MANAGING FOOD INNOVATION: NOVEL FOODS, INGREDIENTS & PROCESSES

Food Regulatory Practices

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Novel Foods (NF), Ingredients & Processes

- Global drivers for food innovation
  - Diversification of food sources of high nutritional quality
  - Sustainability
  - Demand for products aligned with consumers' values
- Wide spectrum
  - Novel ingredients
  - Novel production systems
  - Novel processes and technologies
  - Novelty in food or ingredient attributes

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Challenges

- For regulators
  - Assessing safety of foods with limited history of consumption
  - Developing fit-for-purpose risk assessment approaches
  - Harmonizing definitions and standards across jurisdictions
- For innovators
  - Substantial investment
  - Extended development timelines
  - Absence of clear, predictable regulatory pathways can delay market entry, increase costs, create uncertainty for investment

Need for Global Alignment

- More predictable, transparent, science-based regulatory environments foster
  - Innovation and investment
  - Fair practices in the food trade
  - Consumer protection
- Frameworks must be able to integrate new scientific evidence, learn from international experiences
- Supported by international guidance through Codex

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Examples of NF Regulatory Environments

	Canada	EU	USA
NF regulation	Yes	Yes	No
Risk perception	Product-oriented; Risk-based	Process-oriented; Hazard-based	Product-oriented; Risk-based
Data exclusivity	No	Yes	No (GRAS-public)
Pre-market safety assessment	Yes	Yes	No (except additives)
Use of NAMs	Some acceptance (case-by-case)	Limited and slow uptake	Minimal formal integration
Adaptability to disruptive technologies	Moderate	Cautious	Limited
Recognition of foreign assessments	Limited	Limited	No
Transparency / predictability	Moderate	High	Moderate

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How to Address "New Food Sources and Production Systems"? Codex Discussions

- ❑Discussed in CAC 44, 45, 46
- ❑2 perspectives (CL 2023/31):
  - Dedicated mechanism, OR
  - Existing Codex structures and procedures are sufficient
- ❑CAC46 conclusion
  - New work on NFSPS can be submitted to existing committees, CCEXEC, CAC
  - Encouragement for concrete, science-based proposals, discussion papers
  - More clarity on the work required would inform the need for a new dedicated mechanism

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Relevance to Africa

- Drivers:
  - African indigenous crops traditional ingredients with functionality – With an important Potential
  - Value Addition Needed in the Agri-food sector
  - Export ambitions,
  - Investments Needed in technology
  - Novel Processes are Beneficial to
- Variable regulatory approaches to NF
  - ARSO Leadership in Novel Food - Underpinned by AFRAF leadership
  - Guidance needed and Capacity Building
  - Many countries are importers and exporters of NF

Opportunity to Transform

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Considerations for AFRAF

- ❑ Follow Developments in African Countries and Other Regions
- ❑ Example: For NF of greatest potential / regulatory interest in the region
  - Common guidelines for safety assessment
  - Collaborative safety assessments
  - Shared access to assessment outcomes
- ❑ Benefits
  - Accelerate standardization of NF
  - Participate actively in shaping standards

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Opportunities for Collaboration & Regulatory Convergence

- ❑Harmonization of principles
  - Safety assessment and decision-making guided, where feasible, by common definitions, transparent procedures, science-based criteria
  - Supported by agreed methodologies and standards
- ❑Facilitation of mutual confidence
  - Regulators recognize / rely on assessments conducted by other authorities, where appropriate

SUPPORTED BY CODEX PRINCIPLES AND GUIDANCE

CODEX
CODEX ALIMENTARIUS
1963-2023

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