

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
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Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy - Tel: (+39) 06 57051 - E-mail: codex@fao.org - www.codexalimentarius.org

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PROPOSAL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL STANDARD FOR PASTEURIZED CAMEL MILK

(Prepared by the United Arab Emirates)

1. The purpose and scope of the standard

The purpose of this work is to develop a regional standard for Pasteurized Camel Milk that aims to assure food safety together with facilitation of trade in order to fulfil the need of Pasteurized Camel Milk industry. Camel Milk is a widely used dairy product among Near East region, therefore a standard for Pasteurized Camel Milk is highly needed for the purpose of trading a safe product. The standard objective is to gather the characteristics of the product in an international document in order to control handling and processing of camel milk locally and among GCC gulf countries or worldwide.

The scope of the standard applies to Pasteurized Camel Milk for human consumption, i.e., ready for its intended use as human food, presented in packaged form directly to the consumer. The standard includes the essential quality, test method and labelling requirements for the purposes of protecting the health of the consumers and ensuring fair practices in food trade.

This Standard specifies requirements for pasteurized camel milk, of the species (*Camelus dromedarius*) (one-humped) camel.

Product definition:

Camel Milk:

The full udder excretion of one or more camels of the species defined in the scope, after end of colostrum period during excretion season.

2. Relevance and timeliness

Due to the growing trend of Pasteurized Camel Milk production and trade, it is necessary to establish a standard covering the safety, quality and hygiene in order to have a reference document which has been internationally agreed upon by consensus between member countries.

In addition, the drafting of a Codex regional standard for Pasteurized Camel Milk will help to protect consumers' health and to promote fair trade in accordance with the different international agreements. Therefore, it is appropriate to maintain the standard as a Near East regional standard.

It is of particular importance to point out that the Codex Alimentarius does not include a Codex standard for Pasteurized Camel Milk until now.

3. Main aspects to be covered:

The standard covers essential quality parameters, safety, test method, presentation and labelling aspects of Pasteurized Camel Milk. The standard will also look into other matters in order to align them with relevant horizontal Codex texts.

4. Assessment against the Criteria for the establishment of work priorities

The following criteria were found relevant for the revision of the Codex Near East Regional Standard for Pasteurized Camel Milk:

General criterion

- Promotion and marketing of camel milk and dairy products to effectively link producers' groups to processors and consumers
- Improvement of methods for raw camel milk preservation and value addition using appropriate technologies
- Development of "good" camel production, collection and processing practices to ensure safety and quality of camel milk and dairy products
- Development of camel milk and dairy product standards to facilitate trade and promote sub-sector development.
- Consumer protection from the point of view of health, food safety, ensuring fair practices in the food trade and considering the identified needs of regional countries: Quality of the produce to meet consumer needs and the minimum requirements of food safety. The elaboration of the standard for Pasteurized Camel Milk would be to the benefit of developing countries in particular, because developing countries are the major producer, exporter and consumer of Pasteurized Camel Milk.

Criteria applicable to commodities:

a) Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries:

Camels were once used almost exclusively as a means of transport across harsh environments for both man and goods. However, there is a growing recognition of the value and benefits of camels for their milk, meat and fibers. Camel dairy products could provide not only more food for people in arid and semi-arid areas but also give nomadic herders a rich source of income.

The total number of camels globally is said to be 20 million, but as most camels are owned by nomads, this number can only be estimated. Nomads move in search of pasture according to the seasons - and can live for up to a month in the desert on nothing but camel milk. As camel milk is normally produced under low input-low output systems, five liters a day is considered a decent yield.

Available world production of camel milk is officially put at 1.3 million tons, a tiny figure as compared to cow's milk. However, a recent FAO/CIRAD/KARKARA workshop estimated global camel milk output as 5.3 million tones, although even this may be a conservative estimate. Lactating camels each produce between 1,000 and 12,000 liters of milk for anywhere between 8 and 18 months. The world's biggest camel milk producer is Somalia, with 850,000 tons a year, followed by Saudi Arabia with 89,000 tons.

- Pasteurized Camel Milk is also popular in all Arab and other countries of the Middle East and Central Asia.
- Middle East and Africa dominated the market in 2019 with more than 60% share of the global revenue in terms of consumption, Saudi Arabia is the largest market in the world.

* http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/home/en/news_archive/2006_camel.html.

b) Diversification of national legislations and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade:

This new work will be providing a sound basis for regionally harmonized conditions for trade in Pasteurized Camel Milk and reducing the risk of trade impediments.

- c) International or regional market potential:
- d) It is expected that the new standard will increase and growing trade of this product in the world and contribute positively to regional trade in Pasteurized Camel Milk.
- e) Amenability of the commodity to standardization:
- f) The characteristics of Pasteurized Camel Milk composition, quality and packaging are adequate parameters for the standardization of the product.
- g) Coverage of the main consumer protection and trade issues by existing or proposed general standards.

- h) Codex General Standard not covered proposed standard for Pasteurized Camel Milk. The new work will enhance consumer protection and facilitate Pasteurized Camel Milk trade by establishing an internationally agreed quality standard.
- i) Number of commodities which would need separate standards indicating whether raw, semi-processed or processed: The work will cover a single well-defined commodity which, due to its specific characteristics, needs to be covered by a separate standard.
- j) Work already undertaken by other international organizations in this field:
- k) Pasteurized Camel Milk already covered by Gulf Standardizations Organization standard no. GSO 1970:2009 Dairy and Dairy Products- Pasteurized Camel Milk.

5. Relevance to Codex strategic objectives

The proposed standard meets the criteria outlined in Strategic Plan 2020-2025 of the Codex Alimentarius Commission:

Goal 2 – Develop standards based on science and Codex risk-analysis principles. In particular, 2.1 Use scientific advice.

Consistently in line with Codex risk analysis principles.

Goal 3 – Increase impact through the recognition and use of Codex standards. In particular, 3.3 Recognize and promote the use and impact of Codex standards.

6. Information on the relationship between the proposal and other existing Codex documents:

The new standard will be used in conjunction with all existing Codex standards.

It will consider the Codex Standard for other Milks products especial and the Code of Hygienic Practice for Milk and Milk Products, (CAC/RCP 57-2004), General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985), CXC 1-1969, General Principles of Food Hygiene.

7. Identification of any requirement for and availability of expert scientific advice.

No provision for scientific advice is foreseen.

8. Identification of any need for technical input to the standard from external bodies so that this can be planned for the proposed timeline for completion of the new work

None identified.

9. Proposed timeline for completion of work

Step	Date
Agreement to initiate new work on a regional standard for pasteurized camel milk by CCNE.	July 2023
44 th session of CAC - Approval of new work.	November 2023
Circulation for comments at step 3.	2023-2024
Consideration by the 11 th session of the CCNE.	End 2024
Adoption at Step 5 or any step from 5/8 (depending on the progress of development)	July 2025
Consideration of the draft standard at step 7 by the 12 th session of the CCNE.	July 2025
Adoption of the regional standard for pasteurized camel milk by CAC.	July 2025