

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 10

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

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DRAFT REGIONAL STANDARD FOR QUICK-FROZEN DUMPLINGS (Asia)

(at Step 7)

(Prepared by the electronic working group chaired by China)

Codex Members and Observers wishing to submit comments at Step 7 on Appendix I of this document should do so as instructed in CL 2025/56-ASIA available on the Codex webpage/Circular Letters:

<http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/circular-letters/en/>

INTRODUCTION

1. At CCASIA20¹ held in September 2016, China submitted a discussion paper and project document for the development of a Codex regional standard for quick-frozen dumplings (Jiaozi). CCASIA20 requested China to revise the discussion paper and project document for new work for consideration at the next session.
2. Based on the request of CCASIA20, the following revisions were made for consideration by CCASIA21:
 - i. More information on the diversification of national legislation, food safety concerns, impediments to trade and amenability of this product to standardization had been provided.
 - ii. The discussion paper had clearly addressed all the information requested under “Criteria for establishment of work priorities”.
 - iii. The name of the product in the discussion paper had been changed from “quick-frozen dumplings (Jiaozi)” to “quick-frozen dumplings”.
3. At CCASIA21² held in September 2019, China further highlighted the main amendments related to the removal of Jiaozi from the product name, the extension of the product definition to include dough made from rice flour, and the inclusion of seafood, nuts and, etc. in the list of possible ingredients used as filling. Members, welcoming the revised project document, expressed their general support for the new work. One Member also emphasized the importance of ensuring the inclusivity of the standard. The product definition had been revised based on opinions provided to CCASIA21 in ASIA21/CRD3 Rev.
4. After discussion, CCASIA21 agreed to:
 - i. forward the project document to CAC43(2020) for approval as new work; and
 - ii. establish an electronic working group (EWG) chaired by China, working in English, subject to approval of the new work, to prepare the proposed draft standard for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at CCASIA22(2022).
5. In November 2020, CAC43³ approved the new work proposal on the development of a regional standard for quick-frozen dumplings (Job No. N03-2020), noting that as recommended by CCEXEC79(2020), products to be covered should be specific to and predominantly traded in the region. An EWG on quick-frozen dumplings chaired by China, working in English was created to facilitate the progress of this project. The EWG worked by correspondence (email).

¹ REP17/ASIA paragraph 118

² REP20/ASIA paragraphs 99-102

³ REP20/CAC paragraph 55 and Appendix V

6. In October 2022, CCASIA22⁴ agreed to:
 - i. forward the proposed draft standard for quick-frozen dumplings to CAC46 (2023) for adoption at Step 5 (REP23/ASIA Appendix VIII); and
 - ii. establish an EWG chaired by China, working in English, to consider the section on food additives as well as the replies to the request for comments at Step 6 and provide a revised version for consideration at CCASIA23(2025). The EWG worked by correspondence (email).
7. In December 2023, CAC46⁵ adopted at Step 5 the *Regional standard for quick frozen dumplings (Asia)*.

OBJECTIVE OF THE EWG

8. The objective of this EWG is to prepare the draft standard for circulation for comments on the food additives section as well as the replies to the request for comments at Step 6 and provide a revised version for consideration at CCASIA23.

PARTICIPATION

9. In May 2023, the EWG invitation was circulated to Codex Members and Observers. China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Thailand registered to participate in the EWG. The EWG Chair also sent the invitation to Members via the Codex Secretariat and CCASIA Secretariat to encourage wider participation especially from those countries and regions who also produce and consume the same product.

COMMENTS AND CONSULTATIONS

10. In June 2023, the Codex Secretariat sent a circular letter (CL) to all Codex contact points for comments at Step 6 on the draft regional standard for quick frozen dumpling (CL 2023/53/OCS-ASIA). Comments in reply to CL 2023/53/OCS-ASIA has been compiled in CX/CAC 23/46/3 Add. 1 Appendix III) and considered by CAC46.
11. China prepared the revised draft standard and requested input through four rounds of consultation respectively in June 2023, July 2024, May 2025, and June 2025.
12. In June 2025, a virtual working group (VWG) meeting was held with the participation from China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Thailand.
13. Comments and proposed changes with rationales and justifications are all incorporated into the draft regional standard for quick frozen dumplings.

