

# UNECE Meat Symposium

## Public meets private

Geneva, Switzerland 28 September 2015

# Need and opportunity for public/private partnerships

**Tom Heilandt, Secretary  
Codex Alimentarius Commission**



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# Safe, good food for everyone



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# CODEx was established

- Protect the health of consumers
- Ensure fair practices in the food trade
- Coordinate all food standards work done by IGOs and NGOs
- Establish and update the Codex Alimentarius



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**186 members**

**234 observers**



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## **A RESULT**

Harmonized  
Standards,  
guidelines and  
codes of practice

## **A FORUM**

Structure and process  
for governments and  
organizations to find a  
consensus



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# Codex is

- Voluntary - each country decides how to apply it
- 100% member driven
- Inclusive and transparent
- Based on science
- A reference in the WTO SPS agreement
- An invisible link between producers and consumers and all actors in the food chain



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# SPS agreement

- *“for food safety, the standards, guidelines and recommendations established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission relating to food additives, veterinary drug and pesticide residues, contaminants, methods of analysis and sampling, and codes and guidelines of hygienic practice (Annex A, 3<sup>a</sup>)”*



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**IN 50 YEARS Codex has developed:**

**100s of commodity standards**

**1000s of maximum residue limits (pesticides,  
veterinary drugs)**

**1000s of food additive provisions**

**dozens of codes to prevent or reduce  
contamination**

**risk analysis guidance e.g. GM foods**

**HACCP**

...



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# Codex Alimentarius Commission

## Executive Committee

## Secretariat

### Horizontal/ general Committees

General Principles (France)	Food Labelling (Canada)
Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (Australia)	<b>Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (United States)</b>
<b>Food Additives (China)</b>	<b>Pesticide Residues (China)</b>
<b>Contaminants in Foods (Netherlands)</b>	<b>Food Hygiene (United States)</b>
<b>Methods of Analysis and Sampling (Hungary)</b>	Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (Germany)

### Vertical/commodity Committees

#### active

Fish and Fishery Products (Norway)	Processed Fruits and Vegetables (United States)
Fats and Oils (Malaysia)	Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (Mexico)
Sugars (Colombia)	Spices and culinary herbs (India)
Cereals, Pulses and Legumes (United States)	Milk and Milk Products (New Zealand)

#### adjourned sine die

Natural Mineral Waters (Switzerland)	Meat hygiene (New Zealand)
Cocoa Products and Chocolate (Switzerland)	Vegetable Proteins (Canada)

### Ad-hoc intergovernmental task forces

#### active

#### dissolved

Fruit Juices (Brazil)	Foods derived from Biotechnology (Japan)
Processing and Handling of Quick Frozen Foods (Thailand)	Antimicrobial Resistance (Republic of Korea)
Animal Feeding (Switzerland)	

### FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees

Africa (Kenya)	Asia (India)	Europe (Netherlands)	Latin America and the Caribbean (Chile)	North America and South West Pacific (Vanuatu)	Near East (Iran)
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# Codex texts on meat (commodities)

- Various processed meats (corned beef, luncheon meat, cooked cured meat, cooked cured pork shoulder)
- Used to have a standard on meat cuts but this has been revoked.



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# Codex texts related to meat production (safety)

- Control of Taenia Saginata in Meat of Domestic Cattle
- Control of Trichinella Spp. in Meat of Suidae
- Code of hygienic practice for meat
- Code of practice on Good Animal Feeding
- Risk assessment for Feed
- Guidance for governments on prioritizing hazards in feed
- Veterinary drugs residues
- Code of Practice to Minimize and contain Antimicrobial Resistance
- Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance



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# Ongoing work

- Guidelines for the Control of Nontyphoidal *Salmonella* spp. in Beef and Pork Meat
- Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Foodborne Parasites



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# Many rules – harmonized or not

- The private sector has to apply all that
- Guidance is needed for application
- Food safety incidents can destroy a business
- Need to work together



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# Private sector participation in Codex

***“We have a wealth of experience, but we don't have all the answers. We must look around us for fresh ideas. If we only look inwards, we will be a stagnant organization.”***

(FAO Director General José Graziano da Silva)



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# Private sector participation inCodex

- 164 NGO have observer status with Codex (industry associations, consumer organisations, foundations etc.
- Private sector representatives participate in delegations of members
- Companies provide scientific data on pesticides and veterinary drugs

