

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
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Agenda Item 4(c)

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

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PROPOSED DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR CERTAIN CANNED VEGETABLES

**Comments have been received from
Egypt, France, Iran, Kenya, New Zealand, United States, and OEITFL.**

EGYPT

Accepts the Proposed draft Codex standard for certain canned vegetables.

FRANCE

This Draft Standard prepared by the France-led Working Group invites some comments:

- **Comments made by the Codex Secretariat**, especially on packing media as well as essential composition and quality factors, could be taken up:
- Item 3.2., by including only the reference to guidelines on packing media, as in the case of canned bamboo shoots;
- Item 3.4.2.5., to be added (Item 3.4.2.5 thus becoming 3.4.2.6.). The exact wording of Item 3.5: “A container that fails to meet one or more of the applicable uniformity requirements, as set out in Section 3.4.2, should be considered as “defective”.”
- Many of the specifications implemented in this Draft Standard come from the **OEITFL European Code**, which was adopted by all national professional organizations; given the importance of the European market for canned vegetables, one must ensure that its provisions are retained, especially in regard to packing designations, size and fill.
- This document is lengthy. Therefore, the United States have recently proposed that its format be reviewed for an easier read by users. This proposition calls for a different document structure: all specific provisions for any given vegetable would be consolidated while general provisions applicable to all would remain unchanged. For example, the structure for carrots would be:
 - Sections 1 Scope, 2, and 2.1 would remain intact
 - But in Section 2.2. Product Definitions:

- 2.2.1 Carrots
- 2.2.1.2.Carrot Styles
- 2.2.1.3.Uniformity of Carrots
- 2.2.1.4. Defects and Allowances for Carrots
- 2.2.1.5. Minimum Drained Weight of Carrots
- General provisions 3 (Essential Composition and Quality Factors), 4 (Additives), 5 (Contaminants), 6 (Hygiene), 7 (Weights and Measures), 8 (Labeling), and 9 (Methods of Analysis) would be located towards the end of the document la fin du document, following all vegetable-specific provisions targeted by the Standard.

DRAFT CODEX GUIDELINES FOR PACKING MEDIA (ANNEX)

A mistake seems to have occurred in Item 2.4: it should read “vegetable juice” rather than “fruit juice”.

I. SCOPE

1.1. The guidelines below specify the composition and labeling rules for packing media used with canned vegetables.

2. COMPOSITION AND DESIGNATIONS USED IN LABELING

2.1. Each of the following packing media may be used.

2.2. Water: eventually with added salt.

2.3. Water with added salt and/or sugars and/or other sweeteners such as honey, or without added sugars, with or without aromatic plants, spices or extracts thereof, seasoning, regular or concentrated fruit juice, oil 1 or vinegar 1. These ingredients must not alter the characteristic flavor of the product.

2.4. If one of the added ingredients does alter the characteristic flavor of the product, the name of said ingredient should be affixed to the commercial designation of the product or in close proximity.

2.5. The product may be labeled “vacuum-packed” or “without packing medium” when the product is packed without any packing medium, or in a liquid that does not exceed 20% of the net total weight of the product, the container being sealed in conditions leading to a minimum internal depression of the container of the following measured value, at 20°Celsius:

- 500 millibars 2 for containers of 2550 ml capacity or less;
- 300 millibars for containers of a capacity greater than 2550 ml.

IRAN

3.4.3.5 the defect of ” torn grains” should be more because of some technical problems.

7.2.4.2 Iran propose to modify the table. When minimum drained weight is 66 The space is not enough for liquid .So the minimum drained weight with a liquid medium should be fixed to 61 .

7.2.5 As the minimum drained weight have an effect on the filling, When green peas are not graded, minimum drained weight should be fixed to 60 which doesn’t lead to any difficulty.

KENYA

2.1 Product Definition

Point (1) We reject the proposal if Thailand include some products such as tomatoes etc.

Point (2) Packaging Medium

Kenya found “Vacuum packaged” very expensive to operate, so it does not concur with United States.

