

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

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STANDARD FOR CANNED BABY FOODS

CODEX STAN 73-1981*

Adopted in 1981. Amended in 1983, 1985, 1987, 1989, 2017.

* Formerly CAC/RS 73-1976.

1. SCOPE

- 1.1 Baby foods are foods intended primarily for use during the normal infant's weaning period and also for the progressive adaptation of infants and children to ordinary food. They may be either in ready-to-eat form or in dry form requiring reconstitution with water only. They do not include products covered by the *Standard for Infant Formula and Formulas for Special Medical Purposes intended for Infants* (CODEX STAN 72-1981) or by the *Standard for Processed Cereal-Based Foods for Infants and Young Children* (CODEX STAN 74-1981).
- 1.2 Baby foods in ready-to-eat form are processed by heat before or after being sealed in their containers, and Baby foods in dry form are processed by physical means, in each case so as to prevent spoilage.

2. DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The term *infant* means a person not more than 12 months of age.
- 2.2 The term *young children* means persons from the age of more than 12 months up to the age of three years.
- 2.3 The term *Calorie* means a kilocalorie or "large calorie" (1 kilojoule is equivalent to 0.239 kilocalories).

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 Composition

- 3.1.1 Baby foods may be prepared from any suitable nutritive material that is used, recognized or commonly sold as an article or ingredient of food, including spices.
- 3.1.2 Vitamins and minerals may only be added in accordance with the legislation of the country in which the food is sold.
- 3.1.2.1 Vitamins and/or minerals added in accordance with Section 3.1.2 should be selected from the *Advisory Lists of Nutrient Compounds for Use in Foods for Special Dietary Uses intended for Infants and Children* (CAC/GL 10-1979).
- 3.1.2.2 The amounts of sodium derived from the added vitamins and/or minerals shall be within the limits indicated for sodium in Section 3.1.3.
- 3.1.3 The total sodium content of the products shall not exceed 200 mg Na/100 g calculated on the ready-to-eat basis in accordance with directions for use. The addition of salt (NaCl) to fruit products and dessert products based on fruit is not permitted.

3.2 Consistency and Particle Size

- 3.2.1 Ready-to-eat baby foods are homogeneous or comminuted in the following forms:
- (a) **strained**: food of a fairly uniform, small particle size which does not require and does not encourage chewing before being swallowed;
 - (b) **junior**: food that ordinarily contains particles of a size to encourage chewing by infants and children.
- 3.2.2 Dry baby foods, after reconstitution with water or other suitable liquid, approximate to the consistency and particle size of strained or junior foods under 3.2.1.

3.3 Purity Requirements

All ingredients, including optional ingredients, shall be clean, of good quality, safe and with excessive fibre removed where necessary. Fish, meat and poultry ingredients shall be practically free of pieces of bones.

3.4 Specific Prohibition

The product and its components shall not have been treated by ionizing radiation.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

The following additives are permitted in the preparation of canned baby food with the restrictions stated below:

	Maximum level in 100 g of the ready-to-eat product (unless otherwise indicated)
4.1 Thickening Agents	
4.1.1 Locust bean gum ¹	0.2 g
4.1.2 Guar gum	0.2 g
4.1.3 Distarch phosphate	}
4.1.4 Acetylated distarch phosphate	} 6 g, singly or
4.1.5 Phosphated distarch phosphate	} in combination
4.1.6 Hydroxypropyl starch	}
4.1.7 Acetylated distarch adipate	} 6 g, singly or
4.1.8 Distarch glycerol	} in combination
4.1.9 Acetylated distarch glycerol	}
4.1.10 Non-amidated pectin	1 g in canned fruit-based baby foods only
4.2 Emulsifiers	
4.2.1 Lecithin	0.5 g
4.2.2 Mono- and diglycerides	0.15 g
4.3 pH Adjusting Agents	
4.3.1 Sodium hydrogen carbonate	} Limited by good manufacturing
4.3.2 Sodium carbonate	} practice and within the limit for } sodium in Section 3.1.3
4.3.3 Potassium hydrogen carbonate	} Limited by good manufacturing
4.3.4 Calcium carbonate	} practice
4.3.5 Citric acid and sodium salt	0.5 g and within the limit for sodium in Section 3.1.3
4.3.6 L(+) Lactic acid	0.2 g
4.3.7 Acetic acid	0.5 g
4.4 Antioxidants	
4.4.1 Mixed tocopherols concentrate	} 300 mg/kg fat, singly or in
4.4.2 α -Tocopherol} combination	
4.4.3 L-Ascorbyl palmitate	200 mg/kg fat
4.4.4 L-Ascorbic acid and its sodium and potassium salts	0.5 g/kg, expressed as ascorbic acid and within the limit for sodium in Section 3.1.3
4.5 Flavourings	

¹ Temporarily endorsed.

