

Handbook of Transnational Governance

Institutions and Innovations

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Codex Alimentarius Commission
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The Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) develops standards for hygienic handling, labelling and trade of food commodities, as well as the assessment of food-related safety risks. It is nominally a traditional international (governmental) organization with 182 member states, but plays an important role in *transnational* governance for two reasons. First, although national delegations are led by ministries/departments of agriculture or food regulatory agencies, they usually include many private actors, especially representatives from food industry multinationals and business associations. Second, standards set by the Codex play a crucial role in international trade, especially since Codex was officially sanctioned as an international standard-setter in the SPS-Agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Codex standards therefore now govern the behaviour of agricultural producers and the choices available to consumers in many countries. As a consequence, material stakes and political conflicts over representation and participation are never far below the surface in Codex standard-setting, which is supposedly guided only by scientific methods and expertise.

For copyright reasons, only the Introduction can be displayed here. The rest of the chapter covers:

- The History of the Codex
- Institutional Structure & Standard-Setting Process
- Politics after Delegation: Codex under the WTO
- Participation and Exclusion in Codex Rule-Making:
 - Consumer Representation
 - Developing Countries