



UNION AFRICAINE

BUREAU INTERAFRICAIN DES RESSOURCES ANIMALES

Sanitary and Phytosanitary Information Bulletin n°02: June 2014

Foreword from the Director of AU-IBAR

This Bulletin is produced by African Union-Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), in order to provide some relevant information on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues to all interested stakeholders. This Bulletin is produced quarterly, and distributed to African SPS institutions, African SPS stakeholders, WTO/STDF and international standard-setting organizations for wider dissemination. Please help us in spreading widely to any relevant person who should be interested in. We hope you will find some useful information for your activities in this Bulletin.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Ahmed Elsayalhy
Director, AU-IBAR

For any comment, remark or question, click on the link to send a mail at
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Summary

International trade in agricultural and food products is now governed by a growing array of food safety and agricultural health standards, commonly known as sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards. SPS standards have been developed to address various biological and chemical risks and the spread of plant pests and animal diseases. Requirements related to food safety, plant health and animal health now determine whether or not commodities can access intended markets. Importing countries often require that agricultural and food products comply with their SPS regulations. Products are screened and sometimes tested for several food-borne illnesses, and animal and plant diseases at the point of entry into importing countries and consignments may be detained and eventually rejected based on the results of these tests. For plant and animal products exported to some countries, suppliers need to get pre-approval, based on agreement that the source country or region is free of certain pests or diseases, or that proper risk management measures have been put in place.

African countries faced with rising SPS standards in their export markets can maintain and improve market access, position industries for long-term competitiveness, mitigate potential adverse effects on vulnerable groups, and improve domestic food safety and agricultural productivity by adopting a strategic approach to food safety, plant and animal health, and trade. One way to achieve this is by strengthening agro-food chains and networks, which play an increasingly important role in providing access to markets for producers from developing countries. African countries have the opportunity to upgrade their agro-food chains in order to integrate successfully in global value chains. Value chain upgrading –acquiring knowledge and technologies necessary for competitiveness –has to take place at a faster pace than the actors in the competing chains.

Many African countries have been successful in complying with increasing SPS standards and upgrading their export sectors as a basis for long term export growth. The most successful countries have used high quality and SPS standards to reposition themselves in competitive global markets. This calls for effective participation in activities and programmes of International Standard Setting Organisations (ISSOs), in particular Codex Alimentarius (Codex) for food safety, World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) for animal health and International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) for plant health. Since 2009, the Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), together with the Interafrican Phytosanitary Council (AU/IAPSC) and other partners, has supported participation of African nations in SPS standard setting organisations.

A number of international, regional and sub-regional organizations and research institutions publish SPS standards, studies and briefs. In the scope of the Project PANSPSO, the SPS Bulletin aims at providing to the stakeholders SPS related-information, SPS updates and briefs around the world. Therefore we kindly encourage you to largely disseminate the bulletin.

1 AU-IBAR and PAN-SPSO News

More information on these events available on AU-IBAR website: <http://www.au-ibar.org/>

For PANSPSO related activities, please visit the PANSPSO Project page under AU-IBAR website.

Update

PANSPSO Technical Meetings:

4th meeting of the Steering Committee of PAN-SPSO project- Phase 2, 6th February 2014, Nairobi, Kenya

Technical meeting of African experts on Food Additives in preparation for the 46th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) Nairobi, Kenya 25-27 February 2014.

Technical meeting for the commission on Phytosanitary measures 9 (CPM9) Tunis, Tunisia 11th -13th March 2014

Technical meeting of African experts on Contaminants in food in preparation for the 8th Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF) Nairobi, Kenya 25-27 February 2014.

Technical meeting of African experts on Pesticide Residues in preparation for the 46th Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) Nairobi, Kenya 2-4 April 2014.

Technical Experts meeting on OIE animal health standards on 15 to 16 April 2014 in Nairobi to examine the OIE draft animal health standards submitted for adoption during the 82nd Session General of OIE (25th to 30th May 2014).

