

Codex Fats and Oils Committee to meet during November

At 10 a.m. Monday, Nov. 28, a sharp rap of a gavel by chairman M.W. Hubbard in historic Hoare Memorial Hall, adjacent to Westminster Abbey, in London will call to order the ninth session of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils.

The committee is one of 25 subsidiary bodies of the Codex Alimentarius Commission established in 1962 to protect the health of consumers and to facilitate international trade by obtaining the widest possible international agreement of food standards. Its potential impact on the United States is growing. In 1962, when Codex was born, United States agricultural exports totaled about \$5 billion, including approximately \$900 million in soybeans, soybean oil, cottonseed oil, and other vegetable oils and waxes. During 1976, the USDA's Economic Research Service estimates those same totals were about \$22.9 billion and \$4.2 billion, respectively.

Nations that belong to the Food and Agricultural Organization or the World Health Organization are entitled to representation on the Codex Alimentarius Commission. About 115 nations do belong, others send observers to Codex meetings. Member nations may elect to join any commodity committees they choose. Thirty-four nations sent delegates to the previous Fats and Oils Committee meeting held in 1975.

Drafting and approval of standards is a ten-step process (Fig. 1), with the final step being publication of all standards in The Codex Alimentarius. Thus far Codex standards have been printed individually, but no master Codex publication has been produced. The first eight steps in the process lead to approval by the Codex Commission. These "provisional standards" are then submitted to participating nations for their acceptance or rejections. If a nation accepts a Codex standard, it affirms that products of that type produced in the nation or distributed in the nation will meet Codex standards.

The standards are, for all practical purposes, the minimum needed to assure commodity identities. A nation may give "target acceptance" to a standard, meaning the country would fully accept the standard at some future date. A nation may also give "acceptance with specified deviations," meaning it accepted the standard with modifications.

The Committee on Fats and Oils has approved standards for ten vegetable oils, margarine, lard, rendered pork fat, premier jus (oleo oil), edible tallow, and a standard for fats and oils not covered by a specific commodity standard (Table I). The full commission also has approved these standards. Individual copies may be ordered from the Codex Alimentarius Commission, C-384, via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy.

The United States has rejected the ten vegetable oil standards, largely because the analytical methods for identification purposes were deemed inadequate. A nation may use whatever procedure it wishes to process Codex standards. In the United States, this means most are published in the *Federal Register* with the usual opportunity for public comment before final action. It is unlikely that the U.S. will adopt the Codex standards for lard or rendered pork fat, for example, because U.S. authorities plan to have a single standard covering both. The U.S. probably will try to convince Codex that only a single standard is needed. While rejecting the ten vegetable oil standards, the United States has said it would not create

Table I
Recommended Standard in Fats and Oils

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1. General Standard for Fats and Oils not Covered by Individual Standards (CAC/RS 19-1969)
 2. Edible Soya Bean Oil (CAC/RS 20-1969)
 3. Edible Arachis Oil (CAC/RS 21-1969)
 4. Edible Cottonseed Oil (CAC/RS 22-1969)
 5. Edible Sunflowerseed Oil (CAC/RS 23-1969)
 6. Edible Rapeseed Oil (CAC/RS 24-1969)
 7. Edible Maize Oil (CAC/RS 25-1969)
 8. Edible Sesameseed Oil (CAC/RS 26-1969)
 9. Edible Safflowerseed Oil (CAC/RS 27-1969)
 10. Lard (CAC/RS 28-1969)
 11. Rendered Pork Fat (CAC/RS 29-1969)
 12. Premier Jus (CAC/RS 30-1969)
 13. Edible Tallow (CAC/RS 31-1969)
 14. Margarine (CAC/RS 32-1969)
 15. Olive Oil (CAC/RS 33-1969)
 16. Mustardseed Oil (CAC/RS 34-1969)
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Acceptance of Codex Fats and Oils Standards

Full Acceptance

Bahrain
Cameroon (Fed. Rep. of)
Central African Republic
Ivory Coast
Rep. of Sudan
People's Dem. Rep. of Yemen
Rep. of Zaire

Ghana accepted: 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, & 13

Trinidad and Tobago accepted 14.

15 was accepted by Algeria, Portugal, Romania, Republic of South Africa, Spain, Turkey

Target Acceptance

Cyprus accepted all except 15 (which they accepted with deviations) Trinidad and Tobago accepted all except 14 (which they accepted fully)

Morocco accepted all except: 1, 10, 11, 12, 13, & 15

Ghana accepted 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, & 14

Argentina accepted 15

Acceptance with Specified Deviations

Argentina 1, 4, 10, 11, 12, 14
Arab Rep. of Egypt 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 15
Canada 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9
Portugal accepted all except 1, 2, 6, 8, 15, 16
USA - 14
Bulgaria, Columbia, Cyprus, Italy, Morocco and Tunisia - 15