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CODEX SUB-COMMITTEE ON PROCESSED MEAT PRODUCTS AND
CONSUMER PACKAGED MEAT
Second Session

REPORT

1. The Codex Sub-Committee on Processed Meat Products and Consumer Packaged Meat held its second session on 2-6 October 1967 in Copenhagen under the chairmanship of Dr. V. Enggaard (Denmark). The session was attended by 49 delegates, advisers and observers from 24 countries and international organizations. The list of participants is attached as Appendix I.
2. The meeting was opened by Mr. E. Mortensen, Chairman of the Danish Codex Alimentarius Committee, who welcomed the participants on behalf of the Danish Government.

Adoption of the Agenda

3. The Sub-Committee unanimously adopted the provisional agenda.

Election of Rapporteurs

4. Mr. L.G. Hanson, United Kingdom, was elected rapporteur to assist the Secretariat in the preparation of the draft report.

General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius, Procedure for the Elaboration of and Format for Codex Standards

5. The Sub-Committee had before it
 - 1) the General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius
 - 2) the Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standards
 - 3) a Draft Format for Codex Standards.

The Chairman briefly reviewed these documents and drew attention to the fact that certain aspects of the General Principles, notably the meaning of the acceptance of Codex Standards, together with the proposed new format for Codex Standards, would be examined by the Codex Committee on General Principles at its next session to be held in Paris from 16 to 20 October 1967.

The Sub-Committee noted that any changes which the Codex Committee on General Principles and the Codex Alimentarius Commission might make in the General Principles and in the Draft Format for Codex commodity standards would be brought to its attention at its next session.

PROPOSED DRAFT PROVISIONAL STANDARD FOR CANNED HAMS

6. The Sub-Committee had before it two proposed draft provisional standards, one for canned semi-preserved ham and the other for canned fully preserved ham. The Sub-Committee recognized that these two draft standards did not fully cover all canned hams which could be given various heat treatments which resulted in different keeping qualities. It decided to elaborate one standard to cover all kinds of canned hams, and the draft standard is set out in Appendix II. It was agreed that Governments should be asked to furnish their views on whether a standard for hams in hermetically sealed containers other than cans should be elaborated.

The Sub-Committee took note of the new draft format proposed for Codex standards and decided to elaborate the present draft standard as far as possible in accordance with that format.

The following remarks were made with regard to the under mentioned provisions of the draft standard.

Description

7. The Australian delegation thought that the requirement that "the meat shall be the hind leg of a pig" might be too wide and that the term "pig" should exclude boars. It was agreed that Government comments should be invited on this point.

Composition and minimum quality requirements

8. It was recognized that due to natural variations in ham there was difficulty in deciding what figures for protein should be included in a standard. Some delegates thought that the insertion of a figure would encourage the addition of proteins. Others thought that a figure would be useful, and it was agreed to ask Governments to comment on whether figures should be included and if so what these should be, based on experience or experiments. On the question of figures for exuded jelly/juice, it was recognized that the amount of jelly/juice would vary with the degree of heat treatment. The Canadian delegate considered therefore that any maximum figure for exuded jelly might have the effect of encouraging insufficient heat treatment. It was decided to ask Governments to comment on this question.

9. It was decided to set no maximum limits in respect of salt and sugar because consumer acceptance made the amounts of these ingredients self-limiting. The delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany considered however that any addition of sugar above 2% constituted adulteration.

10. The delegation of Canada raised the point of whether the use of agar-agar might be permitted in view of the diminishing supplies of gelatine. Governments were asked to give their views on this point.

Food Additives

11. The delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany reserved its position with regard to isoascorbic acid on the grounds that its use was not technologically necessary.

The Sub-Committee noted that the list of phosphates (document CODEX/PM/67/Appendix A) which had been approved by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives did not appear to include all phosphates which were in current use. It was therefore agreed to complete the list which is now set out in the standard and which will be referred to the Codex Committee on Food Additives.

