Ministry of Economic Affairs

Codex Working group on Development of Guidance for Paperless Certification

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Topics

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INTRODUCTION

- 2014 Head of delegation for the Netherlands in the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS)

- 2015 discussion paper on the use of electronic certificates by competent authorities and migration to paperless certification (codex website CCFICS22: CX/FICS 16/22/8)

- 2016 the Netherlands Chair of the CCFICS electronic Working Group on Development of Guidance for Paperless Certification

- Australia is Co-chair (codex website CCFICS22: REP16/FICS)

CCFICS

- C O D E X A L I M E N T A R I U S is about safe, good food for everyone - everywhere.

- C O D E X has 10 General Subject Committees

- Terms of Reference (7)
  - harmonising methods and procedures which protect the health of consumers, ensure fair trading practices and facilitate international trade in foodstuffs
  - to develop guidelines and criteria with respect to format, declarations and language of such official certificates as countries may require with a view towards international harmonization
  - to make recommendations for information exchange in relation to food import/export control

CODEX GUIDANCE

Codex guideline CAC/GL 38-2001: Guideline for design, production, issuance and use of generic official certificates

- Sections 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9

  - Certificates

    - Are defined as paper or electronic documents

    - Are applicable regardless the mode of transmission e.g. paper or electronic

    - Should meet the requirements of the importing country

CODEX GUIDANCE

- CAC/GL 38-2001:

  - Issuance of official certificates

    - the competent authority of the exporting country is ultimately responsible for any certificate it issues or authorizes to be issued.

  - Use of electronic certificates

HORIZON

- Identification of additional Codex guidance for paperless certification
    - Common understanding and adequate definition of paperless certification at the international level
    - Broadening participation, promoting consistancy and simplifying the process

- Committee agreed in Melbourne on the following
    - Revision of the discussion paper
    - Gap analyse with current Codex texts
    - Technology review and resource requirements of procedural concepts for paperless electronic certification

POINT OF DEPARTURE

- An increasing number of countries are developing or have introduced electronic certification solutions

- A number of countries already practice paperless certification, using electronic certificates

- Realised after considerable investments of time and money to achieve consistency

- Paper certificates do not automatically disappear

QUESTIONS

- Why do electronic data not naturally replace paper certificates?

- Is there another doorstep that we have to cross?

- Who ultimately facilitates paperless?
  - Producer: issuing party
  - Recipient: accepting party

Who's talking?

- Codex Members   31
  - Africa   2
  - Asia   7
  - Europe   10
  - Latin America and the Caribean   7
  - North America and South West Pacific   5
- Codex observers   2 (LAC and Euro)
- IPPC
- OIE
- UN-CEFACT
- WTO

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First step in the discussion

- Questionnaire on key areas identified by the Committee

  - The need to develop a definition of electronic certificates
  - The use of defined data elements
  - Aid to determine a suitable concept of electronic certification solution
  - The need to protect authenticity and integrity of exchanged certificates
  - different circumstances of Codex Members

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Deliverables

- Revised discussion paper

- Project document to propose additional Codex guidance

- To be discussed on the 23rd session of CCFICS in 2017