The 6th Panafrican meeting of OIE Delegates to build common positions on proposed OIE animal health standards was held on 4 to 6 May 2014 in Nairobi, Kenya (please visit the link)

Technical Experts meeting on OIE animal health standards on 30th June 2014 in Nairobi to examine the OIE draft animal health standards submitted for comments for the Code Commission meeting in September 2014.

The 5th Panafrican meeting of National Codex Contact Points in Africa is scheduled to take place on 16-18 June 2014 in Nairobi, Kenya

Upcoming

1. **FAO & AU-IBAR Early Warning and Rapid Alert (EW-RA) Food Safety Regional workshop** is scheduled to take place on 13-17 October 2014 in Nairobi Kenya
2. **CCAFRICA Colloquium on Codex** is scheduled to take place on 15th to 17th September 2014 in Dar es Salam, Tanzania.
3. **37th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission** is scheduled to take place on 14-18 July 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland
4. **Technical meeting of African experts on Nutrition and Food Hygiene** is scheduled to take place in Nairobi, Kenya on 6-8 October 2014 in preparation for the 36th Session of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) and the 46th Session of Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH).

2 Standard-setting process

All adopted standards of the three International Standard-setting Organisations are available on their respective websites, following the links below:

Codex Alimentarius:

http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/standard_list.do?lang=en

IPPC:

<https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=13399&L=0>

OIE:

http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/mcode/en_sommaire.htm for Terrestrial Animal Health Code

http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/fcode/en_sommaire.htm for Aquatic Animal Health Code

In next editions of this bulletin, you will find links towards proposed draft standards and newly adopted standards relevant for African countries.

Regional Phytosanitary Standards

Draft Standard for the movement of cassava germplasm/planting material in Africa, 2014 drafting in progress

Call for Topics for regional phytosanitary Standardization posted 30th April 2014: Responses received at IAPSC and preparation for further action underway

Updates on ISPM15: Regulation of Wood packaging materials

Notification on responses to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding ISPM 15 was posted on IPP on 20th December 2013, check the link <https://www.ippc.int/news/new-questions-and-answers-ispml5-symbol-registration-now-ipp-faqs-page>.

The Secretariat provided clarifications and

guidance to the IPPC Contracting parties to register the “Mark” as emphasized in ISPM 15. The potential benefits for the application of the “Mark” are equally highlighted. Details can be accessed from

<https://www.ippc.int/faq#Ispm15MoreInfo>.

<https://www.ippc.int/faq#BenefitsRegisteringIspm15>

<https://www.ippc.int/faq#HowRegister>

Joint Action on Regulation of Sea containers, a possible pathway for plant pests

CPM9 observed a joint initiative existing between the International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Labour Organization (ILO) and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) that provides for the revision of Code of Practice for packaging Cargo Transport Units (CTU) and incorporates several elements of phytosanitary relevance, and its importance in the prevention of pest spread and introduction of invasive alien species, details available from <https://www.ippc.int/news/standard-setting/cpm-9-2014-statement-sea-containers>

On-Line Comment System (OCS)

The IPPC secretariat posted guidance on access to the website for OCS, systems requirements and on-line training for the application of OCS. These can be accessed using the following links on the IPP

Access: <http://ocs.ippc.int/index.html>

Systems Requirements:

<https://www.ippc.int/faq#OcsSystemRequirements>

Training: <https://www.ippc.int/faq#OcsTraining>

3 Scientific information

(A) General SPS Information

A trial to assess the impact of SPS measures on processed food exports from developing countries using panel data econometric analysis.

Reference: J. Jongwanich, The impact of food safety standards on processed food exports from developing countries, Food Policy, n°34, 2009, p.447–457.

(B) Contaminants in Food and Feed

A contaminant is any substance not intentionally added to food, which is present in such food as a result of the production (including operations carried out in crop husbandry, animal husbandry and veterinary medicine), manufacture, processing, preparation, treatment, packing, packaging, transport or holding of such food or as a result of environmental contamination (FAO/WHO, 1995).

