Overview
Codex Alimentarius
Guidance for Export Certification

Presented by Mary Stanley
APEC Certification Roundtable
February 25, 2010
Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Certification and Inspection Systems (CCFICS)

- Established in 1992
- Host Government: Australia
- Consumer confidence in the safety and quality of their food supply depends on the effectiveness of inspection and certification systems as food control measures
CCFICS  Terms of Reference

(b) To develop principles and guidelines...to provide assurance where necessary that foodstuffs comply with requirements, especially statutory health requirements;

(d) To develop guidelines and criteria with respect to format, declarations and language of such official certificates as countries may require a view towards international harmonization;

(e) To make recommendations for information exchange in relation to food import/export control
Codex Guidance—Official Certificates


- **Model Certificates—Commodity Committees**
  - Fish and Fishery Products (CAC/GL 48-2004)
  - Milk and Milk Products (CAC/GL 67-2008)

- **Generic Model Official Certificate—CCFICS**
  - Adopted by the 32nd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) as an Annex to CAC/GL 38-2001
  - CAC requested CCFFP and CCMMP to consider revising commodity model certificates to ensure consistency with Generic Model Official Certificate
CAC/GL 38-2001

- Recognizes the competent authority can require official certificates as a condition for clearance

- Guidelines are not intended to encourage or mandate the use of official certificates

- Provides guidance on the design, production, issuance, and use of official certificates
CAC/GL 38-2001—Principles (Section 4)

- Certificates should only be required when essential information and attestations are necessary to ensure food safety and/or fair trade practices (Section 5, Principle A)

- Recognizes that countries may provide assurances through means other than consignment-by-consignment certificates (Section 6, Principle B)
Information and attestations should be essential, determined by the requirements of the importing country’s food inspection system, and applied in a non-discriminatory manner (Section 7, Principles C and D)

- Commercial or marketing specifications (e.g. conformance to importer specifications) should not be required
- Importing countries should communicate the requirements for official attestations and information to be contained on the certificates and their rationale
Information should be presented in a form that simplifies and expedites the clearance process while meeting the importing country’s requirements (Section 8, Principle E)

- To the extent practicable, use a standard format (e.g. generic model official certificate)
- Clearly describe the commodity and consignment to which the certificate relates
- Contain clear reference to those official requirements for which the certificate is issued
Information on the certificate should include as a minimum (Section 8, Principle E):

- Nature of the food
- Name of the product
- Quantity
- Description of the commodity and consignment
- Identity, as appropriate, of the producer/manufacturer
- Exporter or consignor
- Importer or consignee
- Country of dispatch
- Country of destination

Additional information as agreed to by the importing and exporting country
CAC/GL 38-2001—Principles

The competent authority of the exporting country is responsible for any certificate it issues or authorizes to be issued (Section 9, Principles F and G)

- Ensure certificates are issued in a timely manner so as to avoid unnecessary disruption to trade
- Ensure adequate oversight of third party certifying bodies, when authorized and utilized
- Avoid the need for redundant or duplicative certificates
- Ensure adequate means to protect proprietary or commercially sensitive information
CAC/GL 38-2001—Additional Information

- Use of Paper Certificates
- Use of Electronic Certificates
- Presentation of Original Certificates
- Replacement of Certificates
- Revocation of Certificates
- Invalid Certificates
- Fraudulent Certificates (Principle H)
Generic Model Official Certificate

- Annex to CAC/GL 38-2001
- Elaborates on information provided in Section 8 (Design of Official Certificates) and Section 9 (Issuance of Official Certificates)
- Provides a standard format (spatial layout) for official certificates
- Intended to be read in conjunction with the explanatory notes—Include information if required, where appropriate, or if known at the time the certificate is issued
Generic Model Official Certificate

- Reduces complexity of multiple formats
- Facilitates transition from paper to electronic
- Considers common trade practices
- Enables coverage of a broad range of food products and accommodates multiple products on a single certificate
Conclusion

- Design an official certificate consistent with provisions in CAC/GL 38-2001

- Official certificates should contain a minimum number of compulsory data elements

- Recognize alternative means to collect duplicative information (e.g. commercial or “single window” through Customs)
QUESTIONS?