposed Draft Amendment as amended at this session to Step 5/8 for adoption by the Commission. Thailand’s proposal and India’s suggestions for amendments on standards for refined rice bran oil has been agreed by CCFO. However, India did not accept the present standards for crude rice bran oil. As suggested by CCFO, India will prepare a Technical Discussion Paper on standards for crude rice bran oil for consideration in the next session of CCFO.

(v) Agenda Item No. 5: Discussion Paper on the Amendment of the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils: Sunflower Seed Oils:

Argentina proposed revision of standards for sunflower oil in respect of content of linoleic acid. India supported this proposal. Though many countries supported this, countries including USA did not do so with the contention that data from large producing countries were not taken into account and that widening the range of fatty acids might result in difficulties of identification and adulteration.

Conclusion: The Committee agreed to re-establish an eWG, chaired by Argentina to revise the discussion paper and project document, taking into account global variability, climate and seasonal variation and varietal differences, for consideration at the 24th Session of CCFO.

(vi) Agenda Item No. 6: Discussion Paper on Cold Pressed Oils:

Iran had, earlier, introduced a proposal for inclusion of 9 types of cold pressed oils, viz; walnut oil, almond oil, hazelnut oil, pistachio oil, sesame oil, sunflower oil, peanut oil, maize oil and safflower oil in the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils. Since 5 out of 9 types of oils were already present in the Standard for Vegetable Oils, i.e, peanut oil, sesame seed oil, sunflower seed oil, maize oil and safflower oil, the Committee decided not to consider these again. Oils which were then agreed to be added in the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils were Walnut Oil, Pistachio Oil, almond Oil and hazelnut oil.

India’s Comment: India support the development of standards for nut and seed oils which are not covered in the CODEX STAN 210-1999. The following specific comments were put forward to the Committee.
Point 1: The text in 1.1. should be modified as: Oils from Oilseeds and nuts.

Point 2: The following categories should be added:

1.1.10 Coconut oil
1.1.11 Sesame (Til) Oil
1.1.12 Safflower seed oil
1.1.13 Mustard (high erucic acid rape seed Oil
1.1.14 Flax seed (Lin Seed) Oil
1.1.15 Ground Nut (Peanut /Arachis) Oil

Point 3: Proposed addition of Fatty Acid composition of edible cold pressed oils expressed as percentage of total fatty acids in Table 1.

India suggested that in the discussion paper, fatty acids profiles of cold pressed oils from coconut, mustard seed and flax seed may be added besides amendments on parameters in respect of safflower seed, sesame seed, and peanut oil. A statement in this respect was placed before the Committee as CRD-5. India further stated that the oils mentioned are produced and consumed in India and other countries around the world in large quantities and that addition of these cold pressed oils in the Codex Standard will facilitate better trade between countries and also broaden the scope of the standards. Chile also proposed that avocado oil be included in the discussion paper.

Conclusion: The Committee agreed with the proposal of Iran and the suggestions of India and Chile. It also noted that standards for coconut oil and mustard seed oil are specified in Codex and so, only flaxseed oil has to be added to the list as proposed by India. Chile’s suggestion to include avocado oil was also accepted. The Committee, thus, decided to expand the scope of the discussion paper also to: walnut oil & pistachio oil (Iran’s proposal), flaxseed oil (India’s proposal) and avocado oil (Chile’s proposal). The Committee agreed to establish eWG chaired by Iran, to revise the discussion paper including a project document for consideration at the next session of CCFO.

(vii) Agenda Item No. 7: Discussion Paper on the Amendment of the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils: High Oleic Soybean Oil:

The delegation of United States of America as the Chair of eWG, discussed the revised document highlighting actual trade and production data for 2012. They also
projected the trade data for 2013. Many delegates supported the new work (Argentina, Russia, Malaysia, India) as the oil is healthy for dietary consumption. Whereas several other delegates (Italy, Hungary, Netherland, France, Spain, Ireland) did not support the work as the production and International trade figures were very low.

Conclusion: The Committee agreed to establish an electronic working group chaired by the US, to revise the discussion paper taking into account the volume of trading between countries, international or regional market potential to substantiate the need for high oleic soybean oil standard for consideration at the next session of CCFO.

The delegates from Italy and Switzerland put their reservation on the establishment of the electronic WG.

(viii) Agenda Item No. 8: Discussion Paper on the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils for the Addition of palm Oil with High Oleic Acid OxG:

The delegation of Columbia introduced the discussion paper and explained that the new variety would contribute to healthy diet because of preferred composition of fatty acids. The delegation of the European Union did not support due to lack of production data and volume of trade. EU delegation said that there is no volume of oil and no trade shown in the project document. Other delegations also supported EU like Hungary, Australia, Spain and Italy. Several other countries supported the work (USA, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile)

Conclusion: The Committee agreed to establish electronic Working Group to be chaired by Columbia to revise the discussion paper for the next session as the Committee noted that the proposed document lacked information on volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of international trade.

(ix) Agenda Item No. 9: Proposal to Revise the Limit for Campesterol in the Codex Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils:

Delegation of Australia introduced the discussion paper and stated the need to revise the limit for Campesterol in the Codex Standard for Olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils. The Delegation of Australia proposed to increase the level for Campesterol from 4 - 4.8% and to change the level of stigmasterol from <campesterol to <1.9% to ensure
that the identity of the oil is established and fraud prevented. As decided in the shadow Committee meeting, India supported this proposal along with few other countries. However, several countries opposed new work and stressed that the study is based on Australian production of olive oils which is less than 5% of world production. Several delegations recalled that an IOC (International Olive oil Council) study on campesterol levels had recently being completed where 192 samples were analysed. IOC developed the decision tree to address the issues that would allow distinguishing if a higher campesterol level was due to regional differences or other reasons in order to protect those producers that could now reach the limits foreseen in the standard. The delegation of Australia said that they are willing to work with IOC on a solution.

**Conclusion:** The Committee agreed not to start new work and to establish an electronic working group. Australia expressed its strong reservation on this matter.

**Agenda Item No. 10:** Discussion Paper on the Amendment of the Standard for olive Oils and Olive Pomace Oils: Content of Delta-7-Stigmastenol:

The Committee did not consider this matter because of the document for this agenda item was not distributed.

**Agenda Item No. 11:** Reference to Acceptance/Voluntary Application in Codex Standards:

The Committee did not consider this matter due to time constraint.

**Date and Place of the Next Session:**

The Committee informed that its 24th Session was tentatively scheduled to be held in Malaysia from 9 to 13 February 2015.

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