



TO: Codex Contact Points
Interested International Organisations

FROM: Secretariat, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme,
Codex Alimentarius Commission,
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla,
00153 Rome, Italy

SUBJECT: Request for information on the justification of the use of preservatives and anticaking agents for surface treatment of Mozzarella with a high moisture content

DEADLINE: 29 February 2016

BACKGROUND

1. At the 38th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Geneva, Switzerland, 6-11 July 2015), the Codex Secretariat informed the Commission that in the table listing the technological functions of food additives in the *Standard for Mozzarella* ([CODEX STAN 262-2006](#)), two entries for the use of preservatives and anticaking agents for surface treatment of mozzarella with high moisture content had been left blank. However, it had not been possible to find a clear record of the CCMMP decision on how these entries should be completed (i.e. whether these two functional classes of food additives were technologically justified).

2. In order to take an informed decision on the course of action to follow, the Commission agreed to:

- Defer consideration of this matter until its next session of the Commission.
- To issue a circular letter to all Members and Observers, asking for information on the technological justification for the use of preservatives and anticaking agents for surface treatment of mozzarella with high moisture content.
- Take a decision, at CAC39, on the appropriate course of action to follow on the basis of an analysis, prepared by the Secretariat, of the replies to the circular letter.¹

3. The differences in the *Standard for Mozzarella* between Mozzarella with high and Mozzarella with low moisture on aspects other than moisture content and food additives should be noted. It should also be noted that the use of preservatives in the cheese mass of mozzarella with high moisture content is already permitted in the standard as already adopted, the information sought is only on their use for surface treatment of this variant. The list of specific preservatives given in the *Standard for Mozzarella* is shown Annex II.

4. Where anticaking agents are permitted in Codex Group or individual standards for milk products, their use is restricted to the surface (or rind) treatment of sliced, cut, shredded, or grated cheese only². The list of specific anticaking agents given in the *Standard for Mozzarella* shown in Annex II.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION:

5. Members and Observers are invited to provide information on the use, and detailed technological justification for such use, of preservatives and anticaking agents for surface treatment of mozzarella with high moisture content by using the attached Template (Annex 1).

6. Comments should be submitted by no later than **29 February 2016** to the Secretariat of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme (E-mail: Codex@fao.org).

7. Comments should be submitted through the Codex Contact Point or recognized international organizations having observer status with the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

¹ [REP15/CAC](#) paras 97-98; [CAC/CX 15/38/8 Corrigendum](#)

² Their use is not permitted in the standards for Cottage Cheese, Coulommiers, Cream Cheese, Camembert and Brie.

ANNEX 1

Template for the submission of information on the use, and a detailed technological justification for same, of the food additive categories of preservatives and anticaking agents for surface treatment of mozzarella with a high moisture content

Reply Submitted by:	
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Q1: Are the following Functional Classes permitted in your country for surface treatment of mozzarella with a high moisture content (Members only)

Preservatives	YES/NO (delete as appropriate)
Anticaking Agents	YES/ NO (delete as appropriate)

Q 2: If permitted, please list the individual food additives from these food additive categories, used as well as the amount(s) typically added in practice (from the lists shown in Annex II)

Preservatives

INS no.	Specific Name	Typical amount added (mg/kg of cheese)	Technological justification ^(a)	Manufacturing process ^(b)

^(a) Please give detailed technological justification (this information may be given on a separate sheet if necessary).

^(b) Please indicate where in the manufacturing process (process step), in which form (e.g. dry, dissolved in water) and the typical temperature of the cheese at the time of addition, these additives are added

Anticaking agents

INS no.	Specific Name	Typical amount added (mg/kg of cheese)	Technological justification ^(a)	Manufacturing process ^(b)

^(a) Please give detailed technological justification (this information may be given on a separate sheet if necessary).

^(b) Please indicate where in the manufacturing process (process step), in which form (e.g. dry, dissolved in water) and the typical temperature of the cheese at the time of addition, these additives are added

Q3: If these preservatives listed above are used for surface treatment of mozzarella with a high moisture content, is such mozzarella to your knowledge :

- (a) Sold in the country of manufacture only: Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
- (b) Sold on the international market : Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
- (c) Sold both in the country of manufacture and internationally: Yes/No (delete as appropriate)

Q4: If these Anticaking agents listed above are used for surface treatment of mozzarella with a high moisture content, is such mozzarella to your knowledge :

- (a) Sold in the country of manufacture: Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
- (b) Sold on the international market : Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
- (c) Sold both in the country of manufacture and internationally: Yes/No (delete as appropriate)

ANNEX II

List of food additives in the functional classes preservatives and anticaking agents given in Section 4 of the *Standard for Mozzarella* (CODEX STAN 262-2006) (For information purposes only)

Preservatives

INS no.	Name of additive	Maximum level
200	Sorbic acid	1,000 mg/kg, singly or in combination as sorbic acid
201	Sodium sorbate	
202	Potassium sorbate	
203	Calcium sorbate	
234	Nisin	12.5 mg/kg
235	Natamycin (Pimaricin)	Not exceeding 2 mg/dm ² and not present in a depth of 5 mm
280	Propionic acid	Limited by GMP
281	Sodium propionate	
282	Calcium propionate	
283	Potassium propionate	

Anticaking Agents

INS no.	Name of additive	Maximum level
460(i)	Microcrystalline cellulose (cellulose gel)	Limited by GMP
460(ii)	Powdered cellulose	Limited by GMP
551	Silicon dioxide, amorphous	10,000 mg/kg singly or in combination as silicon dioxide
552	Calcium silicate	
553(i)	Magnesium silicate, synthetic	