

Approved April 2, 2019

Coalition for an Enhanced Codex

Objective 1: Increase the Availability of Experts to Scientific Advice Technical Committees

KEY MESSAGES

THE CHALLENGES

- While the demand for panel reviews has increased over the years, the number of experts on each panel has not increased substantially.
- The current rosters of JMPR Experts include just 45 toxicologists and 28 residues experts (status November 2018).
- The output of these experts is limited by the fact that they are working professionals who conduct reviews for JMPR on a volunteer basis, in addition to their normal professional workload (based on a survey in 2018, about half of the experts are allowed no time on the job to devote to JMPR work).
- JMPR Panels are similarly constrained in the number of evaluations and proposed MRLs that can be reviewed during an annual two-week joint meeting.
- The Canadian and US government have made funding available to train additional experts to serve in JMPR to respond to increased demands for Codex MRLs and to ensure a sufficient number of experts on the roster.
- It is important to expand the provision of experts and expert time by national governments.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER

The Codex Coalition suggests:

- Encouraging national governments to admit additional scientists to the roster, as well as allowing staff to work on Codex during working hours.
- Encourage training of new experts.
- Member states consider if they can provide experts with a reduced workload on a rotating basis to ensure adequate time for the volunteer to conduct the reviews and ensure a broad diversity of scientists are available for the work of Codex and its scientific review panels.
- Have reviewers rotate amongst the member states so that there is always a critical mass of experts available.

- Allow government employee experts to use part of their working hours on Codex while maintaining their full salary entitlement.
- National governments to provide travel expenses to the scientists serving on Codex committees and an honorarium if not employed by the government. Such commitments are very small compared to the value of your trade in agricultural commodities and food.