

# 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. 03–007N]

#### Codex Alimentarius: 31st Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling

**AGENCY:** Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Department of Health and Human Services, are sponsoring a public meeting on March 20, 2003, to provide information and receive public comments on agenda items that will be discussed at the 31st Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL), which will be held in Ottawa, Canada, on April 28–May 2, 2003. USDA and FDA recognize the importance of providing interested parties the opportunity to obtain background information on the CCFL of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) and to address items on the Agenda for the 31st Session of the CCFL.

**DATES:** The public meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 20, 2003, from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The public meeting will be held in the Auditorium, Harvey W. Wiley Federal Building, 5100 Paint Branch Parkway, College Park, MD. To receive copies of the documents referenced in this notice, contact the FSIS Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20250–3700. The documents will also be accessible via the World Wide Web at the following address: <http://>

[www.codexalimentarius.net/current.asp](http://www.codexalimentarius.net/current.asp).

If you have comments, please send an original and two copies to the FSIS Docket Clerk and reference Docket Number 03–007N. All comments submitted will be available for public inspection in the Docket Clerk's Office between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

To gain admittance to this meeting, individuals should preregister. All registrants will need to present a photo ID for entrance into the Auditorium. To pre-register, please contact Ms. Theresa Thomas, at (301) 436–1967 or (301) 436–2636 (fax).

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Ellen Matten, International Issues Analyst, U.S. Codex Office, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 4861, South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250; 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 (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Codex is the major international organization for protecting the health and economic interests of consumers and encouraging fair international trade in food. 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 properly labeled. In the United States, USDA, FDA, and the Environmental Protection Agency manage and carry out U.S. Codex activities.

The CCFL drafts labeling provisions that are applicable to all foods; considers, amends if necessary, and endorses specific provisions on labeling of draft standards, codes of practice, and guidelines prepared by other Codex committees; studies specific labeling problems assigned to it by the Commission; and studies problems associated with the advertisement of food, with particular reference to claims and misleading descriptions. The CCFL is chaired by Canada.

#### Issues To Be Discussed at the Public Meeting

The provisional agenda items to be discussed during the public meeting:

1. Adoption of the Agenda.
2. Matters referred by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and other Codex Committees.
3. Consideration of Labelling Provisions in the Draft Codex Standards.
4. Draft Amendment to the *General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (Class names)*.
5. Draft Amendment to the *Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling (Section 3.2 Listing of Nutrients)*.
6. Draft *Guidelines for the Use of Health and Nutrition Claims*.
7. (a.) Draft Recommendations for the *Labelling of Foods obtained through Certain Techniques of Genetic Modification/Genetic Engineering (Draft Amendment to the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods): Definitions*.
- (b.) Proposed Draft Recommendations for the *Labelling of Foods obtained through Certain Techniques of Genetic Modification/Genetic Engineering (Proposed Draft Guidelines for the Labelling of Foods and Food Ingredients Obtained through Certain Techniques of Genetic Modification/Engineering): Labelling Provisions*.
8. *Guidelines for the Production, Processing, Labelling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods. Proposed Draft Revised Sections:*
  - (a) Section 5—Criteria, and
  - (b) Annex 2—Permitted Substances.
9. Proposed Draft Amendment to the *General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods: Quantitative Declaration of Ingredients*.
10. Consideration of Country of Origin Labelling.
11. Consideration of Food Labelling and Traceability.
12. Discussion *Paper on Misleading Claims*.

Each issue listed will be fully described in documents distributed, or to be distributed, by the Canadian Secretariat to the Meeting. Members of the public may access or request copies of these documents (see **ADDRESSES**).

#### Public Meeting

At the March 20th public meeting, the agenda items will be described, discussed, and attendees will have an opportunity to pose questions and offer