4.5.1	Vanilla extract	Limited by good manufacturing practice
4.5.2	Ethyl vanillin	7 mg
4.5.3	Vanillin	7 mg

4.6 Carry-Over Principle

Section 4.1 of the *General Standard for Food Additives* (CODEX STAN 192-1995) shall apply.

5. CONTAMINANTS

5.1 The products covered by this Standard shall comply with the Maximum Levels of the *General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed* (CODEX STAN 193-1995).

5.2 The products covered by this Standard shall comply with the maximum residue limits for pesticides and/or veterinary drugs established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

6. HYGIENE

6.1 It is recommended that the products covered by the provisions of this Standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* (CAC/RCP 1-1969), and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

6.2 The products 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* (CAC/GL 21-1997).

7. PACKAGING

The product shall be packed in containers which will safeguard the hygienic and other qualities of the food. If in ready-to-eat form, it shall be packed in hermetically sealed containers; nitrogen and carbon dioxide may be used as packing media.

8. FILL OF CONTAINER

In the case of products in ready-to-eat form, the fill of container shall be:

- (i) not less than 80% v/v for products weighing less than 150 g (5½ oz.);
- (ii) not less than 85% v/v for products in the weight range 150-250 g (9 oz.); and
- (iii) not less than 90% v/v for products weighing more than 250 g (9 oz.)

of the water capacity of the container. The water capacity of the container is the volume of distilled water at 20°C which the sealed container will hold when completely filled (see CODEX STAN 234-1999 (Special Foods)).

9. LABELLING

In addition to the requirements of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods* (CODEX STAN 1-1985), the following specific provisions apply:

9.1 The Name of the Food

The name of the product shall be that of the major or characterizing ingredient(s) accompanied by words suitable to indicate the consistency or intended use.

9.2 List of Ingredients

9.2.1 A complete list of ingredients shall be declared on the label in descending order of proportion except that in the case of added vitamins and added minerals, these shall be arranged as separate groups for vitamins and minerals, respectively, and within these groups the vitamins and minerals need not be listed in descending order of proportion.

9.2.2 The specific name shall be declared for ingredients and food additives. In addition, appropriate class names for these ingredients and additives may be included on the label.

9.3 Declaration of Nutritive Value

The declaration of nutrition information shall contain the following information in the following order:

- (a) The amount of energy, expressed in Calories (Kcal) and/or kilojoules (kJ), and the number of grammes of protein, carbohydrate and fat per 100 grammes of the food as sold as well as per specified quantity of the food as suggested for consumption;

- (b) in addition to any other nutritional information required by national legislation, the total quantity in the final product of each vitamin and mineral added according to Section 3.1.2, shall be declared per 100 g as well as according to the serving size of the food suggested for consumption.

9.4 Date Marking and Storage Instructions

9.4.1 The date of minimum durability (preceded by the words "best before") shall be declared by the day, month and year in uncoded numerical sequence except that for products with a shelf-life of more than three months, the month and year will suffice. The month may be indicated by letters in those countries where such use will not confuse the consumer. In the case of products requiring a declaration of month and year only, and the shelf-life of the product is valid to the end of a given year, the expression "end (stated year)" may be used as an alternative.

9.4.2 In addition to the date, any special conditions for the storage of the food shall be indicated if the validity depends thereon.

Where practicable, storage instructions shall be in close proximity to the date marking.

9.5 Information for Utilization

9.5.1 Directions as to the preparation and use of the food and its storage and keeping before and after the container has been opened, shall appear on the label or on the accompanying leaflet.

9.5.2 For canned beets (beetroot) and spinach, the following statement shall appear on the label "use after the age of 12 weeks".

9.6 Additional Requirements

The products covered by this Standard are not breast-milk substitutes and shall not be presented as such.

10. METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

For checking the compliance with this standard, the methods of analysis and sampling contained in the *Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling* (CODEX STAN 234-1999) relevant to the provisions in this standard, shall be used.