

Report of the 39th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling

HIROAKI HAMANO

Advisor

ILSI Japan

< Summary >

The Thirty-ninth Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling was held in Quebec at Quebec City Convention Centre, Canada from 9 to 13 May 2011. The Session was attended by 247 delegates representing 60 member countries, one member organization (EU) and 24 international organizations. ILSI delegation led by the author was four members from ILSI Japan and one member from ILSI North America. The summary and conclusions of the Session are as follows.

The Committee agreed:

- to advance Draft Revision of Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling (CAC/GL 2-1985) Section 3.2 to Step 8 for adoption by the 34th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, referring to “sodium” declaration only in Section 3.2.1.2 and indicating in a footnote as to expression of the total amount of sodium in salt equivalents as “salt”;
- to establish an eWG led by Canada, from which the proposals on claims related “reduced/low”, “light”, “more” and on conditions for use of “trans-fatty acid” would be circulated for comments at Step 3 for consideration by the next session;
- also to establish an eWG led by Australia to propose amendments on the requirements for mandatory nutrition labelling for circulation at Step 3 for consideration by the next session;
- to submit a project document to the Commission for approval of new work on the inclusion of “spinosad”, “copper octanoate”, “potassium bicarbonate” and “ethylene for degreening of citrus for fruit fly prevention”, “ethylene for flowering induction in pineapples” in Annex II, Table 2 to the Guidelines for Production, Processing, Labelling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods;
- further to re-establish eWG led by the US to continue considering the structured approach on a 2 year cycle on the revision of the Guidelines including any specific proposals for the use of “ethylene for ripening of fruits and for sprout inhibition in onions and potatoes”;
- to redraft by the EU and re-circulate the Proposed Draft Revision of the Guidelines for Production, Processing, Labelling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods to include “aquaculture animals and seaweed” for comments at Step 3 for consideration by the next session;
- to advance the text “Proposed Draft Compilation of Codex Texts Relevant to Labelling of Foods Derived from Modern Biotechnology” as amended as “a stand-alone text” to the Commission for

adoption at Step 5/8 and to discontinue on the work on “Definitions”;

- to advance the “Proposed Draft Definition of Nutrient Reference values (for inclusion in the Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling)”, which would be referred to the CCNFSDU for comments, at Step 5 for adoption by the Commission.

With regard to the “Proposal for New Work on Review of the Definition of Trans-Fatty Acids”, the Committee agreed to invite CCNFSDU to give its opinion on reviewing the definition of trans-fatty acid in Guidelines taking into consideration new scientific data.

The Committee was informed that the 40th Session of the Committee was tentatively scheduled to be held in Ottawa, Canada from 14 to 18 May 2012.