Hygiene

12. The Sub-Committee agreed on hygiene provisions for this product which are set out in the standard. On the question of the development of a code of hygienic practice for meat products, the Sub-Committee was informed that this question would be discussed at the next session of the Codex Committee on Meat and Meat Products in the light of the work accomplished in this field by OECD.

The question of developing special hygienic requirements for meat products will be considered later in the light of the discussions which will take place in the main Committee at its next session.

Labelling

13. The delegation of France, supported by the delegations of Belgium, Morocco and Spain, considered that the country of origin should be marked indelibly in clear on the container, taking the view that the indication of the name of the country of origin on the label was not in itself a sufficient protection for the consumer. The Sub-Committee therefore decided to make this an optional provision. It was noted that this was a general matter which might be considered by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling.

The delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany suggested that the date of production or the final date by which the product should be consumed should be shown in clear, and the representative of the IOCU (International Organization of Consumers Unions) associated himself with this view. The Sub-Committee noted the view of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling that the date of manufacture would not necessarily result in a greater protection for the consumer. It was therefore decided that the date of production should be shown in code.

PROPOSED DRAFT PROVISIONAL STANDARD FOR CANNED CORNED BEEF

14. It was noted that there were two categories of corned beef on the market which differed from each other to some extent as regards the raw material used in their production. The Sub-Committee noted that one type of corned beef was produced from carcass beef only and that the second type contained also heart meat, head meat, cheek meat and skirt meat. The delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany indicated that only the product made from carcass meat could be considered as corned beef. The Sub-Committee decided that one standard could be elaborated, covering both types, with appropriate compositional and labelling requirements. The draft standard agreed upon by the Sub-Committee is set out in Appendix III.

Description

15. The Australian delegation expressed the view that corned beef should not be made from bull beef.

Composition and minimum quality requirements

16. The Sub-Committee discussed the question of a minimum meat or protein content for corned beef. Having regard to the fact that corned beef was a product consisting wholly of meat, it was decided that it was not necessary at this stage to include figures for minimum meat content or minimum protein content. Governments were asked to consider this in relation to the general question of compositional requirements for meat products (see para. 17).

The Sub-Committee agreed to insert in the draft standard a provision stating that the product should be substantially free from visible tendons. Some delegations were of the opinion that there should be no tendons whatsoever present in the product. Others took the view that since the presence of some tendons in the product was inevitable, the question of providing tolerances in respect of tendons visible to the naked eye should be considered. Governments were asked to comment on these two points of view and in the event of their favouring the establishment of tolerances to suggest figures.

The Sub-Committee agreed that the standard should provide for the use of spices and flavourings and that Governments should be asked to comment on which spices and flavourings should be allowed to be used.

The Danish delegations raised the question of providing in the standard for three categories of corned beef as in the case of ham and luncheon meat, and pointed out that it appeared that if non shelf-stable corned beef, which was on the market internationally, was excluded from the scope of the standard, it could not be traded internationally with countries which accepted the standard.

Some delegation indicated that they were not familiar with non shelf-stable corned beef and stated that they would be strongly opposed to providing for such corned beef in the standard at this stage.

It was decided therefore that it would not be appropriate at this stage to provide for non shelf-stable corned beef in the standard.

It was agreed that the question of whether all the standards for meat products should provide for non shelf-stable products was a matter on which the opinion of Governments should be sought, including the case of corned beef. It was also agreed that this matter will be discussed at the next session of the Sub-Committee.

PROPOSED DRAFT PROVISIONAL STANDARD FOR LUNCHEON MEAT

Scope, Composition and Minimum Quality Requirements

17. The Sub-Committee noted that, in addition to products described as "luncheon meat", there were other products in international trade which were made from meat and cereal and other binders. It was agreed at this stage to develop a standard which would apply only to "luncheon meats" which were recognized as having a relatively high meat content, e.g. 80% or more.

