



American Spice Trade Association

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ASTA Overview



- IOSTA Activities
 - Codex Commodity Committee on Spices
 - Code of Hygienic Practices for Spices
- ASTA Activities
 - New strategic plan
 - New initiatives

Codex Commodity Committee



- Proposed by India 2012
 - Presented at all coordinating committees
 - Discussion paper finalized
 - Codex decision expected July 2013
 - IOSTA to review in June and determine position
 - IOSTA has NGO status at Codex

Codex Commodity Committee



Standardize grades & specifications for spices, aromatic herbs and their formulations for the following forms:

Whole spices, ground spices, cracked/crushed spices, dehydrated spices, spice mixes/blends, spice oils and oleoresins and any other relevant form

Codex Commodity Committee



Physical Parameters (quality characteristics to be included:

Size, color, moisture, ash content, counts, maturity, percentage of cracked or broken pieces/fragments, volatile oil content, filth, excreta or other extraneous matter

Codex Commodity Committee



Rationale:

- Due to lack of harmonized standards, producing countries find it increasingly difficult to comply with various import requirements, which resulted in trade barriers
- The absence of harmonized international standards does not support fair practices in trade...this leads to specifications that are unilaterally demanded by buyers
- Spices are used in almost all food products consumed around the world...the quality of these spice products is of paramount importance as it determines the quality of the food consumed globally.

Codex Commodity Committee



ASTA Concerns

- Previous discussions on India's concerns about differing regulations/enforcement had nothing to do with quality
 - Pesticide residues
 - Differing enforcement – pathogens
 - Burdensome regulations
- These were issues raised in proposed restructuring of IOSTA
 - Issues were not related to quality

Codex Commodity Committee



ASTA Concerns

- Codex recognizes its standards are not universally accepted in the statutory sense because of differences in legal formats/administrative systems
- FDA has limited statutory authority to address quality issues – will not enforce quality...but will enforce food safety: filth, excreta, other extraneous matter

Codex Commodity Committee



ASTA Concerns

- Establishment of minimal quality standards will still allow buyers to set quality standards for product they wish to purchase based on the end use and to negotiate the price accordingly
- Development of standards for all spices will be lengthy, time-consuming and expensive for IOSTA members to participate in

Codex Commodity Committee



ASTA Position

ASTA supports efforts to harmonize standards related to food safety and will support efforts to set standards for filth, excreta or other extraneous matter. However, quality specifications are dictated by the end use of the spice and there is no one specification that will serve all purposes.

Codex Commodity Committee



Next Steps:

- IOSTA meeting June 6, 2013 to set IOSTA position
- IOSTA representation as NGO at July 2013 Codex Alimentarius Commission meeting
- ASTA will work separately with U.S. delegation to Codex to convey our concerns

Codex Code of Hygienic Practice



Codex Code of Hygienic Practice for Spices and Dried Aromatic Herbs

- U.S. delegation leading revision
- Latest draft issued April 22
- IOSTA coordinating feedback – due June 10

ASTA Activities



- Annual Meeting – FDA Deputy Commissioner for Foods Mike Taylor
- FSMA engagement and education
- Clean, safe spice – FDA Meeting
 - Environmental monitoring workshops
 - Process validation white paper
 - Surrogate development
 - Pilot project with FDA to manage risk – RTE vs. RAC
 - RFR – 3rd year report – 5 reports
Salmonella (16 year one, 23 year two)

2013 – 2016 Strategic Plan

Strong Association

Advocacy

Food Safety

Education

- Strengthen resources to effectively represent the spice industry
- Monitor and shape US policy issues affecting the spice industry
- Provide resources to support industry efforts ensuring clean, safe spice and utilize global alliances to reach the entire supply chain
- Ensure clean, safe spice throughout the supply chain by providing education

2013-2014 ASTA President

