

# Codex Alimentarius Commission

The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO)

Agreed standards are voluntary and implementation by member countries therefore not automatic. However, Codex standards are recognised as reference texts for trade disputes brought before a World Trade Organization (WTO) Disputes panel.

The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is the lead UK Government Department for Codex. We take the lead in many of the vertical committees dealing with food hygiene, food additives and food contaminants. For more information about Codex, refer to Defra's information on [the Codex standards](#).