Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

World Health Organization

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS
INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS



CCLAC24 - Side Event

The scientific evidence behind Codex standards: challenges and opportunities for Latin America and the Caribbean

Languages:
Spanish and English

26 November 2026
15:00-16:30 (GMT-3)
Intendencia de Montevideo, Montevideo, Uruguay

SIDE EVENT

Objective:	To examine the role of scientific risk assessment in the development of Codex standards and the challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean in contributing to their scientific basis, in particular through the generation and submission of relevant data, the strengthening of technical capacities and more active participation in Codex standard-setting processes and in support of the scientific activities of FAO and WHO. Furthermore, to examine how scientific evidence and Codex standards can help underpin national regulatory decisions and address sanitary measures that may affect international trade. The event will address three complementary dimensions: i) *the role of scientific assessments and advice from the FAO/WHO expert bodies, in particular JECFA, JMPR and JEMRA, in the development of Codex standards; ii) the availability, representativeness and use of relevant regional data in international scientific assessments; and iii) the challenges in applying scientific evidence and Codex standards to national regulatory decisions, and their relationship with international obligations and trade in food.*
Key message:	The WTO SPS Agreement requires that sanitary measures be based on scientific principles and on a risk assessment (Arts. 2.2 and 5.1) and recognizes Codex standards as the reference (Art. 3). When a country understands the science behind a standard and contributes its own data, it can comply with it, defend it or challenge a measure that is not justified. Therefore, the effective participation of CCLAC delegates in Codex scientific and standard-setting processes, supported by relevant and representative data and strengthened technical capacities, can help improve the scientific basis of regulatory decisions, protect consumer health and promote the application of justified sanitary measures, consistent with relevant international standards and the obligations applicable to international trade.
Host country and co-organizer:	Government of Costa Rica, Government of Chile
Host meeting:	CCLAC24, Intendencia de Montevideo, Montevideo, Uruguay, 23–27 November 2026



AGENDA

15:00 - 15:10 10 MIN	**Welcome and introduction to the session** **Felipe Calvo Villalobos** Director, Technical Regulation and Market Surveillance, MEIC **Ana Marisa Cordero** Technical Specialist, Agricultural Health, Biosafety and Food Safety and Quality Programme, IICA
15:10 - 15:15 5 MIN	**Minor Crops in Latin America** **Edwin Samir Barbosa** Regional Manager LATAM-CA, Minor Use Foundation (MUF)
15:15 - 15:30 15 MIN	**From science to standard: how the Codex Alimentarius uses risk analysis to protect health and facilitate trade** **Steve Crossley** Food Standards Consultant
15:30 - 15:40 10 MIN	**Availability, representativeness and use of regional data** **Verónica Picado** Technical Director of Operations, Minor Use Foundation (MUF)
15:40 - 16:25 45 MIN	**Panel discussion: Challenges and opportunities in applying scientific evidence and Codex standards to national regulatory decisions** **Panel moderator** **Steve Crossley** **Panellists** **Verónica Picado** Technical Director of Operations, Minor Use Foundation (MUF) **Janelle Yarde-Blackman** Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) **Rommel Betancourt** STDF Developing Country Expert and former Chair of CCLAC, Ecuador.
16:25 - 16:30 5 MIN	**Closing remarks and call to action** **Felipe Calvo Villalobos** Director, Technical Regulation and Market Surveillance, MEIC **Roxana Vera** Director, Head of the International Affairs Department, Operations Sub-directorate Division, Agricultural and Livestock Service