

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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

Agenda Item 8

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

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COMMENTS ON PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL STANDARD FOR LAYER PRODUCTS

(Comments submitted by 1st August 2016)

CHINA

2.3.1.1 Dried Laver

Proposed text:

Dried laver is the product of raw laver, which is washed, chopped/cut, molded, dehydrated and dried (~~1st dried products~~) after harvesting (**1st dried products**). It may go through a re-drying process (~~2nd dried products~~) for long-term storage (**2nd dried products**).

~~While non-retail product may contain edible foreign matters, they shall be identified and appropriately communicated.~~

Rationale:

1. The definition of dried laver product is more clearly expressed when moving the words in brackets to the end of the sentences.
2. The second paragraph should be moved to section 8 "LABELLING" because these words do not belong to the definition of laver product, but provide the labelling rules regarding edible foreign matters.

2.3.2 Roasted Laver Product

Proposed text:

Roasted laver product is the product in which the dried laver products, defined in Section 2.3.1, go through roasting or any other heating methods without seasoning, so that its physicochemical characteristics such as colour, moisture and texture may change. ~~It may be cut into different shapes after roasting.~~

Rationale:

The last sentence does not make sense because size and shape is not specified in the definition of roasted laver products.

3.1.2 Optional Ingredients

Proposed text:

As long as the weight of basic ingredient, which is defined in 3.1.1, is more than ~~[60%]~~ **70%**, other edible seaweeds, **whether or not they are included intentionally,** may be used for the products defined in Section 2.3.1.

Rationale:

If too much other seaweeds are added, they may cover the own flavor of raw laver. China proposed that the existence rate of other seaweeds should be no more than 30% of total amount, whether or not they are included intentionally.

3.2 Quality Factors

Proposed text:

{3.2.1 Moisture content}	Maximum (%)
Dried Laver Products (1st dried product)	{13} or {14}

Dried Laver Products (2nd dried product)	[6] or [7]
Roasted Laver Product	5
Seasoned Laver Products	5
Brewing Seasoned Laver	10
3.2.2 Acid value	Maximum (mg KOH/g)
Seasoned laver products fried or treated with edible oil	3.0
[3.2.3 Peroxide value]	Maximum (meq/kg)
Seasoned laver products fried or treated with edible oil	60.0

Rationale:

1. China proposed the maximum level of moisture content for laver products as above on the basis of actual condition, which is equivalent to China's domestic maximum level provided by national standard.
2. China proposed to delete the provision of peroxide value because this index is not stable and is difficult to set the maximum level.

3.3 Classification of Defectives**Proposed text:**

A container that fails to meet one or more of the applicable quality requirements, as set out in Section 3.2 and in the corresponding Annexes (except those based on sample averages), should be considered as a "defective".

Rationale:

"Corresponding Annexes" does not exist in this document.

3.4 Lot Acceptance**Proposed text:**

A lot will be considered acceptable when the number of "defectives" as defined in Section 3.3 and in the corresponding Annexes does not exceed the acceptance number (c) of the appropriate sampling plan with an AQL of 6.5. For factors evaluated on a sample average, a lot will be considered acceptable if the average meets the specified tolerance, and no individual sample is excessively out of tolerance.

Rationale:

1. "Corresponding Annexes" does not exist in this document.
2. It is not appropriate to evaluate lot acceptance based on sample average.

4.2 Seasoned Laver Products**Proposed text:**

Acidity regulators, anticaking agents, flavour enhancers, sweeteners, thickeners and antioxidants used in accordance with Tables 1 and 2 of the *General Standard of Food Additives (CODEX STAN 192-1995)* in food categories 04.2.2.2 through and 04.2.2.8 or listed in Table 3 of the *General Standard for Food Additives* are acceptable for use in seasoned laver products (see Section 2.3.3) conforming to this standard.

Colours and preservatives are not permitted.

In addition, the following food additives may be used.

INS	Name of Food additives	Maximum Level(mg/kg)
Acidity Regulator		
334	Tartaric acid, L(+)-	500
336(i)	Monopotassium tartrate	60
Thickener		
459	Cyclodextrin, beta-	GMP
Sweeteners		
960	Steviol glycosides	900
Antioxidants		

319	Tertiary butyhydroquinone (TBHQ)	200
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Rationale:

1. The food categories of the General Standard of Food Additives (GSFA: CODEX STAN 192-1995) to which laver products defined in Section 2 belong are only 04.2.2.2 and 04.2.2.8. Food categories 04.2.2.3 through 04.2.2.7 do not include laver products covered by this Standard.

