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European Union Comments
CODEX COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION AND FOODS FOR
SPECIAL DIETARY USES

Forty-first Session

Düsseldorf, Germany, 24 – 29 November 2019

AGENDA ITEM 7

Proposed Draft Definition for Biofortification

(at step 4)

Mixed competence
European Union vote

The European Union and its Member States (EUMS) would like to thank the Republic of Zimbabwe and the Republic of South Africa for their work during the past years.

The EUMS would like to recall that the Codex Alimentarius Commission approved the new work on the definition for 'biofortification' and endorsed at the same time the recommendation of the CCEXEC70 to request CCNFSDU to clarify how the definition would be used and where it would be best placed. This recommendation was made to address the concern on how the definition would be used in Codex.

However, at CCNFSDU40 the Committee could not address these questions and agreed to: (i) hold the definition for biofortification at Step 4; and (ii) forward the definition to CCFL and request CCFL:

- To consider if the definition would meet their intended needs; and
- To clarify the intended use of the definition and where the definition would be best placed.

At the 45th session of CCFL in Ottawa, 13 - 17 May 2019, this issue was discussed, focussing on the intended use of the definition and where it would be best placed before discussing whether the proposed definition met the needs of CCFL. CCFL45 concluded that the Committee acknowledged the tremendous work done by CCNFSDU, but agreed that current labelling texts were adequate for CCFL purposes and there was no need for a definition on biofortification in the context of food labelling.

Following this, CAC42 clarified that work on the development of the definition on biofortification, was the responsibility of CCNFSDU, which should further discuss the issue and consider discontinuation following feedback from CCFL.

The EUMS would like to reiterate that a clarification on the placement of the definition and how it would be used is a pre-requisite for meaningful discussions on the development of a definition and that the term “biofortification” is not used in any of the Codex texts adopted or

texts in the step process that are under the remit of CCFL. Finally, the EUMS note the recent updating of the WHO information on biofortification and consider that useful concepts and definitions for biofortification have been provided at international level.

Consequently, and as CCFL concluded that there is no need for this definition in the context of food labelling, the EUMS consider that the work should be discontinued.

Notwithstanding this, the EUMS recognise that foods that have increased levels of essential nutrients can contribute to improve the nutritional status. The absence of a Codex definition of biofortified foods does in no way hinder the development, production or marketing of such foods. This includes the possibility to inform about increased nutrient levels if the conditions to make the respective nutrient claims are met.