There was a full discussion of the need to include a minimum meat content in the standard or a minimum figure for protein, protein/water ratio, or fat/water ratio and it was recognized that this was a problem which would apply to all meat products, especially those which did not consist wholly of meat. The delegations of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands agreed to provide working papers by 1st March 1968 which would set out the advantages and disadvantages of basing the standard on the various criteria, with figures based on their experience. Other countries were invited to send in working papers by the same date. The Sub-Committee agreed to defer a decision until it had considered these papers but asked that Governments should be invited to comment on this matter which it regarded as being of great importance.

The Sub-Committee decided, without prejudice to their ultimate decision on a meat or protein content, that limits should be included in the standard for the amounts of binders that should be included in the final product. They agreed to divide them into carbohydrate binders and protein binders and to include figures in square brackets in the standard so that Governments would be encouraged to comment on them.

It was decided to consider the question of the kind of meat which could properly be used in this product in the light of the decisions taken about the definition of meat. The delegation of the U.S.A. stated that cheek meat, head meat, heart meat and/or tongue meat used singly or in combination should not be in excess of 25% of the total meat ingredients, noting also that no extenders are permitted.

It was noted that the use of phosphates would reduce the amount of exuded jelly and/or fat and that the figures in the standard might be too low for products which did not contain phosphates. It was agreed that the delegations of Denmark and the Netherlands would provide figures on exuded jelly and/or fat.

Food Additives

18. On the use of colouring agents, some delegations considered that none should be permitted. Other delegations pointed out that colouring agents were being used in some products where, owing to the high heat treatment applied, the products lost colour stability. It was agreed to provide in the standard for the use of colouring agents approved by the Codex Committee on Food Additives, and that the Danish Secretariat would provide the Food Additives Committee with a list of colouring agents and amounts used.

Labelling- Name of the Product and Storage instructions

19. On the question of the composition of luncheon meats described by the name of the meat, some delegations pointed out that some countries did allow in the product a minor quantity of meat other than that named in the description of the product.

It was agreed to provide, as in the case of hams, for products of varying keeping qualities, and in this connection the delegation of the U.S.A. indicated that the American consumer would expect all luncheon meat in consumer size packs to be shelf-stable.

METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

20. The Sub-Committee had before it document CODEX/PM/67 - Appendix B containing international referee methods of analysis and sampling for meat products proposed by the Danish Secretariat. It was noted that ISO was also elaborating methods of analysis and sampling for meat products. In order to avoid duplication of effort and in the interest of coordinating the work in this field, the Sub-Committee agreed on the following procedure:

- a) The Danish proposals should be forwarded to ISO as quickly as possible for consideration by the appropriate body of that Organization which was understood to be meeting in November 1967.
- b) ISO should be asked to submit to the Danish Secretariat by 1st March 1968 its own proposals as to methods of analysis and sampling for meat and meat products, together with its comments on the Danish proposal.
- c) The proposals would be examined by the Sub-Committee at its next session for transmission to the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling with comments from the Sub-Committee. In this connection the Sub-Committee expressed the hope that it would be possible to arrange that its next session take place reasonably in advance of the next session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling. In the event of the next session of the Sub-Committee not taking place before the 1968 session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling, it was agreed that the information received from ISO should in any case be transmitted to the 1968 session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling.

It was recognized that the list of methods of analysis should not be restricted to chemical methods of analysis.

As regards sampling methods, the Sub-Committee noted that the "Proposed Sampling Plans for Processed Fruit and Vegetables including Frozen Foods" (SP 10/70-SP, July 1966), which the Danish Secretariat had recommended in document CODEX/PM/67/Appendix B as being suitable for meat products, had been revised at the last session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruit and Vegetables.

The Sub-Committee recommended that the revised version of the sampling plans should be sent to the interested Codex Commodity Committees, including this Sub-Committee, for consideration.

DEFINITION OF MEAT

21. The Sub-Committee considered the feasibility of establishing a definition of meat in connection with the elaboration of Codex standards for meat products, on the basis of certain proposals in this respect which were before it.