Naturally occurring toxicants including toxic metabolites of certain microfungi that are not intentionally added to food and feed (mycotoxins) are also covered under the international definition of contaminants. This includes toxins that are produced by algae and that may be accumulated in edible aquatic organisms such as shellfish (phycotoxins). However, other substances such as insect fragments, rodent hairs and other extraneous matter are not included in this definition.

While contaminants and toxins affect the quality of food and impact negatively on trade, the need to protect public health drives the setting of food safety standards to reduce the risk posed by contaminants and toxins in food and feed. The Codex Alimentarius (Codex) - Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme develops a variety of standards to address all forms of contamination in food. Such standards are developed under different Codex committees, in particular the following: Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR), Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Food (CCRVDF), Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) and Codex Committee on Food Additives. The Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF) addresses all contaminants in food, including feed for food producing animals, except contaminants covered under other Codex committees.

The Codex General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (GSCTFF) contains the main principles which are recommended by the Codex Alimentarius in dealing with contaminants and toxins in food and feed, and lists the maximum levels and associated sampling plans of contaminants and natural toxicants in food and feed which are recommended by the Codex Alimentarius Commission to be applied to commodities moving in international trade. Endogenous natural toxicants, such as e.g. solanine in potatoes, that are implicit constituents of food and feed resulting from a genus, species or strain ordinarily producing hazardous levels of a toxic metabolite(s) i.e. phytotoxins are not generally considered within the scope of this standard. They are, however, within the terms of reference of the CCCF and will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

For more information please read the following links:

http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/aflacontrol_wp04.pdf

<http://www.ehponline.org/members/2005/8384/8384.pdf>

<http://naldc.nal.usda.gov/download/30015/PDF>

<http://www.scienceinafrica.co.za/2007/july/heavymetals.htm>

<http://www.heavymetalafrica.com/Home/Home.html>

<http://www.seafish.org/industry-support/legislation/contaminants/radionuclides>
www.codexalimentarius.net/input/download/standards/17/CXS_193e.pdf
www.codexalimentarius.net/input/download/standards/17/CXS_193e.pdf

(C) Food Additives

A food additive is any substance not normally consumed as a food by itself and not normally used as a typical ingredient of the food, whether or not it has nutritive value, the intentional addition of which to food for a technological (including organoleptic) purpose in the manufacture, processing, preparation, treatment, packing, packaging, transport or holding of such food results, or may be reasonably expected to result (directly or indirectly), in it or its by-products becoming a component of or otherwise affecting the characteristics of such foods. The term does not include contaminants or substances added to food for maintaining or improving nutritional qualities (FAO/WHO, 1995).

Food additives are an important component of our food supply. They mean that we can enjoy a wide variety of foods throughout the year. They also have an important role in ensuring that our food lasts longer and is easier to use. Additives are used in processed foods in relatively small quantities. Many substances used as additives also occur naturally, such as vitamin C or ascorbic acid in fruit and lecithin in eggs or soy beans. Some food additives have more than one use.

Adverse reactions to food additives occur in a small proportion of the population. A few people are intolerant to some food additives. Intolerance does not depend on whether the food additive is derived from a natural or synthetic source. More people are intolerant to common foods such as peanuts, milk or eggs than to food additives.

Maximum use levels are set for each food additive. The primary objective of establishing maximum use levels for food additives in various food groups is to ensure that the intake of an additive from all its uses does not exceed its Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI). Guidelines for use of food additives are covered under the *General Standard for Food Additives* (GSFA).

Food additives and their maximum use levels are based in part on the food additive provisions of previously established Codex commodity standards, or upon the request of governments after subjecting the requested maximum use levels to an appropriate method for verifying the compatibility of a proposed maximum level with the ADI. African member countries have not been providing sufficient data necessary for determination of ADI and setting of Maximum Use Levels. In addition, participation of African countries in Codex standard setting activities, in particular at the CCFA meetings is very poor. As a result, matters of interest to Africa have not for a long time been fully taken into consideration.

The African Union has considered the importance of the Food additives and has set up and supported an expert group on food additives. The African expert group on food additives is committed to addressing food additive safety issues in order to contribute to the protection of the health of the population and promote safe trade in food.