DISCUSSION ON THE DRAFT STANDARD

Product Definition

14. Japan proposed to add an adjective “unleavened” before the word “dough” to avoid complicated discussion on food categorization and to better reflect real-world practices. Similar products with “leavened skin” could be categorized in food category (FC) 07.1.5 (Steamed breads and buns) of the *General standard for food additives* (GSFA, CXS 192-1995).

Food Additives

15. The EWG had extensive discussions on the appropriate food categories for products conforming to the standard, including the need to separate dough and fillings. The EWG also considered the presentation of the food additive provisions and the appropriateness of listing food additives, along with their maximum use levels, under specific food categories for products covered by the standard.
16. China originally proposed to modify the description of FC 07.1.5 “Steamed breads and buns” in the GSFA to include dumpling (*jiaozi*) into this subcategory, given the identical functional needs for food additives between dumplings, filled dumplings and *baozi*. Reclassifying dumplings as specified in this draft standard under FC 07.1.5 would strengthen consistency of commodity standards to GSFA:

07.1.5 Steamed breads and buns: Oriental-style leavened or unleavened wheat or rice products that are cooked in a steamer or other cooking utensils. Products may be made with or without filling. In China, products without filling are called steamed bread (*mantou*), and those with filling are called steamed buns (*baozi* or *bao*) or dumplings (jiaozi). Twisted rolls of various shapes (*huajuan*) may also be prepared. Examples include: filled dumplings and steamed bun with meat, jam or other filling (*manjyu*).

17. Thailand suggested that the details in Section 2.1 Product Definition cover a broader range of products compared to those specified in FC 07.1.5. For example, some products such as Thai dessert called Bua Loy

⁴ REP23/ASIA paragraph 70 and Appendix VIII

⁵ REP23/CAC paragraph 26 and Appendix III

Nam Khing (black sesame dumplings⁶ in ginger tea) are normally cooked by boiling the dumplings in water without using a steamer, which is different from the description provided in FC 07.1.5. Also, some products such as *xiājiǎo* and *shāomài* do not need to be leavened as specified in the description of FC 07.1.5.

18. The Republic of Korea expressed support for the proposal to manage food additives using a tabular format listing individual additive, while also suggesting several modifications. The Republic of Korea proposed that paprika extract (INS 160c(ii)) be permitted for use in both dumplings and dumpling skins, in accordance with good manufacturing practices (GMP).

19. At the VWG meeting held in June 2025, some EWG members suggested that the food additives may be separately managed by the skin and the filling with a general reference to FC 16.0 “Prepared foods”, as this product is a mixture of multiple components.

20. The Republic of Korea suggested that if the food additives for the fillings of the product were set separately based on the food categories of the fillings (e.g. meat, seafood), there might be ambiguity in determining the scope of the predominant component. This could lead to uncertainty in the application of the standard.

21. Japan proposed to delete the first paragraph of the proposed food additive provision: “Quick-frozen dumpling is a mixture of multiple components that are included in other food categories as specified in food category 16.0 “Prepared foods” of the *General standard for food additives* (CXS 192-1995). The food additives of the products are managed separately by the skin and the filling in this Standard”. Given that food category 16.0 in the GSFA should only be used when no appropriate category exists in FC 1.0 to 15.0, and that all components of frozen dumplings (skin and filling) are already covered by these categories, the use of FC 16.0 is not justified. Furthermore, according to the revised descriptor of food category 16.0, any provision included under this category must fulfil strict criteria related to technological justification. Specifically, provisions may only be listed in this category if the additive is needed:

- (i) solely to have a technological function in the prepared food as sold to the consumer; or
- (ii) at a use level that has an intentional technological function in the prepared food that exceeds the use level that can be accounted for by carry-over from the individual components.

22. Japan proposed to rewrite the description sentence into: “Acidity regulators, colours, preservatives, raising agents, stabilizers, humectants, thickeners and emulsifiers in accordance with Tables 1 and 2 of the *General standard for food additives* (CXS 192-1995) in food category 06.4.3 (Pre-cooked pastas and noodles and like products (excluding products of food category 04.1.2.12 and 06.5)) or listed in Table 3 of the *General standard for food additives* (CXS 192-1995) are acceptable for use in foods conforming to this standard”. The rationale of this proposed change is: Current description allows to use all Table 3 additives for dumpling conforming to this standard. If specific food additives belonging same functional classes of Table 1 and 2 of the GSFA are used for foods conforming to the standard. For excluding products of food category 04.1.2.12 and 06.5: the descriptor of FC 04.1.2.12 (Cooked fruit) explains this food category includes peach dumplings (baked peaches with a sweet dough covering). The descriptor of FC 06.5 (Cereal and starch-based desserts (e.g. rice pudding, tapioca pudding) explains this food category includes rice flour dumpling (dango).