2. China proposed that food additives shall be used in accordance with the provision of GSFA. If the maximum level of food additives is higher than that of GSFA, the convincing evidence or explanation should be provided. If other food additives not specified by JECFA may be used, the related rationales such as necessity of use, the scientific evidence of maximum level establishment should be provided and their safety should be confirmed.

7.1 Net Weight**Proposed text:****7.1 Net Weight contents**

The **proper amount should be included in the package as stated in the labeling defined in Section 8.2 weight of the product shall be expressed in the unit of (“g” or “kg”), and/or in the unit of the number of sheet.**

7.1.1 Classification of “Defectives”

A container that fails to meet the requirement for net **contents weight** of Section 7.1 should be considered as a “defective”.

Rationale:

The sentence of “Net contents are expressed in net weight (g or kg) and/or in the unit of the number of sheets” should be moved to Section 8.2 because these words provide the labelling rules of net contents.

7.2Packaging**Proposed text:**

Laver products shall be packaged in a manner to protect and maintain hygienic, nutritional and quality attributes of the products to the extent reasonably practical. In addition, the products shall be packaged to protect them from moisture.

Packaging materials used for retail products shall be completely transparent except for printing areas, or completely opaque.

Containers used for transporting laver products shall have adequate strength to protect laver products from external impact.

Rationale:

This provision is necessary to protect laver products from external impact because laver products are fragile without appropriate protection.

8 LABELLING**Proposed text:**

In addition to the provisions of the General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985), the following specific provisions apply:

8.1The Name of the Product

The name of the products shall be in line with Section 2.3. Other appropriate names can be labelled in accordance with the law and custom in the country where the products are distributed **in a manner not to mislead the consumer.**

Other edible seaweeds other than *Pyropia* as optional ingredients to laver products should be declared in the list of ingredients and their percentage should be clearly labelled.

8.2 Labelling of net contents

The net contents shall be expressed in net weight (g or kg), and/or number of sheets in the unit.

8.3 Labelling of Non-Retail Containers

Information on non-retail containers shall be given either on the container or in accompanying documents, except that the name of the products, lot identification, and the name and address of the manufacturer and/or packer shall appear on the container. However, lot identification, and the name and address of the manufacturer and/or packer may be replaced by an identification mark, provided that such a mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

While non-retail product may contain edible foreign matters, they shall be identified and appropriately communicated.

Rationale:

1. The labelling of products should not mislead the consumers.
2. If edible seaweeds other than *Pyropia* are included as optional ingredients, the fact should be appropriately reflected in the list of ingredients in order to prevent misleading consumers.
3. The sentence of "The net contents should be expressed in net weight (g or kg), and/or number of sheets in the unit" provides the labelling rules of net contents.
4. The last sentence of Section 8.3 provides the labelling rules regarding edible foreign matters.

JAPAN

2.3.1.1 Dried Laver

Proposed text:

Dried laver is the product of raw laver, which is washed, chopped/cut, molded, dehydrated and dried (~~1st dried products~~) after harvesting (**1st dried products**). It may go through a re-drying process (2nd dried products) for long-term storage (**2nd dried products**).

~~While non-retail product may contain edible foreign matters, they shall be identified and appropriately communicated.~~

Rationale:

The second paragraph should be moved to section 8 "LABELLING" as Section 8.4 because these words provide the labelling rules regarding edible foreign matters.

2.3.2 Roasted Laver Product

Proposed text:

Roasted laver product is the product in which the dried laver products, defined in Section 2.3.1, go through roasting or any other heating methods without seasoning, so that its physicochemical characteristics such as colour, moisture and texture may change. ~~It may be cut into different shapes after roasting.~~

Rationale:

The last sentence does not make sense because size and shape is not specified in the definition of roasted laver products.

2.3.3.2 Brewing Seasoned Laver

Proposed text:

2.3.3.2 ~~Brewing~~ Seasoned Laver **for Brewing**

~~Brewing s~~Seasoned laver **for brewing** is the product in which the dried laver, defined in Section 2.3.1.1, is broken and roasted/stir-fried. **The product is already seasoned or added with seasoning when consumed. Boiling water is added before consumption.**

~~The product is seasoned or has additional seasoning packs, and then boiling water is added before consumption.~~

Rationale:

When a seasoning pack is added to this type of product, the pack should not be covered by the Standard.

2.3.3.3 Other Seasoned Laver

Comment:

This section might be deleted because no products are supposed to belong to this category.