2.2 Specification of Products

Section 2.2.2

Kenya proposed that he sticks to “Green beans” but not French beans because this product is no longer grown in France only.

2.2.5 Labelling and styles

There is need to be distinctively labeled as “shoot of palm” or “shoot of cultivated palm”.

2.3 Styles

Kenya concurs with India comments for style. Developing countries do not have such sophisticated machineries/technologies for adherence such specifications and difference in size does not affect the safety of the consumer.

2.3.1 Carrots

Kenya agrees with France concerning length ways portions of carrots.

2.3.2 Green Beans and Wax Beans

Point (2) Cut/Broken

Kenya would wish to be convinced that there will be guarantee for the necessity of adequate homogeneity for both products, Green Beans and Wax Beans.

Point (3) Short Cuts

Kenya have agreed with whichever way it is done as long as there is upper limit of this 25% of pieces.

2.3.2.2 Grading Requirements for Beans (French Beans or Was Beans)

Kenya proposes that 8% for the four categories (1), (2), (3), and (4) to be included in the standard but not categories (5) and (6).

2.3.3.1 Asparagus-Shapes/Sizes

Kenya agrees with the modification of the clause in paragraph 1,2,3 and 4.

2.3.3.2 Asparagus Colour

Kenya have no problem with US proposal concerning the change of the percentage of Asparagus tips from 25% to 50%.

2.3.3.3 Asparagus size

Kenya agrees with the proposal of France.

2.3.4 Green Peas

Kenya proposes that Green peas remain as “garden peas” regardless of the colour.

2.3.5.2 Cultivated/wild palm Shoots-Diameter

Kenya concurs with French authorities concerning the method of measuring palm shoots.

2.3.7.2 Canned baby corn-size

Kenya proposes that whole baby corn to be packaged by count, provided that the size uniformity and quality are achieved. The Thailand proposal is accepted.

3.2 Packing Media

Kenya wants to retain natural starches as a packaging media.

3.4.2 Uniformity

Kenya have agreed with comments.

3.4.2.2 Carrots**Point (1) Length**

Kenya agrees with United States on “: length of the carrots”.

Point (3) Tolerances

Kenya have no problem with the “tolerances” US suggested.

3.4.2.3 Palms**Point (2) Diameter**

Kenya accepted the suggestion made by France.

3.4.3.1 Defects and Tolerances for Carrots

Is accepted to be maintained as it is now.

3.4.3.2 The two Methods to co-exist

Point (4) Pieces of beans: Morocco idea rejected.

Point (5) Pods without ends removed:

Kenya concurs with France.

3.4.3.2.2 Defect Tolerances

Proposal 2: Kenya supports US suggestions.

3.4.3.4 Defects and allowances for beans peas and sweet green peas.

3.4.3.5 Defects and Allowances for Sweet Corn

Kenya has no objection to appropriate wording generated. France justification is valid.

3.4.3.7 Defects and Allowances for mature Processed Peas

Kenya supports Thailand's suggestion.

3.4.3.8 Defects and Allowances for Baby Corn

Point (2) Kenya supports Thailand's proposal

4 FOOD ADDITIVES

More justification for the limitation is sought.

4.3 Colours

The interests are fairly covered.

5.0 Contaminants

Kenya suggests that we maintain the provisions as per the relevant Codex Alimentarius Commission Standards.

7.0 Minimum Drained Weight

Kenya accepted Uruguay suggestion.

8.1 Labelling

Kenya proposes that labeling should be compulsory.

PROPOSALS

Kenya proposes that products covered by the provisions of these standards to include maximum residue limits (MRLs) and microbiological limits table to ensure safety of the consumer. Kenya would prefer microbiological limit to be tabulated other than relying on one statement to cover the same.

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand notes that [this code] refers to the Codex General Principles of Food Hygiene, and Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

It is suggested that, where Hygiene Codes are referred to and do not contain relevant food safety requirements, this information should be included in the Standard. We suggest that this information should be about particular food safety hazards associated with the food products.

