

codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

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CX 5/100

**CL 2000/04-FJ
February 2000**

TO: Codex Contact Points
Interested International Organizations

FROM: Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission
FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Italy

SUBJECT: **REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED DRAFT CODEX
GUIDELINES FOR THE LABELLING OF MIXED FRUIT JUICES AND
NECTARS**

DEADLINE: **31 May 2000**

COMMENTS:

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BACKGROUND

1. The *Codex Guidelines for Mixed Fruit Juices (CODEX GL 11-1991)* and the *Codex Guidelines for Mixed Fruit Nectars (CODEX GL 12-1991)*¹ were elaborated by the *Joint UNECE/Codex Group of Experts on the Standardization of Fruit Juices*. The 11th Session of the Group of Experts (Rome, Italy, 14-18 October 1974) agreed to start work on the standardization of mixtures of fruit juices and nectars since Codex standards for fruit juices and nectars elaborated so far did not apply to these products². At its 14th Session (Geneva, Switzerland, 9-13 June 1980), the Group of Experts agreed to elaborate *Guidelines for Mixed Fruit Juices and Nectars* in order to assist governments in drawing up national regulations on this matter³. In discussing the *Draft Guidelines on Mixed Fruits Juices and Nectars*, the 16th Session of the Group of Experts (Geneva, Switzerland, 30 April – 4 May 1984) decided to separate the *Guidelines on Mixed Fruit Juices* from the one on *Mixed Fruit Nectars*⁴. The two guidelines were adopted by the 19th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, Italy, 1-10 July 1991) at Step 8 of the Procedure⁵.

¹ Codex Alimentarius Volume 6 –Fruit Juices and Related Products-

² ALINORM 76/14, para. 143

³ ALINORM 81/14, para. 119

⁴ ALINORM 85/14, para. 155

⁵ ALINORM 91/40, paras. 283 and 285

2. The 45th Session of the Executive Committee (Rome, Italy, 2-5 June 1998) noted the abolition of a number of Joint Codex/UNECE Groups and Experts and agreed to abolish the *Joint UNECE/Codex Group of Experts on the Standardization of Fruit Juices* subject to confirmation by the 23rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, Italy, 28 June-3 July 1999)⁶. However, the need for revising and updating the standards for fruit and vegetables juices was recognized. In view of this, the 46th Session of the Executive Committee (Rome, Italy, 24-25 June 1999) endorsed the proposal to establish an ***ad hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Fruit Juices*** to undertake this work⁷.

3. The 23rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission confirmed the abolition of the *Joint UNECE/Codex Group of Experts on the Standardization of Fruit Juices*. In accordance with its authority contained in Rule IX.1(b)(i), the Commission agreed to establish an ***ad hoc Intergovernmental Codex Task Force on Fruit Juices*** under specific Terms of Reference.⁸ It agreed to designate the Government of Brazil to be responsible for appointing the Chairperson of the Task Force in compliance with Rule IX.10 of its Rules of Procedure. It was noted that the establishment of such Task Forces would lead to a more flexible structure to handle specific issues for a time-limited period under closely defined terms of reference, but functioning in the same manner as established Codex Committees.

4. Following the decision of the 23rd Session of the Commission and in the framework of the current Codex approach to elaborate more horizontal and general standards as opposed to very specific and detailed ones, the Codex Secretariat has undertaken the work of revising and updating the *Codex Guidelines for Mixed Fruit Juices* and the *Codex Guidelines for Mixed Fruit Nectars*. In the course of the revision, it was found that many provisions were common to both Guidelines and that only slight differences appeared in the labelling section. It was also noted that those provisions shared by the two Guidelines were also common to those contained in the ***Proposed Draft Codex General Standard for Fruit Juices and Nectars*** currently being circulated for comments at Step 3⁹ and therefore, they could be better discussed in the framework of the aforesaid document.

5. In view of the above, the Codex Secretariat drafted a ***Proposed Draft Codex Guidelines for the Labelling of Mixed Fruit Juices and Nectars*** utilizing the existing text of the *Guidelines for Mixed Fruit Juices* and *Mixed Fruit Nectars* respectively. Governments and interested international organizations are invited to comment at Step 3 on the attached ***Proposed Draft Codex Guidelines for the Labelling of Mixed Fruit Juices and Nectars*** as directed above.

⁶ ALINORM 99/3, paras. 11 and 13.

⁷ ALINORM 99/4, para. 31

⁸ ALINORM 99/37, para. 221.

⁹ CL 2000/01-FJ

PROPOSED DRAFT CODEX GUIDELINES FOR THE LABELLING OF MIXED FRUIT JUICES AND NECTARS

1. SCOPE

These guidelines apply to the labelling of mixed fruit juices and nectars as defined in Section 2 below.

