

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
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ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 4(a)

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

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DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR CERTAIN CANNED VEGETABLES
(GENERAL PROVISIONS)

(Comments in response to CL 2007/22-PFV)

Comments at Step 6 from Australia and the European Community

AUSTRALIA

The Australian Government is pleased to forward the following comments with respect to the two Draft Standards at Step 6 of the Procedure in response to circular letter CL 2007/22-PFV:

Draft revised Codex Standard for Canned Vegetables (general provisions)

4.4 Firming Agents

- Australia allows the use of calcium chloride and calcium gluconate to be determined by GMP. Under Table 3 of the GSFA calcium chloride and calcium gluconate are permitted to GMP. Australia believes that limiting the addition of calcium chloride and calcium gluconate to canned mature processed peas is unnecessarily restrictive and suggests removing the restriction from Section 4.4.

7.2 Minimum Drained Weight

- Australia questions the need for this clause provided product meets declared net weight conditions as outlined in the *General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Food* (subclause 4.3).

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

1. DRAFT CODEX STANDARD FOR CERTAIN CANNED VEGETABLES

General comments : bearing in mind that the proposed draft codex standard for certain canned vegetables is an amalgamation of several individual standards, the scope of the food categories covered by the in-construction draft codex standard for certain canned vegetables is more restricted (sauce-based canned vegetables are not covered for instance). Therefore, the technological needs of some additives, justified under the individual standards, may no longer be justified in the present one. This should be taken into account when re-evaluating the technological needs of the candidate food additives.

Acidity Regulators

- **Tartrates**

The EC questions the technological need for using up to 10 000 mg/kg (expressed as tartaric acid) of tartrates in canned vegetables.

- **Phosphates**

As a general principle, the EC does not support the inclusion of any of the phosphate containing food additives listed in the table (INS 338, INS 339i-iii, INS 340i-iii, INS 341i-iii, INS 342i-ii, INS 343i-iii, INS 450i-ii,iii,v,vi,vii, INS 451i-ii, INS 452i-v, INS 542) in canned vegetables. As the primary function of the Phosphates is water-retention, the EC questions the technological need for such uses.

Colours

As a general principle, the EC does not support the inclusion of any of the colours listed in the table in the canned vegetables standard because their use could mislead the consumer.

Comments on Table 3 food additives to be used in certain canned vegetables

The EC is of the view that the Commodity Committee should evaluate the technological justification of the use of individual food additives, and list the additives that really achieve the desired effect in the respective food categories. Therefore, we do not support the proposal to allow the use of all the additives used in accordance with Table 3 of the Codex General Standard for Food Additives (CODEX STAN 192).

In addition, some of these food additives which may have had a technological function in the original standards when applied to vegetables containing sauces and fats is no longer justified for vegetables in the packing media according to the proposed draft Codex Standard for certain canned vegetables.

In addition to the above, the European Community would like to submit the following **additional comments** in response to Codex Circular Letter CL 2007/22- PFV regarding the "Draft Codex standard for certain canned vegetables".

The European Community already submitted written comments regarding the **food additive provisions** in the "Draft Codex Standard for certain canned vegetables".

2. SCOPE

It would be useful if in certain cases the scope could be broadened to include products for industrial processing, with details contained in the corresponding annex.

3. DESCRIPTION

4. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 Composition

3.1.1 Basic ingredients

We suggest replacing the sentence by:

“Vegetables or mixtures of vegetables as defined in Section 2 and packing medium appropriate to the product”.

5. FOOD ADDITIVES

The European Community sent comments to the Codex Secretariat on 4 December 2007 in response to Codex Circular Letter CL 2007/22- PFV: **Food Additive Provisions in the Draft Codex Standard for certain canned vegetables.**

7. WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

7.1.1 Minimum fill:

The requirement in 7.1.1 to the effect that the product should occupy not less than 90% of the water capacity of the container “*minus any necessary head space according to good manufacturing practices*” should be amended. The figure of 90% should remain the rule. It is already enshrined in the Codex standards already adopted and widely used in international business. On the other hand, it is possible to provide for exceptions. For example, minimum fill problems may be encountered in the case of very small packagings and flexible packagings. The wording should therefore be as follows:

“The container should be well filled with the product, which should occupy not less than 90% of the water capacity of the container (minus any necessary head space in the case of small packagings and flexible packagings according to good manufacturing practices).”

7.1.4 Minimum drained weight

Sections 7.1.4.2 and 7.1.2 should both be in brackets, in view of the current work to prepare a method for metrological checks on the net drained weight of canned vegetables.

8. LABELLING

8.2.3 Other styles: The wording as changed by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling should be used here.