

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
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Agenda Item 8(b)

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

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DISCUSSION PAPER ON A PROPOSED REVISION OF THE CODEX STANDARD FOR EXTRA HARD GRATING CHEESE (CODEX STAN C-35-1978)

Submitted by Italy

INTRODUCTION

The “Codex International Standard for Extra-Hard Grating Cheese” is twenty-five years old and was never revised. The need to consider revising this Standard arises for a variety of reasons amongst which are changes in the evaluation of food additives and technological developments concerning composition and quality criteria.

1. This proposed redrafting should allow the application of the standard in question to all the extra-hard cheeses that can be grated, whether they are intended for direct consumption or for further processing.
2. Taking that into account, the description of the product contains relatively broad parameters, in particular regarding the origin of the milk and the appearance of the cheese body.

The scheme indicated in the Guidelines for application of Codex Standards for individual cheese varieties (*Doc. CX/MMP 02/7—part 1, January 2002, Report n. 2, Anenx 1, point 2.2*) has been used for the description of the product.

3. In the third paragraph of point 3.2 of the draft that concerns authorized ingredients, processing aids are also mentioned even if they are not “ingredients” in the strict sense of the word. One follows intentionally the scheme of the “Codex General Standard of Codex for Cheese” (*CODEX STAN A-6—1978, Rev. 2-2001*).
4. The list of additives partially follows that contained in the above “General Standard”. The selection is based on the draft Standard in the *document CX/MMP 00/18 Add 1 (February 2000)* but two colours were suppressed (*Turmeric*, that does not figure in the list of the General Standard, and *Chlorophylls*, the use of which is limited – according to the General Standard – to green marbled cheeses).

Yet to be examined is the appropriateness of listing under the section concerning sliced or grated cheeses three preservatives 200, 202 and 203, that already figure (with maximum levels three times higher) in the list of preservatives authorized for the same cheeses in their whole state.

- 5-6 The clauses relating to contaminants and to hygiene are those of the above General Standard.
7. Regarding cheeses whose names are not protected while the use of the designation provided by the draft Standard is only optional, it is implicit that these cheeses can be marketed with fantasy names, on the condition that consumers are not misled about the nature of or on the origin of the product.

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For the clause concerning the countries of origin (point 7.2) the comments of Germany and of Spain taken in the “Report n.3” relating to the redraft of the proposed Draft Standard for Individual Cheese Varieties (*Doc.CX/MMP 02/7 – part 1, January 2002* page 53 in the English version and page 58 in the French version) have been taken into account.

RECOMMENDATION

- The Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products recommends the 27th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission approve the revision of the Codex Standard for Extra Hard Grating Cheese as new work on the basis of the attached draft.

**PROPOSED DRAFT REVISED STANDARD
FOR EXTRA HARD GRATING CHEESE
(C-35)**

1. SCOPE

This Standard applies to Extra Hard Grating Cheese intended for direct consumption or for further processing in conformity with the description in Section 2 of this Standard.

2. DESCRIPTION

2.1 Type of cheese

A ripened extra hard cheese in conformity with the General Standard for Cheese (CODEX STAN A-6-1978, Rev. 2-2001) suitable for grating by industrial processing or by the final consumer.

2.2 Texture of cheese mass

A granular, slightly brittle texture, suitable for grating.

2.3 Appearance of cheese body

The body has a natural uncoloured or a pale yellow to yellowish colour and no or few occasional holes.

2.4 Origin of milk

Cow's milk, goat's milk or sheep's milk and mixtures of these milks.

2.5 Appearance of whole cheese

The cheese is sold with or without rind, which may be coated. Format, shape, dimensions and weights are various [depending on the kind of milk, the specific method of manufacture and the country of origin].

2.6 Method of manufacture

2.6.1 Coagulation

Rennet or other safe and suitable coagulating enzymes, with the possible addition of starter cultures of harmless lactic acid.

2.6.2 Heat treatment

Milk may be raw or pasteurized. [If pasteurized the milk is heated to not less than 72° c (161° F) for 15 seconds].

2.6.3 Fermentation

Lactic acid fermentation and/or flavour producing bacteria and cultures of other harmless micro-organisms.

2.6.4 Ripening

After the curd (which may be lightly salted) is shaped into forms, the cheese may be salted in brine, dry salted or both. The ripening procedure to develop flavour and body characteristics is normally from 6 months at 10 – 20° c depending on the degree of maturity required. Different ripening conditions may be used provided the cheese exhibits similar physical, biochemical and organoleptic characteristics to those achieved by the previously stated ripening procedure. Cheese intended for industrial processing need not exhibit the same degree of ripening.

2.6.5 Flavour characteristics

Various, depending on the kind of milk used and degree of maturity achieved.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 Raw materials

Milks as stated above, under 2.4.

3.2 Permitted ingredients

- Sodium chloride
- Potable water
- Processing aids as stated above under 2.6.1 and 2.6.3 or residues and/or derivatives thereof.
- [Rice, corn, wheat and potato flours and starches. Notwithstanding the provisions in the General Standard for Cheese (CODEX STAN A-6-1978, Rev. 2-2001), these substances can be used in the same function as anti-caking agents for treatment of the surface of cut, sliced and shredded products only, provided they are added only in amounts functionally necessary as governed by Good Manufacturing Practice, taking into account any use of the anti-caking agents listed in section 4 of this Standard].