2. DESCRIPTION

2.1 MIXED FRUIT JUICES

A mixed fruit juice is the unfermented but fermentable juice, pulpy, turbid or clear, intended for direct consumption, as obtained by a mechanical process, from two or more species of sound ripe fruits or the flesh thereof. The juices may have been concentrated and later reconstituted with water suitable for the purpose of maintaining their essential composition and quality factors.

2.2 MIXED FRUIT NECTARS

A mixed fruit nectar is the unfermented but fermentable pulpy or non-pulpy product, intended for direct consumption, obtained by blending the fruit juice and/or total edible part ground and/or sieved of two or more species of sound ripe fruits, concentrated or unconcentrated, with water and sugars or honey. In case of fruit with a high sugar content the addition of sugar may be omitted.

3 LABELLING

In addition to the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 2-1999) the following specific provisions apply:

3.1 THE NAME OF THE FOOD

3.1.1 The name of the food to be declared on the label should be "fruit juice/nectar" or "mixed fruit juice/nectar", or "blended fruit juice/nectar" where either the word "fruit" is replaced by the names of the types of fruits used in descending order of their quantitative predominance in the product, or this name is followed by the types of fruits in the same order.

3.1.2 In the case of mixed fruit juice, if the quantity of added sugar or sugars, calculated as dry sugar, exceeds 15 g/kg of the product, the words "x added" should plainly and conspicuously accompany the name of the product where "x" represents the name or names of the sugar or sugars added, or the word "sugar(s)". Instead of the term "x added" the term "sweetened" may be used.

3.1.3 In the case of mixed fruit juice made wholly or partially from concentrated juice, the fact of reconstitution should be declared as follows: "mixed x juice made from concentrate or from concentrated juices" where "x" represents the names of all fruits which have been concentrated. This information should be given in close proximity to the name of the food or in another prominent position on the label.

3.1.2 In the case of mixed fruit nectar, the words "minimum fruit content x%" should appear in close proximity to the name of the product where "x" is the actual minimum percentage of fruit ingredient calculated to single strength in the final product.

3.2 LIST OF INGREDIENTS

3.2.1 A complete list of ingredients shall be declared on the label in descending order of proportion and in accordance with the relevant requirements applicable to the individual juices/nectars. For this purpose, concentrated fruit ingredients shall be calculated as single strength. Where, however, information has been included in the name of the food (Section 3.1.1) it need not be repeated in the list of ingredients. In this case:

- a) for fruit juices, it is sufficient to refer to fruit juices with an indication, as necessary, of whether these have been prepared from concentrates,
- b) for mixed fruit nectar, containing concentrated fruit ingredients, the fact of reconstitution should be declared in the list of ingredients as follows: "x made from concentrate" or "x made from concentrated x" where "x" is the name of the single strength fruit ingredient.

3.2.2 For mixed fruit juices, if lemon or lime juice have been added for the purpose of acidification, they should be so declared. Water and volatiles added for reconstitution of the juice need not be declared.

3.3 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The following additional specific provisions shall apply:

3.3.1 No fruit or fruit juice/nectar should be represented pictorially on the label except the species of fruit present in the product.

3.3.2 No claim shall be made in respect of "Vitamin C" nor shall the term "Vitamin C" appear on the label unless the food contains such quantity of "Vitamin C" as would be accepted by national authorities in the country in which the food is sold, as warranting such claim or the use of such term. If this is the case, nutrient declaration shall be in accordance with the *Codex Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling* (CAC/GL 2-1985 (Rev. 1-1993)) and the *Codex Guidelines for the Use of Nutrition Claims* (CAC/GL 23-1997).

3.3.3 Where the food contains more than 2 g/kg of carbon dioxide the term "carbonated" shall appear in close proximity to the name of the food and carbon dioxide shall also be declared in the list of ingredients.

3.3.4 Where the fruit juice/nectar requires to be kept under conditions of refrigeration, there shall be information for keeping and, if necessary thawing of the food.

3.3.5 Where the fruit juice/nectar has been prepared from raw materials treated with ionizing radiation, it shall be labelled in accordance with Section 5.2.2 of the General Standard.

3.3.6 When the nectar contains honey the declaration "contains honey" should appear in close proximity to the name of the food.

3.3.7 Where no sugar has been added to the fruit nectars, no claim shall be made in this respect.

3.4 NON-RETAIL CONTAINERS

Information for non-retail containers shall either be given on the container or in accompanying documents, except that the name of the product, lot identification and name and address of the manufacturer or packer shall appear on the container. However, lot identification and the name and address of the manufacturer or packer may be replaced by an identification mark, provided that such mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.