AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD QUALITY INSPECTION

THE FAO/WHO CODEX CONTACT POINT FOR POLAND
ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES

THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
The Codex Alimentarius is a collection of internationally recognized standards, codes of practice, guidelines and recommendations relating to food, food production and food safety under the aegis of consumer protection.

WARSAW, MAY 2012
LOCATION OF THE CODEX CONTACT POINT FOR POLAND

The Codex Contact Point for Poland is located in the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection responsible to the Minister competent for agricultural markets.

AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD QUALITY INSPECTION

Activity of Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection aims at protection of consumers and food producers interests and it is realised by:

- Removing poor quality products from the market,
- Reduction of food products adulterations and unfair competition,
- Fighting against fraudulent market practices,
- Building customers and trade partners reliance,
- Risk management,
- Promotion and advancement of the Good Manufacture Practice,
- Influencing on business transactions value,
- Enabling aware choice to consumers, based on reliable information.

LEGAL BASIS

The Inspection started its activity on 1 January 2003 under the Act of December 21, 2000 on Commercial Quality of Agricultural and Food Products (Official Journal 2005, No. 187, item 1577 with further amendments). It was created on the basis of two inspection bodies: Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection /CIS/ and Inspection for Purchasing and Processing of Agricultural Products /ISiPAR/.

The Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection performs all tasks specified in the act on commercial quality of agricultural and food products and in 20 other acts and up to 150 national and the European Union regulations.

OBJECTIVES

The main goal of the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection activity is protecting consumers and producers by assuring access to reliable information about agricultural and food products, preventing unfair market practices and facilitating trade exchange with third countries as well as trade on the European common market area.
**SCOPE OF ACTIVITY**

Objectives mentioned above are realized by carrying out official inspections of commercial quality of agricultural and food products, as well as other tasks which are imposed on the Inspection by national and the European Union regulations. The general scope of the inspection's activities covers the following:

- tasks connected with the realization of the Common Agricultural Policy (for example „ex ante” control, „ex-post” control),
- activities aimed at protection of domestic products (for example supervision over organic farming and regional and traditional products),
- activities facilitating export (for example commercial quality assessment, inspection of goose breeding and fattening conditions),
- quality control of fresh fruit and vegetables, meat, hop and hop products, wine, fertilisers, and the last but not least,
- coordination of national co-operation with the international organisations dealing with the food standards.

**TASKS OF THE INSPECTION**

- Supervision of commercial quality of agricultural and food products, in particular:
  - commercial quality control of agricultural and food products at production and trading stage, including exported agricultural and food products,
  - commercial quality control of imported agricultural and food products (the list of imported agricultural and food products and their minimum quantities subjected,
  - to commercial quality control is set by the Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Official Journal 2002, No. 230, item 1933 with further amendments),
  - issuing certificates on commercial quality of agricultural and food products.
- Inspection of agricultural and food products labelled with registered protected geographical indications, protected designations of origin or certificates of specific character.
- Inspection of agricultural and food products storage and transport conditions.
Co-operation with other inspection bodies (Trade Inspection, Sanitary Inspection, Veterinary Inspection, State Plant Health and Seed Inspection Service), customs offices and local governmental units.

Co-operation with or participation in international organisations working in the area of commercial quality and international trade of agricultural and food products including:
- FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission - acting as Codex Contact Point for Poland,
- United Nations/Economic Commission for Europe - acting as the Polish Secretariat for Co-operation with Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards,
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – cooperation with the OECD Scheme on Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables.

Conducting trainings in the scope of commercial quality provisions and requirements, setting quality classes and methods of analyses of agricultural and food products.

Co-operation with foreign official inspection services on commercial quality of agricultural and food products.

Additionally, Inspection has competences for carrying out control in the following scopes:
- fruit and vegetables market and hop market,
- recording of market prices of adult bovine animals,
- classification of bovine and porcine carcasses in the EUROP system,
- genetically modified organisms (GMO),
- wine products,
- organic farming,
- fertilisers and fertilisation.