3.3 Composition

<u>Milk constituent</u>	<u>Minimum content</u> <u>(m/m)</u>	<u>Maximum content</u> <u>(m/m)</u>	<u>Reference level</u> <u>(m/m)</u>
Milkfat in dry matter :	32 %	42 %	32 % to 42 %
Dry matter :	64 %	Not specified	Not specified

Compositional modifications beyond the minima and maxima specified above for milkfat and dry matter are not considered to be in compliance with section 4.3.3 of the General Standard for the Use of Dairy Terms (CODEX STAN 206-1999).

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

Only the food additives listed below may be used and only within the limits specified.

<i>N°</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Maximum Level</i>
<i>Colours</i>		
100	Curcumins (for edible cheese rind)	Limited by GMP
101	Riboflavins	Limited by GMP
141	Copper chlorophylls	15 mg/kg
160a (i)	β-Carotene (synthetic)	25 mg/kg
160a (ii)	Carotenes (natural extracts)	600 mg/kg
160b	Annatto extracts	10 mg/kg (on bixin / norbixin basis)
160c	Paprika oleoresins	Limited by GMP
160e	B-apo-8'-carotenal	35 mg/kg
160f	B-apo-8'-carotenic acid, methyl and ethyl ester	35 mg/kg
<i>Acidity regulators</i>		
170	Calcium carbonates	Limited by GMP
504	Magnesium carbonates	
575	Glucono-delta-lactone (GDL)	
<i>Preservatives</i>		
200	Sorbic acid	3000 mg/kg calculated as sorbic acid
201	Sodium sorbate	
202	Potassium sorbate	
203	Calcium sorbate	12,5 mg/kg
234	Nisin	
251	Sodium nitrate	50 mg/kg, expressed as NaNO ₃
252	Potassium nitrate	
280	Propionic acid	3000 mg/kg calculated as propionic acid
281	Sodium propionate	
282	Calcium propionate	
1105	Lysozyme	Limited by GMP
<i>For surface / rind treatment only :</i>		
200	Sorbic acid	1 g/kg singly or in combination, calculated as sorbic acid
202	Potassium sorbate	
203	Calcium sorbate	
235	Pimaricin (natamycin)	2 mg/dm ² of surface. Not present at a depth of 5 mm

Sliced, cut, shredded or grated cheese
Anti-caking agents

460	Cellulose	Limited by GMP
551	Silicon dioxide, amorphous	10 g/kg singly or in combination. Silicates calculated as silicon dioxide
552	Calcium silicate	
553	Magnesium silicates	
554	Sodium aluminosilicate	
555	Potassium aluminosilicate	
556	Calcium aluminium silicate	
559	Aluminium silicate	
560	Potassium silicate	
[Preservatives]		
200	Sorbic acid	1 g/kg singly or in combination, calculated as sorbic acid]
202	Potassium sorbate	
203	Calcium sorbate	

5. CONTAMINANTS

5.1 Heavy Metals

The products covered by this Standard shall comply with the maximum limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

5.2 Pesticide residues

The products covered by this Standard shall comply with the maximum residue limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

6. HYGIENE

6.1 It is recommended that the products covered by this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate Sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 3 – 1997; *Codex Alimentarius*, Volume 1B) and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

6.2 From raw material production to the point of consumption, the products covered by this Standard should be subject to a combination of control measures, which may include, for example, pasteurization, and these should be shown to achieve the appropriate level of public health protection.

6.3 The products covered by this Standard should comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997; *Codex Alimentarius*, Volume 1B).

7. LABELLING

In addition to the provisions of the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991; *Codex Alimentarius*, Volume 1A) and the General Standard for the Use of Dairy Terms (CODEX STAN 206-1999), the following specific provisions apply :

7.1 Name of the food

The name “Extra Hard Grating Cheese” may be used in accordance with section 4.1 of the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods, provided that the product is in conformity with this Standard.

The name may also be used for cut, sliced, shredded or grated products made from cheese which cheese is in conformity with this Standard.

The use of the name is an option that may be chosen only if the cheese complies with this Standard. Where the name is not used for a cheese that complies with this Standard, the naming provisions of the General Standard for Cheese (CODEX STAN A-6-1978, Rev. 2-2001) apply.

The terms “Extra Hard” and/or “Grating” may be omitted in the name of the product, if the omission would not be confusing to the consumer in the country of retail sale.

7.2 Country of origin

The country in which the cheese was manufactured shall be declared taking into account Section 4.5 of the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods.

When the product is packaged, cut, sliced, shredded or grated in another country, the country in which the aforementioned operations were carried out shall also be declared.

7.3 Declaration of Milkfat content

The milkfat content shall be declared in a manner found acceptable in the country of sale to the final consumer, either (i) as a percentage by mass, (ii) as a percentage of fat in dry matter, or (iii) in grams per serving as quantified in the label, provided that the number of servings is stated.

7.4 Date marking

Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 4.7.1 of the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991; *Codex Alimentarius*, Volume 1A), the date of manufacture shall be declared instead of the minimum durability information, provided that the product is not intended to be purchased as such by the final consumer.

7.5 Labelling of Non-Retail Containers

Information specified in Section 7 of this Standard and Sections 4.1 to 4.8 of the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991; *Codex Alimentarius*, Volume 1A) and, if necessary, storage instructions, shall be given either on the container or in accompanying documents, except that the name of the product, lot identification, and the name and address of the manufacturer or packer shall appear on the container, and in the absence of such a container, on the cheese itself. However, lot identification and name and address of the manufacturer or packer may be replaced by an identification mark, provided such a mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

8. METHODS OF SAMPLING AND ANALYSIS

See *Codex Alimentarius*, Volume 13.