



AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD  
QUALITY INSPECTION

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

THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND





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WARSAW, JULY 2008



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.

## LOCATION OF THE CODEX CONTACT POINT FOR POLAND

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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

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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,
- › Reducing 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 2000, No. 5, item 44 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 Community 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 leading official inspection of commercial quality of agricultural and food products as well as other tasks which are imposed on the Inspection

by national and the European Community regulations. The general scope of the activity 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 hops 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 during production and marketing, 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 paying agencies (Agricultural Market Agency, Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture) in the scope of the Common Agricultural Policy.
- › Co-operation with other inspections 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 marketing 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 within the OECD Scheme on Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables.
- › Conducting trainings in the scope of provisions and commercial quality 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 650 employees, including 78% control inspectors and laboratory staff.

The Inspection is managed by: the Chief Inspector, Deputy Chief Inspector and 16 Voivodeship Inspectors of Agricultural and Food Quality (see organisational structures).

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 transmitting them to the Voivodeship Inspectorates for implementation and enforcement.

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 transmitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

## **LABORATORIES**

Appropriate realization of the Inspection tasks is assured by analytical activities carried out by Inspection laboratories.

Analyses of agricultural and food products are conducted in 11 official Inspection laboratories – 1 Central Laboratory and 10 specialised laboratories.

Methods of analyses used by the Inspection laboratories comply with the EU methods. Determination of methods of analyses and sampling methods in legal acts which are in force, assures that control procedures in each body of the Inspection are uniformed.

At present all Inspection laboratories are accredited by PCA (Polish Centre for Accreditation) according to PN-EN ISO/IEC 17025.

The accreditation scope covers c.a. 140 selected 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.

Inspection laboratories carry out food and agricultural products quality analyses using up to 340 implemented methods of analyses totally.

## **QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

To uphold high quality level on every stage of performing tasks, according to the PN-EN ISO 9001:2001 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.

In May 2008, the British Standards Institution, Management Systems (CEMA) - certification body - confirmed that quality management system implemented in the Inspection fulfils requirements set by the ISO 9001:2001 standard by issuing the Quality Management System Certificate valid till July 2011.

## **INTERNATIONAL COOPERTATION**

Active participation in international organisations activities is a source of global canons of assuring food safety and 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 transnational interests connected with international food turnover.

The Inspection co-ordinates Polish co-operation with international organizations setting food safety and quality standards. The Inspection realises 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 according to the Codex Alimentarius Commission "Procedural Manual" on the national level. The Main Inspectorate co-ordinates Polish participation in the Codex Alimentarius Commission FAO/WHO works and its advisory bodies (over 20 CAC FAO/WHO committees) co-operation with the European Union Council Working Group on Codex Alimentarius.

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

The Inspection carries out 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 products, seed potatoes, meat, eggs and eggs products, cut flowers).

### **Co-operation with Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**

The Main Inspectorate of Agricultural and Food Quality 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 (participants and trainers),
- › 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 FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission activity. 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 of organizational changes and consecutive subordinations to the 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,
- › co-operates and participates in the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies works,
- › circulates all Codex working documents to interested stakeholders and cooperating institutions in Poland,
- › co-ordinates process of developing of 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,
- › maintains Codex library and distributes Codex documents for interested parties,
- › co-ordinates Polish co-operation with the European Union Council Working Group on Codex Alimentarius ,
- › promotes of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission activities,
- › involves new co-operating national experts for wider opinion making process on Codex working documents,
- › encourages to active participation of Poland at the Codex forum,
- › co-ordinates all relevant Codex activities within 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 .

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 mentioned above procedure for each of the Codex Committees there is appointed one governmental body (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 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.

The Polish Codex Contact Point co-operates with c.a. 80 national partners, i.e.: governmental and non-governmental bodies (official food control services, consumers and industry food associations, scientific institutes, universities, stakeholders and other parties) interested in Codex works.

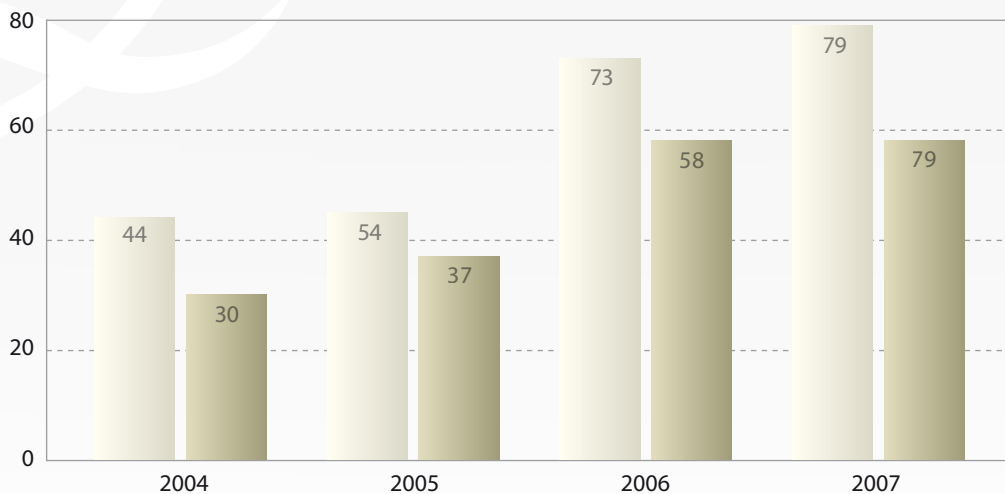


Chart 1. National institutions co-operating with the Codex Contact Point for Poland 2004-2007.