More information can be accessed from the following:

<http://www.codexalimentarius.org/committees-and-task->

[forces/en/?provide=committeeDetail&idList=9](#)

FAO/WHO, 1995. *Codex General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA)*. Rome: Codex Alimentarius Commission.

WHO, 1987. Principles for the Safety Assessment of Food Additives and Contaminants in Food. *WHO Environmental Health Criteria*, Volume 70, p. 111.

4 News from RECs and ISSOs News

RECs

The East African Community (EAC) launched SPS measures for fish and fishery products in March 2014. Read more on EAC website: www.eac.int

OIE:

Publications

Antimicrobial resistance in animal and public health: The focus of this Review is to address the various factors that must be taken into account when trying to understand the antimicrobial resistance problem, with a particular focus on the use of antimicrobials in animals. Read more on http://web.oie.int/boutique/index.php?page=ficprod&id_produit=1074&fichrech=1&lang=en

Good governance and financing of efficient Veterinary Services: This issue of the Review aims at providing the reader with a conceptual framework to analyse the governance of national Veterinary Services and shows how reforms that promote good governance can help enhance the quality of national animal health systems and assist countries to achieve compliance with OIE international standards: Read more on: http://web.oie.int/boutique/index.php?page=ficprod&id_produit=1073&fichrech=1&lang=en

Coordinating surveillance policies in animal health and food safety “from farm to fork”: Animal health and human health are closely interlinked. More than 60% of all pathogens that cause diseases in humans originate from domestic or wild animals. Read more on www.oie.int/doc/eng_index.php

Brucellosis: recent developments towards ‘One Health’: This issue of the Review presents a comprehensive overview of the state of knowledge of the ecology of brucellosis, a clearer understanding of the current situation and a summary of the outlook for the future, so as to allow the disease to be neglected no longer, or at least to be recognised as neglected. Read more on: http://web.oie.int/boutique/index.php?page=ficprod&id_produit=1184&fichrech=1&lang=en

Next events (2014 second semester) : information on these events available on OIE website : http://www.oie.int/eng/manifestations/en_manifs.htm

IPPC:

Publications

The IPPC Secretariat recently launched a manual for national plant protection organizations to better deal with phytosanitary issues in facilitating market access. The primary purpose of the guide is to describe a process that can be followed to gain market access while simultaneously preventing the introduction and spread of pests into new areas. The Manual can be accessed on: <http://phytosanitary.info/information/market-access-guide-phytosanitary-issues-national-plant-protection-organizations>

Transit Manual: Supports facilitation of trade through consistent implementation of ISPM 25 (Transit) with additional information drawn from other relevant ISPMs. It includes practical examples of transit situations to help NPPOs identify whether the consignment in transit poses a phytosanitary risk and how to manage the risk appropriately. Can be accessed on: <http://phytosanitary.info/information/transit-manual-guide-phytosanitary-issues-nppos>

Guidelines for the Revision of National Phytosanitary Legislation: The guidelines attempt to distil the experience gained and lessons learned during the implementation of FAO legal assistance activities in the phytosanitary field in recent years, carried out in close collaboration with the Plant Protection Division of FAO's Agriculture Department. The guidelines discuss the many essential and desirable elements that should form part of modern national phytosanitary legal framework. They also identify the issues that ought to be considered by governments in reviewing their existing regulatory frameworks on plant protection, especially in light of the new revised text of the IPPC and the SPS Agreement. Can be accessed on the following link: <http://phytosanitary.info/information/guidelines-revision-national-phytosanitary-legislation>

Other News

Information on newly adopted International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) and capacity building projects, **G/SPS/GEN/1028**.

Next events: information on these events available on IPPC website: <https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1110636&L=0>

Codex Alimentarius

Codex News:

You can easily download all **Codex Alimentarius Newsletter** from the Codex Website following this link: <http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/newsletter.jsp>

Next events (2014 second semester) : information on these events available on Codex website : <http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/current.jsp?lang=en>

Publications

A large amount of information concerning the FAO and WHO capacity development activities (ongoing or planned projects) and tools.