3.1.2 Optional Ingredients

Proposed text:

As long as the weight of basic ingredient, which is defined in 3.1.1, is more than ~~[60%]~~, other edible seaweeds, **whether or not they are included intentionally**, may be used for the products defined in Section 2.3.1. **When other edible seaweeds are mixed, the fact should be reflected to the name of the products defined in Section 8.1.**

All other **optional** ingredients ~~may be used for the products defined in Section 2.3.3. Seasoned laver products, which shall be of food grade quality and conform to all applicable Codex references standards such as;~~ **if exists.**

- (a) edible oil
- (b) sauces
- (c) sugars
- (d) salts
- (e) spice, seasoning and condiments
- (f) other ingredients as appropriate

Rationale:

The existence rate of other seaweeds should be 40% or less of total amount, whether or not they are included intentionally. When other edible seaweeds are mixed, the fact should be appropriately labeled in the name of the products in order to prevent misleading consumers.

Regarding the second paragraph, as some ingredients have applicable Codex standards while others do not, a more general description is preferable.

3.2 Quality Factors**Proposed text:**

3.2 Quality Factors

The final product shall maintain its own flavour and colour, which represent its raw materials and processing methods and it shall be free from off-flavours.

[3.2.1 Moisture content]	Maximum (%)	
Dried Laver Products (1st dried product)		[13] or [14]
Dried Laver Products (2nd dried product)		[6] or [7]
Roasted Laver Product	5	
Seasoned Laver Products	5	
Brewing Seasoned Laver for brewing		10
3.2.2 Acid value	Maximum (mg KOH/g)	
Seasoned laver products fried or treated with edible oil		3.0
[3.2.3 Peroxide value]	Maximum (meq/kg)	
Seasoned laver products fried or treated with edible oil	60.0	

Rationale:

Japan proposed the thresholds of moisture content for laver products as above on the basis of actual condition. It is difficult to set the threshold of peroxide value since this index is not stable.

3.3 Classification of Defectives**Proposed text:**

A container that fails to meet one or more of the applicable quality requirements, as set out in Section 3.2 and in the corresponding Annexes (except those based on sample averages), should be considered as a "defective".

Rationale:

"Corresponding Annexes" does not exist in this document.

3.4 Lot Acceptance

Proposed text:

A lot will be considered acceptable when the number of “defectives” as defined in Section 3.3 and in the corresponding Annexes does not exceed the acceptance number (c) of the appropriate sampling plan with an AQL of 6.5. For factors evaluated on a sample average, a lot will be considered acceptable if the average meets the specified tolerance, and no individual sample is excessively out of tolerance.

Rationale:

“Corresponding Annexes” does not exist in this document.

It is not appropriate to evaluate lot acceptance based on sample average.

4.2 Seasoned Laver Products

Proposed text:

Acidity regulators, anticaking agents, flavour enhancers, sweeteners, thickeners and antioxidants used in accordance with Tables 1 and 2 of the *General Standard of Food Additives (CODEX STAN 192-1995)* in food categories 04.2.2.3~~2~~ through and 04.2.2.8 or listed in Table 3 of the *General Standard for Food Additives* are acceptable for use in seasoned laver products (see Section 2.3.3) conforming to this standard.

Colours and preservatives are not permitted.

In addition, the following food additives may be used.

INS	Name of Food additives	Maximum Level(mg/kg)
Acidity Regulator		
334	Tartaric acid, L(+)-	500
336(i)	Monopotassium tartrate	60
<u>340(ii)</u>	<u>Dipotassium hydrogen phosphate</u>	<u>1 as phosphorus</u>
<u>341(ii)</u>	<u>Calcium hydrogen phosphate</u>	<u>20 as phosphorus</u>
Thickener		
459	Cyclodextrin, beta-	GMP
Sweeteners		
<u>950</u>	<u>Acesulfame potassium</u>	<u>350</u>
960	Steviol glycosides	900
Antioxidants		
319	Tertiary butylhydroquinone (TBHQ) □	200

4.2.1 Flavourings

The flavourings used in products covered by this standard should comply with the Guidelines for the use of flavourings (CAC/GL 66-2008).

Rationale:

The food categories of the General Standard of Food Additives (GSFA: CODEX STAN 192-1995) to which laver products defined in Section 2.1 belong are only 04.2.2.2 and 04.2.2.8. Food category 04.2.2.2 (dried vegetables, seaweeds, and nuts and seeds) covered not only dried laver products defined in Section 2.3.1 and roasted laver products defined in Section 2.3.2, but also most of seasoned laver products defined in Section 2.3.3, since they are made from dried lavers as defined. Food categories 04.2.2.3 through 04.2.2.7 do not include laver products covered by the Standard.

