



U.S. Pharmacopeia
The Standard of QualitySM

Food Chemicals Codex Frequently Asked Questions

What is the *Food Chemicals Codex*?

The *Food Chemicals Codex* plays a key role in safeguarding public health and industry integrity. The *FCC* is a compendium that establishes, with public and stakeholder guidance, internationally recognized scientific standards (for identity and purity) for food-grade substances. It allows manufacturers of food, food chemicals, and food additives to comply with standards that have been created and vetted by a highly rigorous and transparent scientific process.

Why is the *FCC* important?

FCC standards have become recognized internationally by manufacturers, vendors, and users of food chemicals. Its specifications serve widely as the basis for contractual agreements. Adherence to *FCC* standards carries regulatory weight around the world, whether as a legal requirement for manufacturing or importing in some countries or for demonstration of self-regulation in others. It is crucial for food industry chemists to have input into the revision of standards that they will later need to observe.

FCC is a proven tool in establishing and managing quality and purity – a key element in facilitating vendor and customer relationships. The use of objective, evidence-based, and regularly updated standards for purity and identity allows manufacturers to help safeguard both public health and their own reputations.

What is USP's role in *FCC*?

FCC has been published since 1966 by the Institutes of Medicine (IOM). In August 2006, publication of the *FCC* was assumed by USP. As the official standards-setting body for pharmaceuticals, pharmaceutical ingredients, and dietary supplements, USP is ideally suited to ensure an orderly, timely, and transparent scientific process for food additives standards as well. USP's well-established revision structure facilitates appropriate industry participation and input, while ensuring the integrity and objectivity of the standards-setting processes. [w1]

USP's nearly 200-year history and financial stability and independence will assure continuity of the *Codex*. USP has instituted a biennial revision cycle for *FCC*, with Supplements in the interim years. This is important because now food scientists will have full and regular access, to both the latest science and the revision process. There will also be a quarterly[w2], online public notice and comment cycle for proposed revisions.

Revisions to the Fifth Edition of *FCC* are currently underway. USP is requesting suggestions for revision by April 30, 2007. Interested parties can do so through www.usp.org/fcc/. There is no fee associated with participating – revision is fully public, transparent, and volunteer. Please feel free to post this information where appropriate, to provide the broadest possible exposure and participation.

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