

GUIDELINES ON SUBSTANCES USED AS PROCESSING AIDS

CAC/GL 75-2010

1. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The Guidelines aim to provide information for the safe use of substances used as processing aids and the safety of their residues in the preparation of foods and food ingredients.

2. DEFINITION

Processing aid means any substance or material, not including apparatus or utensils, and not consumed as a food ingredient by itself, intentionally used in the processing of raw materials, foods or its ingredients, to fulfil a certain technological purpose during treatment or processing and which may result in the non-intentional but unavoidable presence of residues or derivatives in the final product.¹

3. PRINCIPLES FOR THE SAFE USE OF SUBSTANCES USED AS PROCESSING AIDS

3.1 The use of a substance as a processing aid is justified when such use performs one or more technological functions during treatment or processing of raw materials, foods, or ingredients. Any residues of processing aids remaining in the food after processing should not perform a technological function in the final product.

3.2 Substances used as processing aids shall be used under conditions of good manufacturing practices (GMP) which includes the following:

- The quantity of the substance used shall be limited to the lowest achievable level necessary to accomplish its desired technological function;
- Residues or derivatives of the substance remaining in food should be reduced to the extent reasonably achievable and should not pose any health risk; and
- The substance is prepared and handled in the same way as a food ingredient.

3.3 The safety of a substance used as a processing aid should be demonstrated by the supplier or the user of the substance. The demonstration of safety should include appropriate assessment of any unintended or unavoidable residues resulting from its use as a processing aid under conditions of GMP.

3.4 Substances used as processing aids should be of food grade quality. This can be demonstrated by conforming to the applicable specifications of identity and purity recommended by the Codex Alimentarius Commission or, in the absence of such a specification, with an appropriate specification developed by responsible national or international bodies or suppliers.

3.5 Substances used as processing aids should comply with any applicable microbiological criteria established in accordance with the *Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods* (CAC/GL 21-1997) and should be prepared and handled in accordance with the *Recommended International Code of Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CAC/RCP 1-1969) and other relevant Codex texts”.

5.0 LABELLING

5.1 Labelling of substances used as processing aids should be in accordance with the requirement of the *Codex General Standard for Labelling of Food Additives When Sold as Such* (CODEX STAN 107-1981) and the *Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Food* (CODEX STAN 1-1985).

¹ Codex Alimentarius Commission, Procedural Manual, “Section I : Definitions for the purpose of the Codex Alimentarius”