This information will be useful to the users of the end-document when developing their HACCP programme.

UNITED STATES

The Codex Drafting Group led by France has completed a draft in simplified format that is supported by the United States. The United States suggests:

1. The Working Group submit the revised text as a Conference Room Document
2. This Conference Room Document (new draft) be the text for discussion.

OEITFL

BACKGROUND NOTE

4. Product Definition – The last § of Section 2.1.(1) "This standard does not cover vegetables that are lacto-fermented, pickled or preserved in vinegar" should be inserted in § "1. Scope" for clarity.

8. Packing Media – OEITFL favours discontinuation of separate Codex Guidelines for Packing Media and requests detail to be incorporated in each product Standard, this making them stand alone.

PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD

OEITFL recommends the presentation of the standard to be amended in order to follow a "product" based approach. This would help the user of the standard that usually looks for data concerning a product such as carrot for instance and not the type of defects allowed in canned vegetables.

2.1 Product Definitions

The last § of Section 2.1.(1) "This standard does not cover vegetables that are lactofermented, pickled or preserved in vinegar" should be inserted in § "1. Scope" (see above).

2.3 Styles

2.3.3 Asparagus

2.3.3.1 Asparagus comes in the following shapes and sizes:

- White asparagus (or asparagus): White, cream or yellow white asparagus with occasionally slightly purple tips.
- Asparagus with green tip: White, cream or yellow white asparagus, the tip and the adjoining portion of which are green (not exceeding half the length from the extremity of the tip).
- Green asparagus: Green, light green or yellow green coloured asparagus.

2.3.3.2 Asparagus are canned as follows in terms of their colour:

- Asparagus: Tips and adjoining portions of the stalk shall measure 7 cm or more. Asparagus shall be peeled and size graded except they are declared "not peeled" and/or "not graded".
- Asparagus spears : Tips and adjoining portions of the stalk shall measure 12 cm or more.
- Short asparagus : Tips and adjoining portions of the stalk shall measure between 7 cm and 12 cm.
- Asparagus tips: Tips and adjoining portions of the stalks shall measure between 3 cm and 7 cm.
- Cut asparagus: Cut asparagus shall be peeled and cut transversally into sections from 2 cm to 7 cm long.
- Cut asparagus, with tips: The percentage of tips shall be equal to or greater than 15% of the drained weight.
- Cut asparagus, without tips : The occasional presence of tips is allowed.

2.3.4 Garden Peas – the two parts of the table need to define seed skin type i.e. "Green Peas – Smooth" and "Sweet Green Peas – Wrinkled" to aid clarity.

Green peas may be designated in terms of their size as follows:

Names	Diameter of the circular perforations of the corresponding screen (these perforations are those through which raw grains must pass)
GREEN PEAS - SMOOTH	
(1) Extra small green peas	7.5 mm
(2) Very small green peas	8.2 mm
(3) Small green peas	8.75 mm
(4) Medium green peas	9.3 mm
(5) Large green peas	Out of grade
SWEET GREEN PEAS - WRINKLED	
(1) Extra small sweet green peas	7.5 mm
(2) Very small sweet green peas	8.2 mm
(3) Small sweet green peas	9.3 mm
(4) Medium sweet green peas	10.2 mm
(5) Large sweet green peas	Out of grade
(6) Sweet green peas*	Not screened

Green peas may be canned with mixes from different screens subject to the mandatory statement on the label of the percentage in weight coming from the different screens according to Section 7.

*(Sweet) garden peas : garden peas of wrinkle varieties, in the natural proportion of sizes after beating and cleaning, without the removal or addition of screened peas.

The descriptor “sweet” for Garden Peas of wrinkled varieties in the natural proportion of sizes should be optional – allowing product to be labelled simply as “Garden Peas”.

3.2 Packing Media

3.2.1.2 Oil and vinegar are optional ingredients. They do not need to be listed here as they are again mentioned under 3.3 Optional ingredients.