Prior to each Codex meeting, which Polish delegates are going to participate in, detailed instruction for delegates is prepared with cooperation with all partners and 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 network with co-operating bodies. It is based on e-mail and website [www.ijhars.gov.pl](http://www.ijhars.gov.pl) where every interested may find detailed information on Codex Alimentarius, news, information on sessions and discussion papers but 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 European Union Council Secretariat. 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 Community Member States where the EU positions are discussed.

The Codex Contact Point for Poland is well organized, mobile body which through the 45 years of its existence has created effective network of communication with all interested bodies.

The involvement of co-operating bodies in Codex works is still being improved. It has been realized among other things by up-dating the Internal Procedure of Proceeding within the Codex Works at the National Level, making the surveys (1 - on defining issues of special concerns for Poland covered by Codex, 2 - on usefulness of National Codex Contact Point website and 3 - on difficulties encountered in the use or application of Codex Standards and related texts at the national level and in the opinion making process), 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 etc.

## **POLAND AS THE HOST COUNTRY OF THE FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE**

The FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission during its 30th Session, which took place on 2-7 July 2007 in Rome, made a decision that the next 26th Session of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO) will be organized in Poland.

Poland as the formal host country of the CCEURO in co-operation with Switzerland – the present FAO/WHO Co-ordinator for Europe organized the 1st FAO/WHO – EURO Regional Workshop on Codex Alimentarius which was

1. Created by joining former Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection (CIS) and Inspection for Purchasing and Processing of Agricultural Products (ISIPAR)
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

held in Warsaw (Poland) from 1st till 3rd October 2007. The Workshop was jointly organized by the Governments of Switzerland (Swiss Federal Office of Public Health) and Poland (the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development). Significant financial support was provided through the FAO/WHO Trust Fund for Enhanced participation in Codex – funds earmarked by the Government of Switzerland for the European region. The Workshop was attended by 42 delegates from over 20 countries and representatives from the European Commission, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO).

The Workshop was under the honorable auspices of Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Poland.

The general purpose of the Workshop was to involve less active countries of the European region in Codex works.

Main objectives of the Workshop were as follows:

- to raise awareness of the significance of country participation in the international standard-setting activities of the Codex Alimentarius Commission,
- to increase the understanding of the structures and procedures of the Codex Alimentarius Commission,
- to describe the issues to consider when establishing a national Codex framework to facilitate active involvement in Codex,
- to discuss the use of Codex standards in national food quality and safety programmes in the European context,
- to encourage efforts to continue to strengthen national Codex programmes through further information dissemination activities,
- to receive feed-back on challenges in the region and future capacity building needs on Codex-related activities.

During the Workshop scope of the Codex tasks, the procedure of Codex works and the importance of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission for global food legislation were presented. The Workshop trainers were experts from FAO, Sweden, Switzerland, the European Commission and Poland.

During the Workshops the poster session was organized, while delegates presented the Status of National Codex Program and organization of FAO/WHO Codex Contact Points on the national level. Moreover during the practical part of the Workshop simulation of the Codex Session was carried out and participants had opportunity to acquaint with the general principles and procedures of Codex works.

The participants of the Regional Workshop on Codex Alimentarius in Warsaw concluded that the Workshop was very useful and there is 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.

The Codex Contact Point for Poland was responsible for organization of the 26th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO) in Warsaw, Poland.

4. Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kosovo (UNMIK), Latvia, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Slovenia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

## PARTICIPATION OF POLISH EXPERTS IN CODEX SESSIONS

### Summary 2000-2008

Totally, in term 2000-2008 Poland was represented in 85 Codex sessions by 186 national delegates.

#### 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

#### 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

5. Data relate to January - July 2008

- › 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
- › 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

6. Supported by the FAO/WHO Trust Fund for enhanced participation in Codex.

7. Supported by the FAO/WHO Trust Fund for enhanced participation in Codex.

8. Supported by the FAO/WHO Trust Fund for enhanced participation in Codex.

## WHERE CODEX CONTACT POINT FOR POLAND IS LOCATED?



**THE FAO/WHO CODEX CONTACT POINT FOR POLAND  
THE MAIN INSPECTORATE  
OF AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD QUALITY INSPECTION**

**INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION DEPARTMENT**

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