Ten delegations were of the opinion that the best approach to the problem would be to draw up a strict and fairly detailed definition of meat, and to list in each individual commodity standard for meat products such additional meat ingredients as might be considered necessary. Other delegations were inclined to favour the establishment of a broad and fairly brief definition of meat, listing in each individual commodity standard the meat ingredients which should be considered as exclusions to the general definition. It was recognized that the establishment of an entirely satisfactory definition of meat would be difficult particularly in view of the varying definitions of meat to be found in the national legislation of various countries. The Sub-Committee agreed that the definition which had been favoured in principle by the ten countries referred to earlier should be distributed as a working document for the next session of the Sub-Committee.

FIRST DRAFTS FOR:

- a) CANNED CHOPPED MEAT
- b) SALAMI-TYPE SAUSAGES
- c) CANNED SAUSAGES IN BRINE (FRANKFURTER TYPE)
- d) CANNED STEWED STEAK WITH GRAVY

22. The Sub-Committee had a preliminary exchange of views on the substance of the four first draft standards referred to above. It was agreed that the points made hereunder would be taken into account in the redraft of the texts by the Danish Secretariat, which would also present the texts in accordance with the draft Codex format. The Danish Secretariat also undertook to take account of the written comments submitted by the U.S.A. It was agreed that the four texts thus revised would be working documents for the next session of the Sub-Committee.

Some of the French speaking delegations considered that the English title "canned chopped meat" should be used to describe this product in the French text in order to avoid confusion with the product sold as "viande hachée" which is not the same. As in the case of corned beef, some delegations pointed out that there was non shelf-stable chopped meat on the market and it was decided that consideration should be given as to whether the standard should provide for such types of chopped meat.

The following points were made with regard to the four drafts:

Canned Chopped Meat

- 1) provision for non shelf-stable products
- 2) question of exuded jelly and/or fat (as for luncheon meat)
- 3) how to distinguish clearly from luncheon meat, e.g. by the appropriate use of the terms "comminuted" and "coarsely chopped"
- 4) whether to allow the inclusion of cereal and if so to what extent
- 5) the need for a limitation on the emulsified meat, i.e. the proportion of finely chopped meat to coarsely chopped meat.

Salami-type sausages

- 1) whether the standard should cover salami sausages or salami-type sausages
- 2) whether the standard should cover two groups:
 - a) those which have been heat treated or smoked
 - b) those which have been desiccated
- 3) the need to state the type of meat used, e.g. pork salami, beef salami, etc.
- 4) whether to provide for a lower diameter for the casing
- 5) whether it is necessary to limit the amount of salt
- 6) whether, with respect to the proposal that the fat should be granulated to the size of a lentil corn, it would not be sufficient to say simply "evenly granulated"
- 7) the need to specify the type of cure because of hygienic considerations
- 8) provision for natural smoke flavours and natural smoke extracts
- 9) the inclusion of "comminuted" in the description of the product.

In addition, the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany said that the figure for water protein relation should have been 2.3%.

Canned Sausages in Brine (Frankfurter type)

- 1) whether the standard should cover only Frankfurter sausages per se or Frankfurter-type sausages
- 2) the question of perishability as for other products
- 3) the inclusion or exclusion of polysaccharides
- 4) the expression of compositional requirements in terms of drained or net weight
- 5) the question of the need for tolerances for burst sausages.

Canned Stewed Steak with Gravy

Whether the standard should provide for canned meat with gravy or for separate categories, i.e. canned beef, canned mutton, etc.

FAO PAPER ON LEGAL REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING INTENTIONAL ADDITIVES TO MEAT AND MEAT PRODUCTS

23. The Sub-Committee expressed its appreciation for the above paper prepared by the FAO Legislation Branch, which set out on a country by country basis the provisions with regard to the use of additives in meat and meat products in various countries. It was noted that the three group classification of these additives (A, B and C) was a necessarily arbitrary one, made in the Food Standards Branch of FAO. It was noted that there were certain inevitable inaccuracies of detail in the information given for certain countries. It was agreed that delegations should consider the additives permitted in their own countries, so that the document could be discussed profitably and revised in order to help the future deliberations of the Sub-Committee.