3.4 Quality criteria

In general terms, we very much question the need for maintaining item 3.4.3 (defects and allowances) as it might be regarded as incorporating excessive details that complicate the Standard. If these specifications were to be maintained we recommend the following:

3.4.3.4 Green Peas

Defects	Maximum Limits (based on the weight of drained peas)
(1) Blemished peas (consisting of peas which are slightly stained or spotted)	3% m/m
(2) Seriously blemished peas (consisting of peas which are spotted, discoloured or otherwise blemished (including worm-eaten peas) to the extent that the appearance or eating quality is seriously affected)	1 % m/m
(3) Pea fragments (consisting of portions of peas; separated or individual cotyledons; crushed, partial, or broken cotyledons; and loose skins, but not including entire intact peas with skins detached)	10 % m/m A 10% tolerance for “fragments” covers off a wet season when high levels of split peas are naturally formed. Keeping the total defects at 10% maintains the overall quality standard.
(4) Yellow peas (entire pea is substantially yellow and is not a so-called 'blond' pea which is very pale in colour)	2 % m/m
(5) Extraneous plant material (consisting of any vine or leaf or pod material from the pea plant, or other harmless plant material not purposely added as an ingredient)	0.5 % m/m
Total of the foreign defects (1), (2), (3), (4), (5)	10 % m/m

3.4.3.7 Mature Processed Peas – The total of the defects (1), (2), (3) and (4) should not exceed 15% m/m by weight.

4.3_Colours – add authorised use of E142 Green S for use in canned mature Processed Peas. This then allows the combination of E102/E142 or E102/E133 to colour the products

INS No.	Name of Food Additive	Maximum Level
102	Tartrazine	100 mg/kg
133	Brilliant blue FCF	20 mg/kg
142 □	Green S	10 mg/kg
		(for use in canned mature processed peas, singly or in combination)
INS No.	Name of Food Additive	Maximum Level
386	Disodium ethylenediamine-tetra-acetate (EDTA)	30 mg/kg (for use in canned baby corn) 250 mg/kg (for use in canned and bottled pulses, legumes, mushrooms and artichokes)
512	Stannous chloride	25 mg/kg (calculated as tin, for use in canned and bottled white asparagus)

7.2 Minimum Drained Weights7.2.1 Carrots – 56.5% minimum drained weight for all diameter ranges.7.2.2 Green Beans – 52% for "whole" and "other presentations" rather than 50% and 54% respectively.

Type of presentation	Minimum Drained Weights (%)
Whole	52
Other presentations, except strips	52
Strips	50

7.2.4 Sweet corn – with a packing medium 66%

Type of presentation	Minimum drained weight (%)
With a liquid packing medium	66
Vacuum packaged or without a liquid Packing medium	67

7.2.5 Green Peas – ungraded figure should be 60% (compromise figure for sweet green peas as mentioned in the annex to the proposed draft standard) rather than 62.5%.

Type of presentation	Minimum drained weight (%)
Extra small	66
Very small	
Small	
Medium	62.5
Large	
Not graded	60

The Drained Weight proposed under items 7.2.1, 7.2.2, 7.2.4 and 7.2.5 are those recognised and commonly applied by the EU industry taking into consideration some reductions necessary to the type of vegetables grown in some countries such as the UK. The quoted figures are detailed in the OEITFL Code of Practice -September 1996.

ANNEX

2.1.1 OEITFL agrees to widening the scope to include pre-processed raw materials.

2.1.2 OEITFL agrees with USA/France amendment (deletion of "without packing medium").

2.2.2 OEITFL agrees with USA/France amendments.

2.3 OEITFL totally disagrees with deletion of quoted sub paragraphs as these are needed to maintain basic standards worldwide. Deletion of these subparagraphs would question the use of such a standard.

2.3.4 OEITFL insists on the term "Garden Peas" to be retained.

7.2.5 Peas – The requested 59% for ungraded material, a compromise of 60% would be acceptable.