

CODEX STANDARD FOR CANNED CRAB MEAT
CODEX STAN 90 - 1981, REV.1-1995

1. SCOPE

This standard applies to canned crab meat. It does not apply to specialty products where crab meat constitutes less than 50% m/m of the contents.

2. DESCRIPTION

2.1 PRODUCT DEFINITION

Canned crab meat is prepared singly or in combination from the leg, claw, body and shoulder meat from which the shell has been removed, of any of the edible species of the sub-order *Brachyura* of the order Decapoda and all species of the family *Lithodidae*.

2.2 PROCESS DEFINITION

Canned crab meat is packed in hermetically sealed containers and shall have received a processing treatment sufficient to ensure commercial sterility.

2.3 PRESENTATION

Any presentation of the product shall be permitted provided that it:

- (i) meets all requirements of this standard; and
- (ii) is adequately described on the label to avoid confusing or misleading the consumer.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 CRAB MEAT

Canned crab meat shall be prepared from sound crab of the species designated in 2.1 which are alive immediately prior to the commencement of processing and of a quality suitable for human consumption.

3.2 OTHER INGREDIENTS

The packing medium and all other ingredients used shall be of food grade quality and conform to all applicable Codex standards.

3.3 FINAL PRODUCT

Products shall meet the requirements of this Standard when lots examined in accordance with Section 9 comply with provisions set out in Section 8. Products shall be examined by the methods given in Section 7.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

Only the use of the following additives is permitted.

Additive

Maximum Level in the final product

Acidity Regulators

330 Citric acid

338 Orthophosphoric acid

450 Disodium diphosphate

GMP

10 mg/kg expressed as P₂O₅, singly or in combination (includes natural phosphate)

Sequestrant

385 Calcium disodium EDTA

250 mg/kg

Flavour Enhancer

621 Monosodium glutamate

GMP

5. HYGIENE AND HANDLING

5.1 The final product shall be free from any foreign material that poses a threat to human health.

5.2 When tested by appropriate methods of sampling and examination prescribed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), the product:

- (i) shall be free from micro-organisms capable of development under normal conditions of storage; and
- (ii) shall not contain any other substance including substances derived from microorganisms in amounts which may represent a hazard to health in accordance with standards established by the CAC; and
- (iii) shall be free from container integrity defects which may compromise the hermetic seal.

5.3 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 Recommended International Code of Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 3-1997) and the following relevant Codes:

- (i) the Recommended International Code of Practice for Canned Fish (CAC/RCP 10-1976);
- (ii) the Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods (CAC/RCP 23-1979);
- (iv) the Recommended International Code of Practice for Crabs (CAC/RCP 28-1983);
- (iii) The sections on the Products of Aquaculture in the Proposed Draft International Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products (under elaboration)¹

6. LABELLING

In addition to provisions of the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 3 - 1999) the following specific provisions apply:

6.1 NAME OF THE FOOD

6.1.1 The name of the product shall be "crab" or "crabmeat".

6.1.2 In addition, the label shall include other descriptive terms that will avoid misleading or confusing the consumer.

7. SAMPLING, EXAMINATION AND ANALYSES

7.1 SAMPLING

- (i) Sampling of lots for examination of the final product as prescribed in Section 3.3 shall be in accordance with the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Sampling Plans for Prepackaged Foods (1969) (AQL-6.5) (Ref. CAC/RM 42-1969).
- (ii) Sampling of lots for examination of net weight and drained weight shall be carried out in accordance with an appropriate sampling plan meeting the criteria established by the CAC.

7.2 SENSORIC AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Samples taken for sensoric and physical examination shall be assessed by persons trained in such examination and in accordance with Annex A and the *Guidelines for the Sensory Evaluation of Fish and Shellfish in Laboratories* (CAC/GL 31 - 1999).

¹ The Proposed Draft Code of Practice, when finalized, will replace all current Codes of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products

7.3 DETERMINATION OF NET WEIGHT

Net weight of all sample units shall be determined by the following procedures:

- (i) Weigh the unopened container.
- (ii) Open the container and remove the contents.
- (iii) Weigh the empty container, including the end and any wrapping material, after removing excess liquid and adhering meat.
- (iv) Subtract the weight of the empty container and any wrapping material from the weight of the unopened container. The resultant figure is the net content.

7.4 DETERMINATION OF DRAINED WEIGHT

The drained weight of all sample units shall be determined by the following procedures:

- (i) Maintain the container at a temperature of between 20°C and 30°C for a minimum of 12 hours prior to examination.
- (ii) Open the container and distribute the contents on a pre-weighed circular sieve having a wire mesh with square openings of 2.8 mm x 2.8 mm.
- (iii) Remove all wrapping material and incline the sieve at an angle of approximately 17-20° and allow the meat to drain two minutes, measured from the time the product is poured onto the sieve.
- (iv) Weigh the sieve containing the drained crab meat.
- (v) Determine the weight of drained crab meat by subtracting the mass of the sieve from the mass of the sieve with drained product.

8. DEFINITION OF DEFECTIVES

A sample unit will be considered defective when it exhibits any of the properties defined below.

8.1 FOREIGN MATTER

The presence in the sample unit of any matter, which has not been derived from crab meat, does not pose a threat to human health, and is readily recognized without magnification or is present at a level determined by any method including magnification that indicates non-compliance with good manufacturing and sanitation practices.

8.2 ODOUR/FLAVOUR

A sample unit affected by persistent and distinct objectionable odours or flavours indicative of decomposition or rancidity.

8.3 TEXTURE

- (i) Excessively mushy flesh uncharacteristic of the species in the presentation; or
- (ii) Excessively tough flesh uncharacteristic of the species in the presentation.

8.4 DISCOLOURATION

A sample unit affected by distinct discolourations indicative of decomposition or rancidity or by blue, brown, black discolourations exceeding 5% by weight of the drained contents, or black sulphide staining of the meat exceeding 5% by weight of the drained contents.

8.5 OBJECTIONABLE MATTER

A sample unit affected by struvite crystals - any struvite crystal greater than 5 mm in length.

9. LOT ACCEPTANCE

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

- (i) the total number of defectives as classified according to Section 8 does not exceed the acceptance number (c) of the appropriate sampling plan in the Sampling Plans for Prepackaged Foods (AQL-6.5) (CAC/RM 42-1977);
- (ii) the total number of sample units not meeting the form of presentation defined in Section 2.3 does not exceed the acceptance number (c) of the appropriate sampling plan in the Sampling Plans for Prepackaged Foods (AQL - 6.5) (CAC/RM 42-1977);
- (iii) the average net weight and the average drained weight where appropriate of all sample units examined is not less than the declared weight, and provided there is no unreasonable shortage in any individual container.
- (iv) the Food Additives, Hygiene and Labelling requirements of Sections 4, 5.1, 5.2 and 6 are met.

ANNEX "A": SENSORY AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

1. Complete external can examination for the presence of container integrity defects or can ends which may be distorted outwards.
2. Open can and complete weight determination according to defined procedures in Sections 7.3 and 7.4.
3. Examine product for discolouration, foreign and objectionable matter.
4. Assess odour, flavour and texture in accordance with the *Guidelines for the Sensory Evaluation of Fish and Shellfish in Laboratories (CAC/GL 31-1999)*