FUTURE WORK

24. The following was agreed upon for the next session:

- a) consideration of the Government comments on the three draft standards for canned hams, canned corned beef and canned luncheon meat which will be sent out to Governments at Step 3.
- b) Examination of revised drafts for canned chopped meat, salami-type sausages, canned sausages in brine (Frankfurter type) and canned stewed steak with gravy which will be prepared by the Danish Secretariat in the light of the preliminary discussions on these texts.
- c) Consideration of papers to be prepared by the delegations of Netherlands and the UK on meat/protein content.
- d) Methods of analysis and sampling (consideration of ISO proposals and of revised sampling plans).
- e) Definition meat.

It was noted that consideration might have to be given to the draft general standard for quick frozen foods elaborated by the Joint ECE/Codex Alimentarius Group of Experts on Standardization of Quick Frozen Foods, which was being circulated at Step 5 of the Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standards.

Governments were invited to submit their views as to other meat products or groups of meat products which might be standardized at a later date, to give supporting trade figures and a description of such products.

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PROPOSED DRAFT PROVISIONAL STANDARD FOR CANNED HAMS (Step 3)

1. SCOPE

The provisions of this standard apply to canned hams in tin plate containers which have been heat treated after sealing.

2. DESCRIPTION

The meat shall be from the hind leg of a pig. All bones and gristle shall be removed. The meat shall be cured and may be smoked. The heat treatment should be sufficient to ensure satisfactory storage under normal conditions of sale. In the case of hams which have only been mildly heat treated, full storage instructions must be shown on the label.

3. COMPOSITION AND MINIMUM QUALITY REQUIREMENTS

Ingredients

- salt min. 2%
- sugar no limitation
- gelatine no limitation

Minimum quality requirements

The meat shall be clean and substantially free from staining from the container. The meat shall be uniformly and thoroughly cured and capable of being sliced.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

The following provisions in respect of food additives are subject to endorsement by the Codex Committee on Food Additives:

- nitrate max. [2000] ppm (expressed as sodium nitrate)
- nitrite max. 200 ppm (expressed as sodium nitrite)
- ascorbic acid, isoascorbic acid and their sodium salts max. 500 ppm (as ascorbic acid)
- monosodium glutamate no limitation
- sodium and potassium orthophosphates
linear di-
tri-
tetra-
polyphosphates) max. 0.3% (expressed as P₂O₅)

5. HYGIENE

The provisions of the General Principles of Food Hygiene apply. The following specific provisions in respect of the food hygiene of this product are subject to endorsement by the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene:

- i) The heat treatment shall be such as to result in a temperature of at least 65.5°C at the centre of the product.
- ii) The cans shall be cooled in water of good bacteriological quality.
- iii) The product shall be packaged in hermetically sealed containers which do not permit contamination and which shall be clean and show visible vacuum.

6. LABELLING

The provisions of the General Standard on Food Labelling apply, and the following specific provisions for this product in respect to food labelling are subject to endorsement by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling:

i) Name of the product

The name of the product is "ham in natural juices" or, if gelatine has been added, "ham in natural juices with added gelatine".

ii) Storage instructions

- a) For products subjected to heat treatment such as to require them to be stored below 5°C, at which temperature they will keep for at least six months, the following should appear on the label:
"perishable - keep under refrigeration".
- b) For products subjected to heat treatment such as to require them to be stored below 15°C, at which temperature they will keep for at least three months, the following should appear on the label:
"perishable. - keep in a cool place (15°C)".

iii) Establishment number and country of origin

The establishment number and the country of origin shall be shown on the can in an indelible manner. The country of origin may be shown in code or in clear.

iv) Date of manufacture

The date of manufacture shall be shown on the can in code.

- i) The cans shall be cooled in water of good bacteriological quality.
- ii) The product shall be packaged in hermetically sealed containers which do not permit contamination, and which shall be clean and show visible vacuum.

6. LABELLING

The provisions of the Genral Standard on Food Labelling apply, and the following speicfic provisions for this product in respect of food labelling are subject to endorsement by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling:

i) Name of the product

The name of the product is "corned beef".

ii) Establishment number and country of origin

The establishment number and the country of origin shall be shown on the can in an indelible manner. The country of origin may be shown in code or in clear.

iii) Date of manufacture

The date of manufacture shall be shown on the can in code.