With the elimination of food categories 04.2.2.3 through 04.2.2.7 from the quotation, it is necessary to add 340(i) Dipotassium hydrogen phosphate, 341(ii) Calcium hydrogen phosphate and 950 Acesulfame potassium to the table of food additives which are additionally allowed to use, because maximum levels of these substances are not provided in Table 1 and 2 of GSFA for food categories 04.2.2.2 and 04.2.2.8 nor in Table 3 of GSFA. (Although Dipotassium hydrogen phosphate and Calcium hydrogen phosphate are included in Table 1 and 2 for food categories 04.2.2.2 and 04.2.2.8, they are for use in potatoes only.)

Japan proposes the maximum levels of Dipotassium hydrogen phosphate and Calcium hydrogen phosphate as 1mg/kg and 20mg/kg respectively as phosphorus. These figures are sufficiently lower than maximum levels of these substances for other products.

Japan proposes the maximum level of Acesulfame potassium as 350mg/kg. This figure is equivalent to Japan's domestic threshold provided by Food Sanitation Act based on scientific evidence.

Japan proposes to delete 960 Steviol glycosides from the list of the food additives which may be used, because it cannot provide scientific evidence to propose the maximum level which is higher than the level provided in Table 1 and 2 of GSFA for food categories 04.2.2.2 and 04.2.2.8.

Japan would like to withdraw its previous proposal to include 336(i) Monopotassium tartrate in the list of the food additives which may be used, since a JECFA specification has not been set for the substance.

Japan does not support to include 319 Tertiary butyhydroquinone (TBHQ) in the list, since the Japanese Authority has not confirmed safety of the substance and thus it is not allowed to use in Japan.

Flavourings are used in some products defined in Section 2.3.3, and they should comply with the Guidelines for the use of flavourings.

6. HYGIENE

Proposed text:

~~Seaweeds used for laver products shall be grown and processed in areas and water appropriate for cultivation and processing of seaweeds for direct human consumption. After harvesting, raw seaweeds shall be treated with potable water or clean sea water. In the final step of processing for dried laver products, just before a drying process, the seaweeds shall be treated with potable water.~~

Rationale:

It is difficult for importing countries to check to clarify that a product complies with this provision.

7.1 Net Weight

Proposed text:

7.1 Net Weight contents

The **proper amount should be included in the package as stated in the labeling defined in Section 8.3** weight of the product shall be expressed in the unit of ("g" or "kg"), and/or in the unit of the number of sheet.

7.1.1 Classification of "Defectives"

A container that fails to meet the requirement for net **contents weight** of Section 7.1 should be considered as a "defective".

Rationale:

Net contents are expressed in net weight (g or kg) and/or in the unit of the number of sheets.

7.2 Packaging

Proposed text:

Laver products shall be packaged in a manner to protect and maintain hygienic, nutritional and quality attributes of the products to the extent reasonably practical. In addition, the products shall be packaged to protect them from moisture.

Packaging materials used for retail products shall be completely transparent except for printing areas, or completely opaque.

Containers used for transporting laver products shall have adequate strength to protect laver products from external impact.

Rationale:

This provision is necessary to protect laver products from external impact.

8. LABELLING

Proposed text:

In addition to the provisions of the General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985), the following specific provisions apply:

8.1 The Name of the Product

(i) The name of the products shall be in line with Section 2.3. Other appropriate names can be labelled in accordance with the law and custom in the country where the products are distributed in a manner not to mislead the consumer.

(ii) In the case of edible seaweeds other than *Pyropia* are included as optional ingredients , the name of product shall be in line with Section 3.1.2.

8.2 Labelling of net contents

The net contents shall be expressed in net weight(g or kg), and/or number of sheets in the unit.

8.3 Labelling of Non-Retail Containers

Information on non-retail containers shall be given either on the container or in accompanying documents, except that the name of the products, lot identification, and the name and address of the manufacturer and/or packer shall appear on the container. However, lot identification, and the name and address of the manufacturer and/or packer may be replaced by an identification mark, provided that such a mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

While non-retail product may contain edible foreign matters , they shall be identified and appropriately communicated.

Rationale:

The labelling of products should not mislead the consumer.

Regarding the proposed Subsection (ii) of Section 8.1, refer to our proposal on Section 3.1.2 above.

The net contents should be expressed in net weight (g or kg), and/or number of sheets in the unit.

Regarding the last sentence of Section 8.3, refer to our proposal on Section 2.3.1.1 above.