**ORGANISATIONAL SCHEME**

Staff of the Inspection accounts approximately 670, including 59% control inspectors and 18% laboratory staff.

The Inspection is managed by: the Chief Inspector, 2 Deputy Chief Inspectors and 16 Voivodeship Inspectors of Agricultural and Food Quality (see organisational structure on page 17).
The Chief Inspector coordinates and supervises all activities of the Inspection with the support of the Main Inspectorate. It is executed by elaborating annual and quarterly control plans and presenting them to the Voivodeship Inspectorates for implementation. The Voivodeship Inspectorates elaborate information about conducted controls and send it to the Main Inspectorate where the summary report is prepared. This uniform report is submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

**LABORATORIES**

Appropriate realization of the Inspection tasks is guaranteed by analytical activities carried out by Inspection laboratories. Analyses of agricultural and food products are conducted in 7 official Inspection laboratories – 1 Central Laboratory and 6 specialised laboratories. Methods of analyses used by the Inspection laboratories comply with the EU methods. Usage of methods of analyses and sampling recommended in legal acts being in force, assures that control procedures in each body of the Inspection are uniformed. All Inspection laboratories are accredited by PCA (Polish Centre for Accreditation) according to PN-EN ISO/IEC 17025. Inspection laboratories carry out food and agricultural products quality analyses using up to 727 implemented analytical, instrumental and microbiological methods related to certain groups of products such as: milk and milk products, meat and meat products, juices and their concentrates, beer, cereals and cereal products, oils and vegetable fats, vegetable products, honey, alcohol and non-alcohol drinks and mineral waters.

**QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

To uphold high quality level on every stage of performing tasks, according to the ISO 9001:2008 standard, quality management system has been implemented in the Inspection. The Inspection is the first official food control body in Poland which in 2005 gained conformity certificate on the ISO 9001:2000 standard. Recent re-certification audit, conducted on March 2011 by the certification body unit - BSI Management Systems Polska Sp. z o.o., confirmed that the quality management system implemented in the Inspection fulfils requirements set by the ISO 9001: 2008 standard. The certificate have been awarded for the next three years.
INTERNATIONAL COOPERTATION

Assuring active participation in international organisations activities is a chance for influencing the work on global canons of food safety and protection of consumers interests, guarantee of access to current information on world scientific achievements in food safety and food quality, source of knowledge about world trends in food industry and opportunity to protect regional and national interests connected with international food trade.

The Inspection co-ordinates Polish co-operation with international organizations setting food safety and quality standards. The Inspection executes all tasks connected with international co-operation mainly by co-operation with the following bodies:

- Codex Alimentarius Commission FAO/WHO (CAC FAO/WHO);
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE);
- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Co-operation with Codex Alimentarius Commission FAO/WHO (CAC FAO/WHO)

The Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection acts as the FAO/WHO Codex Contact Point for Poland and performs its function at the national level according to the Codex Alimentarius Commission “Procedural Manual”. The Inspection co-ordinates Polish participation in the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission and in its subsidiary bodies (over 20 CAC FAO/WHO committees) works and co-operation with the Council of the European Union (Working Group on Codex Alimentarius).

Co-operation with United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

The Inspection runs the Polish Secretariat of co-operation with the UNECE Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards. Within this task the Inspection co-operates with 20 national institutions and co-ordinates participation of Poland in activities of the Working Party and its specialized sections (fresh fruit and vegetables, dry and dried produce, seed potatoes, meat, eggs and egg products).
Co-operation with Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection represents Poland in the OECD Scheme for Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables by direct participation in the following activities:

- the plenary Sessions of the OECD Scheme,
- works on interpretation brochures on quality standards,
- trainings,
- international meetings of Heads of quality control services organized by the OECD Scheme.

ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES OF THE CODEX CONTACT POINT FOR POLAND

HISTORY

The history of the Codex Contact Point for Poland is as long as that of FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission itself. In 1963 the FAO/WHO Codex Contact Point was established in the Polish Committee for Standardization. In 1964 by the Regulation of the Minister of Foreign Trade, the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection (CIS) was appointed as the Polish Secretariat for co-operation with the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission. In consequence, the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection (CIS) was notified in the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Secretariat in Rome as the FAO/WHO Codex Contact Point for Poland. Since 1st January 2003 the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection acts as the FAO/WHO Codex Contact Point for Poland.

Despite organizational changes and consecutive subordinations to different ministries the FAO/WHO Codex Contact Point for Poland kept up the continuity of works and co-operation with the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission.

THE MAIN TASKS OF THE CODEX CONTACT POINT FOR POLAND

The Codex Contact Point for Poland:

- acts as the link between the Codex Secretariat and Poland.

1 Created by joining former Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection (CIS) and Inspection for Purchasing and Processing of Agricultural Products (ISIPAR)
co-operates with and participates in the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies works,
• distributes all Codex working documents to interested stakeholders and cooperating institutions in Poland,
• co-ordinates process of developing the Polish positions on Codex standards, guidelines and related texts and sends final national comments to the Codex Secretariat,
• co-ordinates participation of Polish experts in Codex sessions and Codex working groups,
• co-ordinates Polish co-operation with the Council of the European Union (Working Group on Codex Alimentarius) 2,
• promotes the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission activities,
• involves new co-operating national experts in order to widen opinion making process on Codex working documents,
• encourages active participation of Poland at the Codex forum,
• co-ordinates all relevant Codex activities in Poland.

THE RULES OF CODEX WORKS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The rules of Codex works at the national level are described in the Internal Procedure of Proceeding within the Codex works at the national level 3. The procedure was consulted with all relevant official authorities, as well as with non-governmental organizations interested in Codex. In general all Codex activities on the national level are co-ordinated and supervised by the Codex Contact Point for Poland.

Nevertheless, according to the abovementioned procedure, there is appointed a governmental body - for each of the Codex Committees selected on the basis of the scope of its competences - which plays the role of a leader – final decision maker.

The authority (appointed expert) is responsible for fulfilling the following tasks:
• considering and analysing the Codex working documents distributed by the Codex Contact Point for Poland,
• preparation of final Polish comments to the received documents on the basis of the comments sent by co-operating institutions and submission of the final version of national position to the Codex Contact Point for Poland,
• selection of Polish representatives to the Session of the appropriate Codex Committee.

2 Under the EC Decision of November 17, 2003 No. 2003/822, the European Community accessed to the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission

3 Elaborated by the Codex Contact Point for Poland
The Polish Codex Contact Point co-operates with c.a. 50 national partners, i.e.: governmental and non-governmental bodies (official food control services, consumers and food industry associations, scientific institutes, universities and other parties) interested in Codex works.

Prior to each Codex meeting, which Polish delegates are going to participate in, detailed instruction for delegates is prepared. When there is a need to discuss issues of special concerns for Poland, co-ordination meetings are being convened by the Codex Contact Point with representatives of all stakeholders concerned.

The Codex Contact Point for Poland has created well structured communication with co-operating bodies. It is based on e-mail network and website www.ijhars.gov.pl where every interested parties may find detailed information on Codex Alimentarius, news, information on sessions and also reports of Polish delegates to the sessions.
The Codex Contact Point acts as a national link between co-operating institutions and Codex Secretariat, as well as the Secretariat General of the Council of the European Union. In the frame of the preparation to the sessions of Codex Committees, the national governmental representatives take part in co-ordination meetings for the European Union Member States where the EU positions are discussed.