Open link: <http://www.fao.org/food/food-safety-quality/publications-tools/food-safety-publications/en/>

July 2013: Foodborne parasites – ranking for risk management: Foodborne parasites are often referred to as neglected diseases. From the food safety perspective they have not received the same level of attention as other foodborne biological and chemical hazards. Yet they cause a high burden of disease in humans, and can cause great hardship in terms of food security and their impact on livelihoods. Access Publication on:

http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/agns/pdf/ParasiteHighlight3.pdf

July 2013: Evidence-informed food safety decision-making considering multiple criteria: Food safety risk managers should base their decisions on clear evidence and assessment of the potential for foodborne hazards to cause harm. Decisions facing food safety risk managers are varied, and at times complex, e.g. setting food safety priorities, resource allocations, policy recommendations and selecting the most appropriate intervention to minimize food safety risks. In determining appropriate action, decision-makers often need to consider the consequences relating to more than one risk factor eg. impact on public health, trade, food access and security. Read more on:

<http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/agns/pdf/factsheets/EvidenceHighlight.pdf>

July 2013: Public health risks of histamine and other biogenic amines from fish and fishery products: Scombrotoxin fish poisoning (SFP), often called “histamine poisoning”, is caused by ingestion of certain species of marine fish with high levels of histamine and possibly other biogenic amines. In some parts of the world, SFP is a major cause of food-borne illness. The fish species involved contain high levels of free histidine in their tissue and include tuna and other pelagic species like mackerel, sardines, and anchovy. When these species are subjected to temperature abuse during and/or after harvest, bacterial decarboxylation of histidine leads to histamine formation. Other biogenic amines produced as a result of bacterial growth in fish may potentiate histamine’s effect. For more information access the following link:

http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/agns/news_events/HistamineHighlightFINAL.pdf

WTO News

The WTO's World Trade Report 2012 has identified SPS measures among non-tariff barriers that are having an increasing impact on trade: Read more on

http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/publications_e/wtr12_e.htm

The WTO SPS committee dealing with food safety and animal and plant health heard a record number of specific trade concerns — 11 new, 12 old and one under “other business” — but was unable to agree on a mediation procedure designed to avoid legal disputes when it met on 16–17 October 2013:

http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news13_e/sps_16oct13_e.htm

WTO SPS committee failed to agree on a definition for private standards for food safety and animal and plant health, and deferred a decision on a mediation procedure designed to avoid legal disputes, when it met on 25–26 March 2014: Read more on the following link:

http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news14_e/sps_25mar14_e.htm

WTO members have raised their concerns about each other's measures involving meat, animal products and live animals, shrimps, and other products, with African swine fever joining diseases that are more regularly on the agenda such as mad cow (BSE) and foot-and-mouth diseases: Read more on

http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news14_e/sps_25mar14_e.htm

The EU reported to the WTO SPS Committee instances when African swine fever was found in two wild boars in Lithuania in January 2014 and two in Poland the following month. It stressed that the disease has not been found in farm animals, but that the disease had spread from Russia and other countries to the east of the EU. Read more on the following link:

http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news14_e/sps_25mar14_e.htm#africanswine

The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) has developed a structured process, based on Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA), to assist developing countries in making choices between competing SPS investment options, enhancing economic efficiency and promoting transparency and inclusiveness in decision-making processes: For information on applying the tool in your country please contact STDFSecretariat@wto.org

Next events (2014 second semester)

Title	Date		Location
	From	To	
SPS Committee meetings (Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures)	9 July 2014	10 July 2014	Geneva (Switzerland)
	15 October 2014	16 October 2014	Geneva (Switzerland)

WTO trainings:

- [E-Learning Courses on the SPS Agreement](#)
- [Regional SPS Workshop for French-speaking Africa](#)
- [Regional SPS Workshop for English-speaking Africa](#)
- [Advanced Course on the SPS Agreement](#)