23. Japan suggested that food additives be regarded as being used in dumplings themselves, so the distinction made separately by the note (i.e. “Used for dumpling skins and fillings”) in the table of food additives could all be removed. Japan proposed some food additives that has already been listed in FC 06.4.3, but the proposed maximum level (ML) currently described does not exceed the ML established for FC 06.4.3: propylene glycol alginate (INS 405), phosphates (INS 338; 339(i)-(iii); 340(i)-(iii); 341(i)-(iii); 342(i),(ii); 343(i)-(iii); 450(i)-(iii),(v)-(vii),(ix); 451(i),(ii); 452(i)-(v); 542), propylene glycol esters of fatty acids (INS 477), sucrose esters (INS 473; 473a; 474), carotenes, beta- (INS 160a(i), (iii), (iv)), Benzoates (INS 210-213) and sulfites (INS 220-225; 539). To ensure the consistency of the commodity standard to the GSFA, the MLs should be consistent to that of GSFA. Therefore, the MLs given in the GSFA is adopted for use in this standard for consistency reasons.

24. Japan suggested that the ingredients of the fillings be diverse as shown in section 3.1.2, and it would be too complicated and impractical to assign food categories by the type of ingredients. If there are no multiple food categories, there will be no issues with which food category a product actually falls into. Japan indicated its belief that assigning a single food category is reasonable to confirm whether the product meets the food additive provisions. In this sense, the descriptor FC 06.4.3 (Pre-cooked pastas and noodles and like products) includes not only frozen products sold directly to the consumer but also the starch component of prepared meals like canned spaghetti and meatballs entrée. Therefore, dumplings can fall into FC 06.4.3. Accordingly, FC 07.1.5 (Steamed breads and buns) is not appropriate because Japanese dumplings are cooked by not only steaming but also grilling and boiling.

⁶ Dough made from glutinous rice flour with ground black sesame seed filling.

25. As Japan and the Codex Secretariat mentioned at the VWG meeting held in June 2025, it should be noted that potassium aluminium sulfate (INS 522) had been previously included in the GSFA but was removed in 2012 due to concerns over dietary aluminium intake. The Republic of Korea was asked to submit the justification report for the proposed use of potassium aluminium sulfate (INS 522), aluminium ammonium sulfate (INS 523) as stabilizer and some other colours in the draft standard, but no justification report was provided. Therefore, INS 522, INS 523 and some other colours were removed from this draft standard.

26. China proposed to assign FC 06.4.3 as the food category for the product specified in this draft standard based on members' comments and discussions.

CONCLUSIONS

27. Based on the discussion in the EWG, the EWG Chair proposed Section 4 on Food Additives which has been placed in square brackets for further consideration by CCASIA23.

28. The EWG Chair noted that the sampling plan for this product would be considered under Agenda Item 3 and, if agreed, would be forwarded to CCMAS for endorsement.

29. For other sections, the comments received in the EWG have been addressed and the draft standard has been revised to incorporate Members' comments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

30. CCASIA23 is invited to:

- finalize the text in square brackets under Section 4 on Food Additives in Appendix I of the document;
- note that the sampling plans discussed under Agenda item 3 in relation to this standard would need to be endorsed by CCMAS; and
- consider and forward the draft standard to CAC for adoption at Step 8 after all the necessary endorsement requirements for food additive and food labelling provisions have been fulfilled.

DRAFT REGIONAL STANDARD FOR QUICK-FROZEN DUMPLINGS
(At Step 7)

1. SCOPE

This standard applies to the product as defined in Section 2, which is quick-frozen and intended for direct consumption or further processing as appropriate.

2. DESCRIPTION

2.1. Product definition

Quick-frozen dumplings are prepared from unleavened dough made from flour with fillings of one or more ingredients, e.g. meat, poultry, eggs, aquatic products, fruits and vegetables, nuts, and their derived products. The filling should be wrapped into a rolled piece of dough and may or may not be cooked before being quickly frozen.

2.2. Process definition

Quick-frozen dumplings are subject to a freezing process in appropriate equipment and complying with the conditions laid down hereafter. This freezing operation shall be carried out in such a way that the range of temperature of maximum crystallization is passed quickly. Quick-frozen dumplings shall be subjected to a quick-freezing process and maintained at -18° C or colder at all points in the cold chain, subject to permitted temperature tolerances. The recognized practice of repacking quick-frozen products under temperature-controlled conditions is permitted.