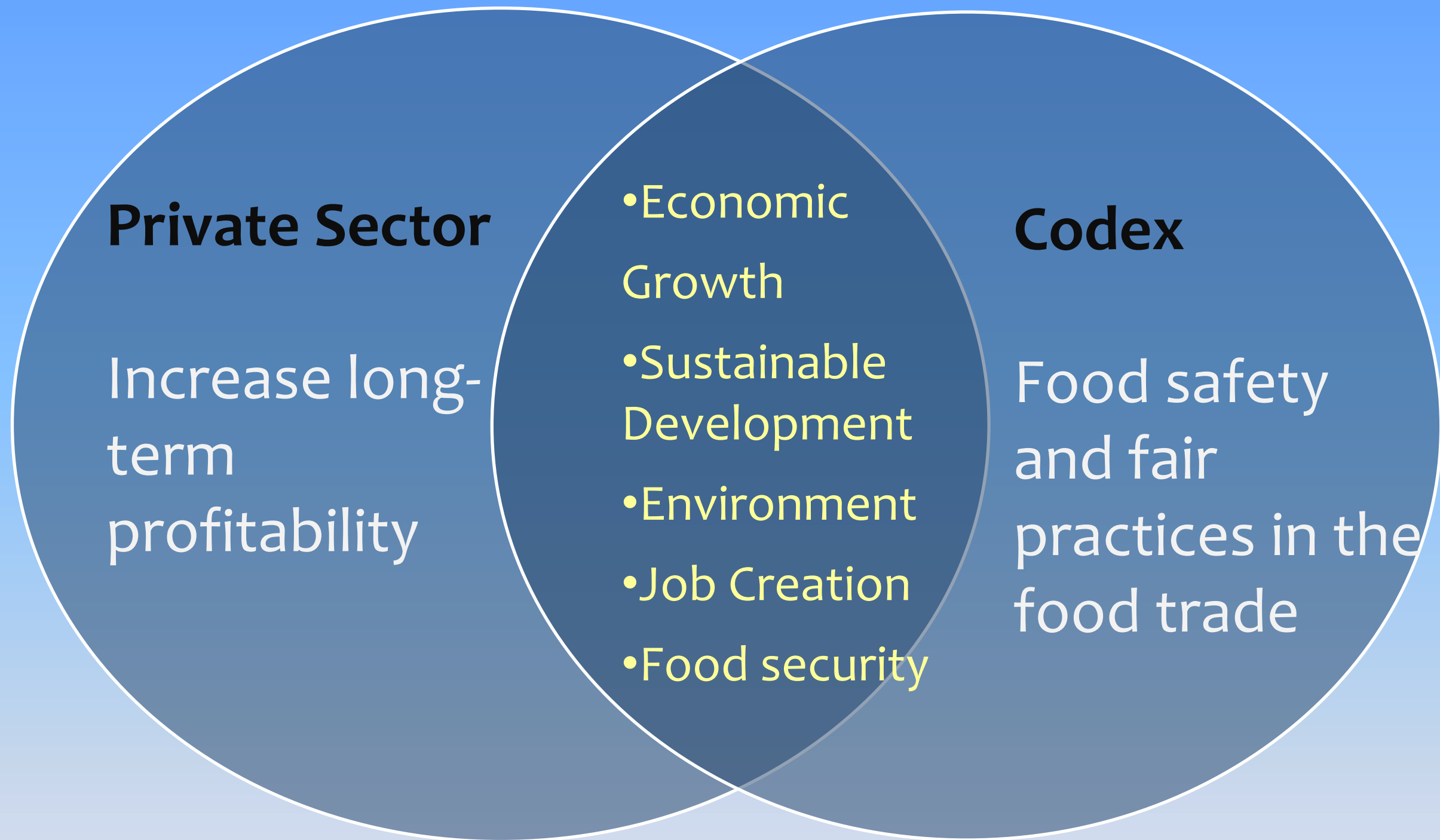


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# Issues in Codex in recent years

- Speed of standard development
- Remaining inclusive and transparent
- Finding consensus in a heterogeneous membership
- Participation of developing countries
- **Private standards**



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# Concerns with private standards

- Multiplicity of standards
- Stricter than Codex
- Lack of scientific justification/transparency
- Cost of compliance/certification
- Effects on small businesses
- Prescriptive rather than outcome oriented



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# First study (2009)

- private standards give guidance for application/audit of Codex texts
- **Codex should engage with the private standard bodies**
- Codex should increase speed of standard setting
- Codex depends on the adoption of its standards, guidelines and codes by both governments and private standard setters



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# CAC32



- Monitor developments together with WTO, IPPC and OIE
- Second study with focus on role, cost and benefits of private standards
- Analyse speed of standard development



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# Second study (2010)

- Individual firm standards more stringent without scientific basis/ Collective private standards largely consistent with Codex
- Private standards
  - more prescriptive on food hygiene,
  - have limited developing country input,
  - penalise small scale enterprises (complexity and costs) and
  - lead to of multiple certification requirements



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# CAC33

- Further analysis on the financial burden by SMEs in the regions
- Private standards setting bodies should limit number of audits and to work more cooperatively among themselves
- **Engagement with private standard setting bodies ... could contribute to resolving some of the concerns of developing countries ... constructive dialogue depends on all parties having access to relevant information**



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# Since then ...

- WTO SPS Committee is still discussing a definition of “private standard”
- Speed of Codex standard setting: 4.2 years (average)
- GFSI has become a Codex observer
- The requirements in the GFSI Guidance Document are based on the food safety principles laid down by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) and relevant ISO standards
- Codex secretariat , FAO and WHO participate

regularly in GFSI Conferences



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# Conclusions

- Food safety today is seen as a shared responsibility – not as a marketing tool
- There is no private against public as we all stand to win or lose - together
- Codex will continue to facilitate the dialogue between public and private actors



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Thank you!