PROPOSED DRAFT PROVISIONAL STANDARD FOR CANNED LUNCHEON MEAT (Step 3)1. SCOPE

The provisions of this standard apply to canned luncheon meat in tin plate containers which have been heat treated after sealing.

2. DESCRIPTION

(Definition of the meat to be allowed in the product to be developed).

The heat treatment should be sufficient to ensure satisfactory storage under normal conditions of sale. In the case of luncheon meats which have only been mildly heat treated, full storage instructions must be shown on the label.

3. COMPOSITION AND MINIMUM QUALITY REQUIREMENTSComposition

The exuded jelly and/or fat shall not exceed 8% collectively and the exuded jelly and/or fat for a product containing a binder shall not exceed 3% collectively.

Ingredients

The following ingredients are allowed:

- comminuted cooked, cured meat
- water
- Carbohydrate binders
 - meal, flour or starch prepared from grain or potato, but not from a legume
 - bread, biscuit or bakery products, but not those containing or made with a legume.
- Protein binders
 - milk powder, skim milk powder, butter milk powder, whey powder, soya flour, soya protein, caseinate, ground nut protein, wheat gluten, blood serum.

The maximum amount of carbohydrate binders and protein binders taken together which may be present in the product shall not exceed 7%, of which not more than 3% may consist of protein binders. 1/

1/ The delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany and France considered that these figures should read 5% and 2%, respectively.

- Salt no limitation
- Sugar for curing no limitation
- Spices and flavourings (to be developed)

Minimum Quality Requirements

The meat shall be clean and substantially free from staining from the container. The meat shall be uniformly and thoroughly cured and capable of being sliced.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

The following provisions in respect of food additives are subject to endorsement by the Codex Committee on Food Additives:

- Nitrate max. [2000] ppm (expressed as sodium nitrate)
- Nitrite max. 200 ppm (expressed as sodium nitrite)
- ascorbic acid, isoascorbic acid and their sodium salts max. 500 ppm (as ascorbic acid)
- sodium and potassium orthophosphates
linear di-
tri-
tetra-
polyphosphates } maximum 0.3%
(expressed as P₂O₅)
- sodium citrate no limitation
- Colouring agents

Colouring agents approved by the Codex Committee on Food Additives are allowed.

5. HYGIENE

The provisions of the General Principles of Food Hygiene apply. The following specific provisions in respect of the food hygiene of this product are subject to endorsement by the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene:

- i) The heat treatment shall be such as to result in a temperature of at least 65.5°C at the centre of the product.
- ii) The cans shall be cooled in water of good bacteriological quality.
- iii) The product shall be packaged in hermetically sealed containers which do not permit contamination and which shall be clean and show visible vacuum.

6. LABELLING

The provisions of the General Standard on Food Labelling apply, and the following specific provisions for this product in respect of food labelling are subject to endorsement by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling:

i) Name of the product

The name of the product is "luncheon meat". It may be qualified by the name of the meat used, or where more than one kind of meat is used, by the names in descending order of proportion, e.g. "pork luncheon meat", "pork and beef luncheon meat". Alternatively, where more than one kind of meat is used, the product may be named "mixed luncheon meat" provided that the kinds of meat used are indicated in descending order of proportion in the list of ingredients on the label.

ii) Storage instructions

a) For products subjected to heat treatment such as to require them to be stored below 5°C, at which temperature they will keep for at least six months, the following should appear on the label:

"perishable - keep under refrigeration".

b) For products subjected to heat treatment such as to require them to be stored below 15°C, at which temperature they will keep for at least three months, the following should appear on the label:

"perishable - keep in a cool place (15°C)".

iii) Establishment number and country of origin

The establishment number and the country of origin shall be shown on the can in an indelible manner. The country of origin may be shown in code or in clear.

iv) Date of manufacture

The date of manufacture shall be shown on the can in code.