

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of  
the United Nations



World Health  
Organization

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## GENERAL STANDARD FOR THE USE OF DAIRY TERMS

CXS 206-1999<sup>1</sup>

Adopted in 1999. Amended in 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> This Standard replaced the Code of Principles Concerning Milk and Milk Products.

### 2022 Amendment

The following amendment was made to the text of the standard following decisions taken at the forty-fifth session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in December 2022.

Page	Location	Text in previous version	Text in amended version
4	Section 5 Labelling of Prepackaged foods	Prepackaged milk, milk products and composite milk products shall be labelled in accordance with Section 4 of the <i>General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods</i> (CXS 1-1985), except to the extent otherwise expressly provided in a specific Codex standard or in Section 4 of this Standard.	Section 5 Labelling  Section 5.1 Pre-packaged foods  Pre-packaged milk, milk products and composite milk products shall be labelled in accordance with Section 4 of the <i>General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods</i> (CXS 1-1985), except to the extent otherwise expressly provided in a specific Codex standard or in Section 4 of this Standard.
4	Section 5.2 Non-Retail Containers		Section 5.2 Non-Retail Containers  The labelling of non-retail containers should be in accordance with the <i>General Standard for the Labelling of Non-Retail Containers of Foods</i> (CXS 346-2021).

## 1. SCOPE

This General Standard applies to the use of dairy terms in relation to foods to be offered to the consumer or for further processing.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Milk** is the normal mammary secretion of milking animals obtained from one or more milkings without either addition to it or extraction from it, intended for consumption as liquid milk or for further processing.
- 2.2 Milk product** is a product obtained by any processing of milk, which may contain food additives, and other ingredients functionally necessary for the processing.
- 2.3 Composite milk product** is a product of which the milk, milk products or milk constituents are an essential part in terms of quantity in the final product, as consumed provided that the constituents not derived from milk are not intended to take the place in part or in whole of any milk constituent.
- 2.4 A reconstituted milk product** is a product resulting from the addition of water to the dried or concentrated form of the product in the amount necessary to re-establish the appropriate water to solids ratio.
- 2.5 A recombined milk product** is a product resulting from the combining of milkfat and milk-solids-non-fat in their preserved forms with or without the addition of water to achieve the appropriate milk product composition.
- 2.6 Dairy terms** means names, designations, symbols, pictorial or other devices which refer to or are suggestive, directly or indirectly, of milk or milk products.

## 3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Foods shall be described or presented in such a manner as to ensure the correct use of dairy terms intended for milk and milk products, to protect consumers from being confused or misled and to ensure fair practices in the food trade.

## 4. APPLICATION OF DAIRY TERMS

### 4.1 General requirements

- 4.1.1** The name of the food shall be declared in accordance with Section 4.1 of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985).
- 4.1.2** A word or words denoting the animal or, in the case of mixtures, all animals from which the milk has been derived shall be inserted immediately before or after the designation of the product. Such declarations are not required if the consumer would not be misled by their omission.

### 4.2 Use of the term milk

- 4.2.1** Only a food complying with the definition in Section 2.1 may be named "milk". If such a food is offered for sale as such it shall be named "raw milk" or other such appropriate term as would not mislead or confuse the consumer.
- 4.2.2** Milk which is modified in composition by the addition and/or withdrawal of milk constituents may be identified with a name using the term "milk", provided that a clear description of the modification to which the milk has been subjected is given in close proximity to the name.
- 4.2.3** Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 4.2.2 of this Standard, milk which is adjusted for fat and/or protein content and which is intended for direct consumption, may also be named "milk" provided that:
- it is sold only where such adjustment is permitted in the country of retail sale;
  - the minimum and maximum limits of fat and/or protein content (as the case may be) of the adjusted milk are specified in the legislation of the country of retail sale. In this case the protein content shall be within the limits of natural variation within that country;
  - the adjustment has been performed according to methods permitted by the legislation of the country of retail sale, and only by the addition and/or withdrawal of milk constituents, without altering the whey protein to casein ratio; and
  - the adjustment is declared in accordance with Section 4.2.2 of this standard.

### 4.3 Use of the names of milk products in Codex commodity standards

- 4.3.1** Only a product complying with the provisions in a Codex standard for a milk product may be named as specified in the Codex standard for the product concerned.

**4.3.2** Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 4.3.1 of this Standard and Section 4.1.2 of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985), a milk product may be named as specified in the Codex standard for the relevant milk product when manufactured from milk, the fat and/or protein content of which has been adjusted, provided that the compositional criteria in the relevant standard are met.

**4.3.3** Products that are modified through the addition and/or withdrawal of milk constituents may be named with the name of the relevant milk product in association with a clear description of the modification to which the milk product has been subjected provided that the essential product characteristics are maintained and that the limits of such compositional modifications shall be detailed in the standards concerned as appropriate.

#### **4.4 Use of terms for reconstituted and recombined milk products**

Milk and milk products may be named as specified in the Codex Standard for the relevant milk product when made from recombined or reconstituted milk or from recombination or reconstitution of milk products in accordance with Section 4.1.2 of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985), if the consumer would not be misled or confused.

#### **4.5 Use of terms for composite milk products**

A product complying with the description in Section 2.3 may be named with the term “milk” or the name specified for a milk product as appropriate, provided that a clear description of the other characterizing ingredient(s) (such as flavouring foods, spices, herbs and flavours) is given in close proximity to the name.

#### **4.6 Use of dairy terms for other foods**

**4.6.1** The names referred to in Sections 4.2 to 4.5 may only be used as names or in the labelling of milk, milk products or composite milk products.

**4.6.2** However, the provision in Section 4.6.1 shall not apply to the name of a product the exact nature of which is clear from traditional usage or when the name is clearly used to describe a characteristic quality of the non-milk product.

**4.6.3** In respect of a product which is not milk, a milk product or a composite milk product, no label, commercial document, publicity material or any form of point of sale presentation shall be used which claims, implies or suggests that the product is milk, a milk product or a composite milk product, or which refers to one or more of these products<sup>2</sup>.

**4.6.4** However, with regard to products referred to in Section 4.6.3, which contain milk or a milk product, or milk constituents, which are an essential part in terms of characterization of the product, the term “milk”, or the name of a milk product may be used in the description of the true nature of the product, provided that the constituents not derived from milk are not intended to take the place, in part or in whole, of any milk constituent. For these products dairy terms may be used only if the consumer would not be misled.

If however the final product is intended to substitute milk, a milk product or composite milk product, dairy terms shall not be used.

For products referred to in Section 4.6.3 which contain milk, or a milk product, or milk constituents, which are not an essential part in terms of characterization of the product, dairy terms can only be used in the list of ingredients, in accordance with the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985). For these products dairy terms cannot be used for other purposes.

## **5. LABELLING**

### **5.1 Pre-packaged foods**

Pre-packaged milk, milk products and composite milk products shall be labelled in accordance with Section 4 of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985), except to the extent otherwise expressly provided in a specific Codex standard or in Section 4 of this Standard.

### **5.2 Non-retail containers**

The labelling of non-retail containers should be in accordance with the *General Standard for the Labelling of Non-Retail Containers of Foods* (CXS 346-2021).

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<sup>2</sup> This excludes descriptive names as defined in Section 4.1.1.3 of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (GSLPF) and ingredients lists as defined in Section 4.2.1.2 of the GSLPF providing the consumer would not be misled.