

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

E-mail: codex@fao.org - www.codexalimentarius.org

STANDARD FOR CORNED BEEF

CXS 88-1981

Adopted in 1981. Revised in 1991, 2014, 2015. Amended in 2019.

1. SCOPE

This standard applies to canned beef products designated as "Corned Beef" and sold in hermetically sealed containers which have been heat treated after sealing to such an extent that the product is shelf-stable.

It does not apply to meat products of the type "Corned Beef" with compositional characteristics different from those specified. These products shall be designated with a qualifying statement which describes the true nature in such a way that it does not mislead the consumer and that it does not lead to confusion with products covered by this standard.

2. DESCRIPTION

Corned beef is chopped, cured, boneless carcass meat from animals of bovine species and may include head meat, heart meat and skirt meat.

The product shall be prepared from coarsely cut beef which has been precooked or a mixture of such precooked beef to which a maximum of 5% raw beef has been added; in either case, the meat shall be cured before or after filling into the container.

The heat treatment shall be applied after the container is sealed and shall be sufficient to ensure that the product is shelf-stable and that it presents no public health hazard.

2.1 Subsidiary Definition

Hermetically sealed container means a container which is completely sealed and impermeable and which is made of any appropriate material which is suitable for the product covered by the standard.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 Essential Ingredients

- Uncured beef;
- Curing ingredients consisting of food-grade salt and sodium or potassium nitrite.

3.2 Optional Ingredients

- Sucrose, invert sugar, dextrose (glucose), lactose, maltose, glucose syrup (including corn syrup).

3.3 Composition

The total protein content in the final product shall not be less than 21% m/m.

3.4 Essential Quality Factors

3.4.1 Raw Material

The meat from which the product is prepared shall be of a quality suitable for human consumption and free from objectionable odours and flavours.

3.4.2 Final Products

The final product shall be clean and substantially free from staining and contamination from the container. The meat shall be uniformly and thoroughly cured and the product shall be capable of being sliced, when chilled.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

Preservatives used in accordance with Tables 1 and 2 of the *General Standard for Food Additives* (CXS 192-1995) in food category 08.3.2 "Heat-treated processed comminuted meat, poultry, and game products" and its parent food categories are acceptable for use in foods conforming to this Standard. Only certain Table 3 food additives (as indicated in Table 3) are acceptable for use in foods conforming to this Standard.

Section 4.1 of the *General Standard for Food Additives* (CXS 192-1995), referring to the conditions applying to carry-over of food additives from ingredients and raw materials into foods, shall apply.

5. CONTAMINANTS

The products covered by this Standard shall comply with the Maximum Levels of the *General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed* (CXS 193-1995)."

The products covered by this Standard shall comply with the maximum residue limits for pesticides and/or veterinary drugs established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

6. HYGIENE

It is recommended that the products covered by the provisions of this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CXC 1-1969), the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat* (CXC 58-2005), the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods* (CXC 23-1979), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

The products should comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the *Principles and Guidelines for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria Related to Foods* (CXG 21-1997).

7. LABELLING

The provisions of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985), excepting Section 5.2 (Irradiated Foods) which is not relevant, shall apply:

7.1 The Name of the Food

The name of the food to be declared on the label shall be "Corned Beef".

7.2 Date Marking and Storage Instructions

For canned corned beef which is a shelf-stable product the date of minimum durability shall be indicated by the year.

7.3 Labelling of Non-Retail Containers

Information, as appropriate needed for labelling of retail containers is given either on the non-retail container or in accompanying documents except that the name of the food, date marking and storage instructions, lot identification and the name and address of the manufacturer or packer shall appear on the non-retail container.

However, lot identification, and the name and address of the manufacturer or packer may be replaced by an identification mark provided that such a mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

8. METHODS OF ANALYSIS

For checking the compliance with this Standard, the methods of analysis and sampling contained in the *Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling* (CXS 234-1999) relevant to the provisions in this Standard shall be used.