The Codex Contact Point for Poland is well organized, resilient body which through almost 50 years of its existence has created effective network of communication with all interested parties. The involvement of co-operating institutions in Codex works is still being improved. It has been realized by i.a. up-dating the Procedure of Proceeding within the Codex Works at the National Level, surveying on Codex matters, publishing information brochures and articles in specialized magazines presenting the structure and the scope of activities of Codex Alimentarius and Codex Contact Point for Poland, organizing National Codex conferences.

THE 26th SESSION OF THE FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE IN POLAND

The FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission at its 30th Session, which took place on 2-7 July 2007 in Rome, accepted that the next 26th Session of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO) would be organised in Poland.

The FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe held its 26th Session in Warsaw from 7th to 10th October 2008 at the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Poland and was organized in cooperation with the then FAO/WHO Coordinator for Europe (Switzerland). The Session was chaired by Ms Awilo Ochieng Pernet (Switzerland) and attended by 77 delegates and observers representing 33 members, 2 Observer countries and 3 international governmental organizations. The session was the opportunity to discuss among others the following subjects:

- The FAO/WHO Activities Complementary to the Work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission,
- Use of Codex Standards at National and Regional Level,
- National Food Control Systems and Consumer Participation in Food Standard Setting,
Nutritional Issues within the Region (nutritional issues within the region such as obesity, nutritional profiles, nutritional labelling and claims).

The Committee acknowledged the valuable contribution of the Government of the Republic of Poland to the Codex work in the region and unanimously accepted the proposal of the Delegation of Switzerland to nominate Poland as the next Coordinator for Europe, subject to appointment by the 32nd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

POLAND AS THE FAO/WHO COORDINATOR FOR EUROPE FOR 2009-2011

At the 32nd Session of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission Poland was officially appointed as the new FAO/WHO Coordinator for Europe.

The FAO/WHO Coordinator for Europe:

- Defines the problems and needs of the region concerning food standards and food control,
- Promotes within the Committee contacts for the mutual exchange of information on proposed regulatory initiatives and problems arising from food control and stimulates the strengthening of food control infrastructures,
- Recommends to the Commission the development of world wide standards for products of interest to the region, including products considered by the Committee to have an international market potential in the future,
- Develops regional standards for food products moving exclusively or almost exclusively in intra regional trade,
- Draws the attention of the Commission to any aspects of the Commission’s work of particular significance to the region,
- Promotes coordination of all regional food standards work undertaken by international governmental and non-governmental organizations within the region,
- Exercises a general coordinating role for the region and such other functions as may be entrusted to it by the Commission,
- Promotes the use of Codex standards and related texts by members.
THE 27th SESSION OF THE FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE IN POLAND

On 5-8 October 2010 in Warsaw, Poland hosted 27th session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe. The organization and chairmanship of this meeting was one of the tasks arising from the role of FAO/WHO Coordinator for Europe in the framework of the Codex Alimentarius Commission which Poland preformed for the period 2009-2011.

The session was attended by 80 delegates and observers representing 32 countries, one intergovernmental organization and three international NGOs. Meeting was chaired by Professor Krzysztof Kwiatek, Head of Department of Hygiene of Animal Feedingstuffs in the National Veterinary Research Institute of Poland is the Chairperson of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe.

The issues that were discussed during the four-day meeting included:
- Development of guidelines for traceability/product tracing,
- National Food Control Systems and consumer participation in food standards setting,
- The role of the private standards,
- Nutritional issues within the region.

Much attention was given to the standards for the products of interest to the region. The Committee agreed to propose new work on the revision of the Regional Standard for Fresh Fungus “Chanterelle” and on the Regional Standard for ayran.


The FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe at its last session in 2010 acknowledged the excellent contribution of Poland to Codex work in the region and unanimously supported the proposal of the delegation of Switzerland to nominate Poland as Coordinator for Europe for a second term, for appointment by the 34th Session of the CAC. Many delegations supported Switzerland’s proposal, including the Belgian Presidency representing the opinion of all European Union Member States. Poland expressed its readiness to continue the functions of the Regional Coordinator, while encouraging all countries in the region to consider formal co-hosting of the next CCEURO session.
At the last 34th Session of CAC (Geneva, Switzerland; 4 – 7 July 2011) Poland was officially re-elected as the FAO/WHO Coordinator for Europe and it was also decided that the next 28th CCEURO session will be organized in cooperation with Georgia and will be held in September 2012.

**CCEURO REGIONAL WORKSHOPS ON THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS**

The FAO/WHO CCEURO Regional Workshops on Codex Alimentarius were organized three times in Poland (in 2007, 2008 and 2010). The trainings were jointly organized by the Governments of Switzerland and Poland (The Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection and The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development) in 2007 and 2008. In 2010 Workshop was organized by the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Poland. Financial support for participation was provided through the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund. The general purpose of the Workshops was to involve less active countries of the European region in Codex works. Programs of the Workshops included lectures, presentation and a simulation of the Codex Session. Speakers and delegates were sharing their expertise and practical knowledge on Codex. The participants of the Regional Workshops on Codex Alimentarius in Warsaw concluded that the Workshops were very useful and there was a strong need to organize such meetings more often and continue the regional activities to strengthen the European representation and inputs during the Codex meetings.

**PARTICIPATION OF POLISH EXPERTS IN CODEX SESSIONS**

**Summary 2000-2011**

Totally, in term 2000-2011 Poland was represented in 113 Codex sessions by 246 national delegates.
### 2010
- Executive Committee of Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods
- Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling
- Codex Committee on General Principles
- FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe
- Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses

### 2009
- Executive Committee of Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Committee on Food Labelling
- Codex Committee on General Principles
- Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods
- Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling
- Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products
- Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses

### 2008
- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Committee on Food Labelling
- Codex Committee on Food Additives
- Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods
- Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling
- Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products
- Codex Committee on Natural Mineral Waters

### 2007
- Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems
- Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Committee on Food Labelling
- Codex Committee on Food Additives
- Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods
- Codex Committee on General Principles
- Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling
- Codex Committee on Fats and Oils
- FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe
The Republic of Poland

2006

- Codex Committee on Food Hygiene
- Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
- Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables
- Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
- Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products
- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling
- Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants
- Codex Committee on General Principles

2005

- Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
- Codex Committee on Food Labelling
- Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants
- Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues
- Codex Committee on General Principles
- Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling
- Codex Committee on Fats and Oils

2004

- Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems
- Codex Committee on General Principles
- Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
- Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods
- FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe
- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Committee on General Principles
- Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants
- Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling

2003

- Codex Committee on General Principles
- Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Committee on General Principles
- Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues
- Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Animal Feeding
- Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants

4 Supported by the FAO/WHO Trust Fund for enhanced participation in Codex.
5 Supported by the FAO/WHO Trust Fund for enhanced participation in Codex.
6 Supported by the FAO/WHO Trust Fund for enhanced participation in Codex.
Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection

- Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods
- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Committee on Fats and Oils

2002

- Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling
- Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
- FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe
- Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products
- Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues
- Codex Committee on Food Labelling
- Codex Committee on General Principles
- Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants

2001

- Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- Codex Committee on Food Labelling
- Codex Committee on General Principles
- Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues
- Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Animal Feeding
- Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants
- Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling
- Codex Committee on Fats and Oils

2000

- Codex Committee on Natural Mineral Waters
- Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
- FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe
- Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables
- Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
- Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products
- Codex Committee on Food Labelling
- Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues
- Codex Committee on General Principles
- Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods
- Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants
- Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products
- Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems
- Codex Committee on Sugars
WHERE CODEX CONTACT POINT FOR POLAND IS LOCATED?
THE FAO/WHO CODEX CONTACT POINT FOR POLAND

THE MAIN INSPECTORATE
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