



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

2 0 2 1  
**C O D E X**

**PROTECTING HEALTH, FACILITATING TRADE**

# A year of virtual reality

**A TEAM  
TO RECKON  
WITH**

**A VIRTUAL  
YEAR OF REAL  
ACHIEVEMENT**

**HOW DID  
CODEX SCORE  
ON VIRTUAL?**

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The Codex Alimentarius Commission thanks the following Member Countries for their contributions as hosts of Codex committees that took place in the period from CAC43 (September-November 2020) to CAC44 (November 2021).

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Canada

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France

Hungary

India

Malaysia

Netherlands

Norway

Republic of Korea

United States of America

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# WHAT IS THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS?

The Codex Alimentarius, or “Food Code”, is a collection of standards, guidelines and codes of practice developed by consensus and based on the most robust up-to-date science available. Codex texts are not mandatory but governments frequently use them as the basis for national legislation to ensure food safety, quality and fair practices in food trade. Since 1963, Codex has developed hundreds of internationally recognized standards, guidelines and codes. It has defined thousands of permitted levels of additives, contaminants and chemical residues in food. The end goal: ensure food is safe for everyone, everywhere. Codex texts are an important reference point for the dispute settlement mechanism at the World Trade Organization.

The standards are adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which currently comprises 188 Member Countries and 1 Member Organization (The European Union) and 240 Observers of which 60 are intergovernmental organizations, 164 non-governmental organizations and 16 United Nations agencies. The Commission, also known as CAC, was established in 1963 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to protect consumer health and promote fair practices in the food trade.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The image shows the cover of the book 'Understanding Codex', Fifth Edition. The cover is colorful and features various food items such as a carrot, a lemon, a tomato, a fish, a kiwi, and a kiwi. It also includes the logos of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The title 'UNDERSTANDING CODEX' is prominently displayed in the center, with 'FIFTH EDITION' above it and 'CODEX ALIMENTARIUS' written vertically on the right side.

*Understanding Codex* is an excellent introduction to the world of Codex and international food safety standard setting for everyone. Currently available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS MANDATE



**PROTECT**  
the health  
of consumers



**ENSURE**  
fair practices  
in food trade



**PROMOTE**  
coordination of all  
food standards work

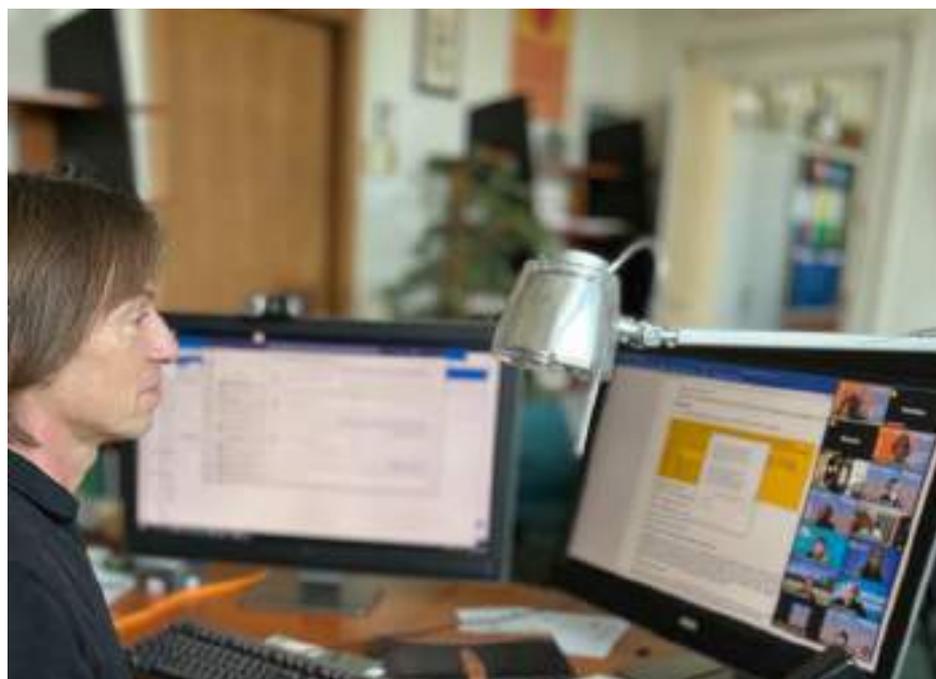


# A YEAR OF VIRTUAL REALITY

Welcome to our annual review highlighting what has happened in Codex since the last Commission which ended in November 2020.

The Codex Secretariat has revolutionized the way meetings are managed and introduced new ways to bring experts and Codex delegations together to exploit the additional time meeting cancellations gave us and prepare for the new virtual sessions. We report on the 12 bodies that did meet and the two that are still to convene.

Guilherme Da Costa, Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Vice Chairpersons have been serving for over four years since their appointment at CAC40 in July 2017. Read their final reviews as they step down ahead of elections which will take place in Geneva during CAC44



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