Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

World Health Organization

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS
INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS



Concept note for a side event at the 34th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO)

SIDE EVENT
24 September 2026
09:00-10:15 (CET)

Strengthening data submission from the region to FAO/WHO scientific advice: Know-how and tips to overcome challenges

1. Background

The FAO/WHO Food Safety Scientific Advice Programme provides science- and evidence-based advice to support the development of international food safety standards, guidance and risk management decisions. The programme is delivered through joint expert bodies, including the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meetings on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA) and the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR), as well as through ad hoc expert meetings.

The scientific advice provided by these bodies depends on the availability of high-quality, relevant and representative data. Data submitted by countries can contribute to assessments of chemical, microbiological and physical hazards, including estimates of exposure, occurrence, risks and potential benefits. International databases and platforms, including those maintained by JECFA and the FAO GM Foods Platform, support the coordination and dissemination of food safety data and information.

CCEURO Members have substantial expertise and data relevant to FAO/WHO scientific advice. However, challenges may affect participation in calls for data and calls for experts. These may include limited awareness of opportunities, uncertainty about eligibility and submission requirements, difficulties in identifying suitable experts, limited time and resources, data-quality or data-format issues and institutional or administrative barriers to sharing information.

This side event will build on the CCEURO33 side event on “Leveraging national data and information for international food standards” and provide practical information on how Member States can respond effectively to calls for data and calls for experts issued by FAO/WHO scientific committees. It will leverage the Codex eLearning course 5 on “Risk assessment in the framework of Codex” and combine an overview of the scientific advice process with practical guidance and lessons learned from Member States in the Region.

2. Objectives

The side event will:

- Improve Member States’ understanding of the FAO/WHO Scientific Advice Programme and the contribution of national data and expertise to the work of JECFA, JEMRA, JMPR and other expert bodies;
- Provide practical guidance on responding to calls for data and calls for experts, including requirements, timelines, data quality, documentation and declarations of interest;
- Share lessons learned and practical solutions from selected CCEURO Members to overcome technical, institutional and resource-related challenges;
- Encourage stronger national coordination and increased participation from the region in FAO/WHO scientific advice and international food safety standard-setting.



3. Draft programme

Time	Session	Lead
09:00-09:05	Opening and objectives	**Peter Sousa Hoejskov** WHO Regional Office for Europe **Mary Kenny** FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia
09:05-09:10	FAO and WHO scientific advice for food safety and Codex Alimentarius: Why national contributions matter	**Hilde Kruse** Codex Secretariat
09:10-09:30	How to respond to calls for data and experts?	**Kim Petersen**, WHO Headquarters **Angeliki Vlachou**, FAO Headquarters
09:30-09:40	Member State experiences in submitting data to FAO and WHO expert bodies	**Betul Vazgecer** Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Türkiye
09:40-10:10	Discussion and questions	Moderated by FAO and WHO Regional Offices
10:10-10:15	Conclusions and next steps	**Peter Sousa Hoejskov** WHO Regional Office for Europe **Mary Kenny** FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia