

Nutrition and Food Safety Newsletter

December 2023

Dear Subscribers

Welcome to our Nutrition and Food Safety newsletter. In this issue, we present new publications, key meetings, and notable events in the field of nutrition and food safety from October to December 2023. For further details, please click on the related hyperlinks.

The Nutrition and Food Safety Department wishes you a healthy and happy holiday season and new year!

New Publications

Wasting guidelines published

The new 2023 WHO [Guideline on the Prevention and Treatment of Wasting in Infants and Children](#) was published on 20 November.

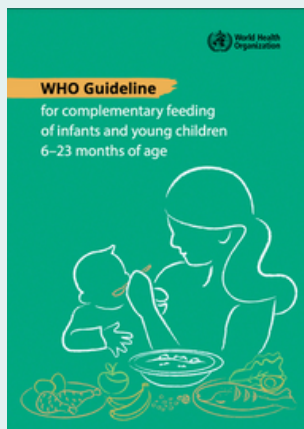
This resource offers evidence-based recommendations and best practices for preventing and managing wasting and nutritional oedema in infants and children. It aims to inform the development or revision of national or organizational guidelines, protocols, tools, and manuals.



Complementary feeding

The [WHO Guideline for Complementary Feeding of Infants and Young Children 6–23 Months of Age](#), published on 16 October, provides evidence-based

recommendations intended for policy-makers, technical and programme staff at government institutions and organizations involved in the design, implementation, and scaling of programmes for infant and young child feeding.



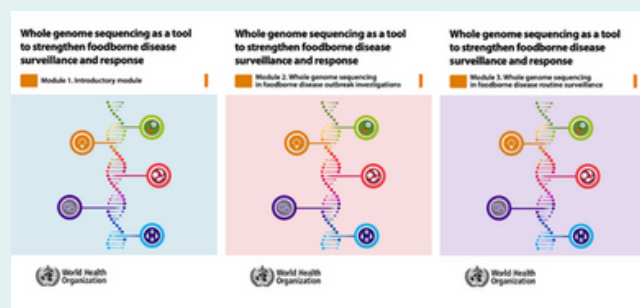
Regulatory approaches to address digital marketing of breast-milk substitutes

On 16 October, the [Guidance on Regulatory Approaches to Address Digital Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes](#) was published. This document outlines guidance to Member States for developing and applying regulatory measures aimed at restricting digital marketing of products that fall within the scope of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (The Code).



Reducing foodborne diseases

The WHO has recently unveiled comprehensive guidance on a laboratory technique that has the potential to change how we detect and monitor microbial hazards in the food chain and manage food safety risks. The report, titled "[Whole Genome Sequencing as a Tool to Strengthen Foodborne Disease Surveillance and Response](#)", was published on 19 October as three distinct modules.



Food additive safety assessment

The [Safety Evaluation of Certain Food Additives](#) was released on 2 October, subsequent to the Ninety-Fifth Meeting of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA). The monographs featured in this volume include detailed summaries of various food additives.



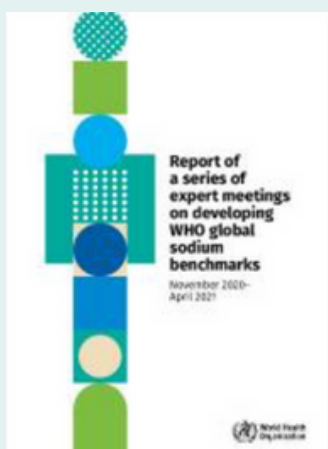
Recommendations for allergens

A meeting report on the [Risk Assessment of Food Allergens](#) was published 15 November 2023. Reference doses (RfDs) were recommended for global priority allergens such as walnut, cashew, almond, peanut, and egg.



Driving progress towards reducing sodium intake

The [Report of a series of expert meetings on developing WHO global sodium benchmarks, November 2020 – April 2021](#) was released 1 November.



Preventing microbiological hazards

The [Prevention and Control of Microbiological Hazards in Fresh Fruits and Vegetables: Part 4: Specific Commodities: Meeting Report](#) was published 10 October.



[Countdown to 2023](#): eliminating industrially produced trans-fatty acids (iTFA)

In 2019, the International Food and Beverage Alliance (IFBA), consisting of 11 global food and non-alcoholic beverage companies, pledged to limit iTFA to below 2g per 100g of fats and oils in their products. This recent [report](#), published 1 November, tracks the progress made by these companies towards fulfilling this commitment.



Key Events and Meetings

Maximum Residue Limits (MRL) set for zilpaterol hydrochloride

The Codex Alimentarius commemorated its 60th anniversary during the [46th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission](#) in Rome, Italy, held in November. This event introduced the adoption of Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for Zilpaterol Hydrochloride, a growth promoter found in various animal-derived products. The establishment of these MRLs was based on a meticulous risk assessment conducted by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA).



INFOSAN makes progress towards improving multisectoral collaboration in food safety

The [FAO/WHO INFOSAN](#) Secretariat has been highly active this year, offering customized advice and workshops to countries to strengthen their capacity to coordinate during food safety incidents. The secretariat has also created a roadmap to help WHO Member States progress from one level to the next using an indicator that aims for the proposed target by 2030. Additionally, two regional meetings were conducted in November with the Americas and Asia-Pacific regions to continue building joint narratives into WHO Member States' contributions to the food safety indicator.



WHO has accelerated the work in traditional food markets

The Guideline Development Group (GDG) met for the first time in November 2023 to update the interim guidance [reducing public health risks associated with the sale of live wild animals of mammalian species in traditional food markets](#). Funded by the government of the Netherlands and the USFDA, the new document will consider the role of food markets for [health security and emergency preparedness in cities and urban settings](#).



Trans-fatty acids (TFA) laboratory training in China

Upon request from the Chinese National Centre for Food Safety Risk Assessment (CFSA) in collaboration with the Chinese Agricultural University in Beijing, China, WHO Nutrition and Food Safety experts were invited to attend two days of laboratory training workshops. This included sharing good practices for TFA elimination and the WHO protocol for measuring the fatty acid profiles of foods.

The training session included a webcast with over 3,000 online participants and positive feedback from the Chinese government.

WHO continues to provide any needed information and support for capacity building for member states.



The first ever health day and food day at COP28

The [twenty-eighth Session of the Conference of the Parties \(COP28\)](#) in the UAE took place between November 30 and December 12, 2023. For the very first time, there was a health day and a food day. Information on thematic days can be accessed [here](#). A Ministerial [COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate and Health](#), developed by the COP28 Presidency, the UAE Ministry of Health and Prevention, WHO, and a group of countries, has been endorsed so far by about 143 Member States. To watch a side event on health, food and climate, please click [here](#).



UK government hosted the Global Food Security Summit 2023

The summit focused on bringing international attention to the deepening global food security crisis and helping to boost efforts to achieve Zero Hunger and end malnutrition.



Attended by the WHO Director-General, there was an overarching commitment to drive progress towards the UN Global Goals to make the world a more prosperous, healthier, safer, better educated, and fairer place by 2030. The [Guideline on the Prevention and Treatment of Wasting in Infants and Children](#) was also launched at the event. Click [here](#) to watch the event.

FERG News

The 6th expert meeting of WHO Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group (FERG) occurred between 5 and 7 December. FERG is preparing the updated estimates of the global, regional and national burden of foodborne diseases by 2025 as it was so mandated by the World Health Assembly resolution (WHA73.5).

Other news:

[The Micronutrient Forum's 6th Global Conference](#) (#MNF2023) took place from October 16-20, 2023 at the World Forum in The Hague, Netherlands with a thematic focus on Nutrition for Resilience (N4R).

delivery framework for prevention and management of obesity.
To sign up and watch the event, please click [here](#).

Last year, at the 75th World Health Assembly in 2022, Member States adopted new recommendations for the prevention and management of obesity and endorsed the [WHO Acceleration Plan to Stop Obesity](#). Twelve out of the 28 countries have obesity prevention and management services as part of their priority actions to stop obesity. As part of the acceleration plan, WHO has developed a technical package that consolidates the evidence for the prioritized interventions. As a response to the needs of Member States, WHO developed a health service delivery

framework for the prevention and management of obesity. Therefore, on 6-7 December, the Nutrition and Food Safety Department co-organized the Healthier Populations: Delivering Impact workshop, which focused on implementation and delivery. This workshop, which was well attended by government officials, civil society, implementation partners, academia, and WHO was an opportunity to learn from the direct experience of countries that have achieved success.



Season's Greetings

With 2023 winding down and 2024 approaching, we thank you for the interest, time and support you have given the Nutrition and Food Safety team over the past twelve months.

**From everyone here at the WHO Nutrition and Food Safety Department:
Thank you, truly and deeply!**

**Enjoy with your loved ones a
*** Happy, Healthy and Peaceful Holiday Season *****

We look forward to our collaboration in the New Year with fresh energy and inspiration!

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