

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 99-015N]

Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex): Meeting of the Codex Committee on General Principles

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Office of Under Secretary for Food Safety, United States Department of Agriculture; the Food and Drug Administration, United States Department of Health and Human Services; and the Environmental Protection Agency are sponsoring a public meeting on March 17, 1999, to provide information and receive public comments on agenda items that will be discussed at the Fourteenth Session of the General Principles Committee of Codex, which will be held in Paris, France, April 19-23, 1999. Attendees at the March 17 meeting will hear brief descriptions of the issues and will have the opportunity to pose questions and offer comments. The co-sponsors of the March 17 public meeting recognize the importance of providing interested parties the opportunity to obtain background information on the Fourteenth Session of the General Principles Committee of Codex and to address items on the agenda.

DATES: The public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 17, 1999, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The public meeting will be held in Room 107-A, Jamie L. Whitten Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700. If a sign language interpreter or other special accommodation is necessary, contact Ms. Edith Kennard by telephone at (202) 720-5261. Submit

one original and two copies of comments to the FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket No. 99-015N, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700. All comments submitted in response to this notice will be considered part of the public record and will be available for viewing in the Docket Room between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Patrick J. Clerkin, Associate U.S. Manager for Codex, U.S. Codex Office, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 4861, South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700, Phone: (202) 205-7760, Fax: (202) 720-3157.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Codex was established in 1962 by two United Nations organizations, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization. Codex is the major international organization for encouraging fair international trade in food and protecting the health and economic interests of consumers. Through adoption of food standards, codes of practice, and other guidelines developed by its committees, and by promoting their adoption and implementation by governments, Codex seeks to ensure that the world's food supply is sound, wholesome, free from adulteration, and correctly labeled.

The Codex Committee on General Principles was established to deal with such procedural and general matters as are referred to by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Such matters have included the establishment of the general principles which define the purpose and scope of Codex; the nature of Codex standards and the forms of acceptance by countries of Codex standards; and the development of guidelines for Codex committees.

Issues to be discussed at the March 17, 1999, public meeting:

1. Matters referred by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and other Codex Committees (including special treatment of developing countries)
2. Risk analysis
 - a. Definitions
 - b. Working principles for risk analysis
3. Measures intended to facilitate consensus

4. Review of the general principles of Codex (revision of the acceptance procedure)
5. Review of the status of Codex texts
 - a. Framework of the technical barriers to trade agreement
 - b. Discussion paper on the application of Codex advisory texts
6. Review of the statements of principle on the role of science and the extent to which other factors are taken into account
 - a. Role of science and other factors in relation to risk analysis
 - b. Application in the case of bovine somatotropins
7. Revision of the procedural manual
 - a. Draft principles concerning the participation of international non-governmental organizations
 - b. Core functions of Codex contact points
8. Application of Rule VII of the Commission's rules of procedure (attendance of members at sessions of the subsidiary bodies)

Done at Washington, DC, on March 5, 1999.

F. Edward Scarbrough,

U.S. Manager for Codex.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 99-009N]

Equivalence Evaluation Process for Foreign Meat and Poultry Food Regulatory Systems

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting and document availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is announcing the availability of a document that describes the Agency's process for evaluating foreign meat and poultry food regulatory systems to determine whether they are equivalent to the United States system. The Agency is soliciting public comments on the document and will hold a public meeting on April 14, 1999, to discuss the equivalence evaluation process.