2.3. Handling practice

The product shall be handled under such conditions as will maintain the quality during transportation, storage and distribution up to and including the time of final sale. It is recommended that during storage, transportation, distribution and retail, the product be handled in accordance with the provisions of the *Code of practice for the processing and handling of quick-frozen foods* (CXC 8-1976).

2.4. Product types

2.4.1. Raw dumplings

This product is not cooked or is partially cooked before being quick-frozen and needs to be cooked before consumption.

2.4.2. Cooked dumplings

This product is fully cooked before being quick-frozen, and if necessary, needs to be reheated before consumption.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1. Ingredients

3.1.1. Basic ingredients

Wheat flour and/or other kinds of flour, e.g. corn flour, rice flour, coarse grain flour, buckwheat flour, cereal grains flour, starch, etc.

3.1.2. Optional ingredients

Optional ingredients are:

- i. meat
- ii. poultry
- iii. aquatic products
- iv. fruits and vegetables (including edible fungi, pulses and legume vegetables)
- v. eggs
- vi. nuts and seeds
- vii. beans
- viii. edible oil and fat

- ix. derived products of i) to viii)
- x. sugar
- xi. edible salt
- xii. spices and culinary herbs
- xiii. seasonings; and
- xiv. other ingredients as appropriate.

3.2. Quality criteria

3.2.1. General requirements

Quick-frozen dumplings should have the following qualities:

- the filling shall not be less than 30 percent of the product's total weight; and
- the filling shall be wrapped in an appropriate form.

3.2.2. Defects and allowances

Quick-frozen dumplings should be substantially free from the following defects:

- visible foreign matters⁷ outside and inside the product; and
- broken wrapping dough and filling leaking from the wrapping dough.

3.3. Classification of defective

A container that fails to meet the quality requirements set out in Section 3.2 shall be considered defective.

3.4. Lot acceptance

A lot shall be considered meeting the requirements of this standard when:

- the number of "defectives" as, defined in Section 3.3, does not exceed the acceptance number (c) of an appropriate sampling plan with an acceptance quality limit (AQL) of 6.5.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

[Acidity regulators, colours, preservatives, raising agents, stabilizers, humectants, thickeners and emulsifiers in accordance with Tables 1 and 2 of the *General standard for food additives* (CXS 192-1995) in food category 06.4.3 (Pre-cooked pastas and noodles and like products (excluding products of food category 04.1.2.12 and 06.5)) or listed in Table 3 of the *General standard for food additives* (CXS 192-1995) are acceptable for use in foods conforming to this standard.

The flavourings used in products covered by this standard should comply with the *Guidelines for the use of flavourings* (CXG 66-2008).]

5. CONTAMINANTS

The product covered by this standard shall comply with the maximum levels (MLs) 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 (MRLs) for pesticides established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

6. HYGIENE

It is recommended that the product 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 practice for the processing and handling of quick-frozen foods* (CXC 8-1976) and other codes of practice, relevant to this product, recommended by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

The product 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. WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

7.1. Net weight

The weight of the products covered by the provisions of this standard shall be indicated in accordance with the

⁷ Any visible objectionable foreign detectable matter or material not usually associated with the raw material used.

General standard for the labelling of pre-packaged foods (CXS 1-1985).

7.2. Lot acceptance

The requirements for net weight should be deemed to be complied with when the average net weight of all containers examined is not less than the declared weight, provided there is no unreasonable shortage in individual containers.

8. LABELLING

The product covered by the provisions of this standard shall be labelled in accordance with the *General standard for the labelling of pre-packaged foods (CXS 1-1985)*, in addition, the following provision shall apply.

8.1. Name of the product

The name of the product shall be “quick-frozen dumplings”. The label should properly indicate that the package contains “raw dumplings” or “cooked dumplings”. Other names may be used in accordance with the law and custom of the country in which the product is sold and in a manner not misleading to consumers.

8.2. Storage instruction

The label shall include terms to indicate that the product shall be stored at a temperature of -18° C or colder.

8.3. Labelling of 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)*.

9. PACKAGING

Packaging used for quick-frozen dumplings shall in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *Code of practice for the processing and handling of quick-frozen foods (CXC 8-1976)*.

10. METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

For checking 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.