

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

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STANDARD FOR LUNCHEON MEAT

CODEX STAN 89-1981

Adopted in 1981. Revision: 1991, 2014 and 2015.

1. SCOPE

This standard applies to products designated as "Luncheon Meat"¹ which have been packed in any suitable packing material.

2. DESCRIPTION

The product shall be prepared from meat or poultry meat or a combination of these as defined below which has been comminuted and cured and which may have been smoked.

The product may or may not contain binders.

The heat treatment to which the product has been subjected and the type of cure and packaging shall be sufficient to ensure that the product presents no public health hazard and remains wholesome under the conditions of storage, transport and sale.

2.1 Subsidiary Definitions

For the purpose of this standard:

- **Edible offal** means such offals as have been passed as fit for human consumption including lungs (but not if the animal from which the lungs have been taken has been scalded by immersion in hot water) but not including ears, scalp, snouts (including lips and muzzle), mucous membrane, sinews, genital system, udders, intestines and urinary bladder. Edible offal also includes poultry skin.
- **Meat** means the edible part including edible offal from any mammal slaughtered in an abattoir.
- **Packaged** means packed in a container manufactured of materials which do not permit contamination under normal conditions of handling.
- **Poultry meat** means the edible part of any domesticated birds including chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, guinea-fowls or pigeons slaughtered in an abattoir.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 Essential Ingredients

- Meat or poultry meat or a combination of these excluding edible offal;
- Water;
- Curing ingredients consisting of food-grade salt and sodium or potassium nitrite.

3.2 Optional Ingredients

- Edible offal, fat *per se*, cured and uncured pork rind *per se*;
- Carbohydrate and protein binders such as:
 - meal, flour or starch prepared from grain, or potato or sweet potato;
 - bread, biscuit or bakery products;
 - milk powder, skim milk powder, butter milk powder, caseinate, whey powder, egg protein, dried blood products, vegetable protein products;
- Sucrose, invert sugar, dextrose (glucose), lactose, maltose, glucose syrup (including corn syrup);
- Spices, seasonings and condiments;
- Water soluble, aromatic hydrolysed protein.

3.3 Composition

	Product with binder	Product without binder and edible offal (but may include heart, tongue or head meat from mammals)
Minimum ingoing meat content	80% ²	90%
Maximum fat content	35%	30%

¹ Only the English language shall be used whatever the language of the text.

² The meat content includes meat, edible offal and poultry meat.

3.4 Essential Quality Factors

3.4.1 Raw Material

The ingredients from which the product is prepared shall be of a quality suitable for human consumption and free from objectionable odours and flavours.

3.4.2 Final Product

The product shall be clean and substantially free from staining and contamination from the container. The meat and poultry meat shall be uniformly and thoroughly cured and the product shall be capable of being sliced.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

Preservatives, humectants and colours used in accordance with Tables 1 and 2 of the *General Standard for Food Additives* (CODEX STAN 192-1995) in food category 08.3.2 "Heat-treated processed comminuted meat, poultry, and game products" and its parent food categories are acceptable for use in foods conforming to this Standard. Only certain Table 3 food additives (as indicated in Table 3) are acceptable for use in foods conforming to this Standard.

Use of flavouring substances should be consistent with the *Guidelines for the Use of Flavourings* (CAC/GL 66-2008).

Section 4.1 of the *General Standard for Food Additives* (CODEX STAN 192-1995), referring to the conditions applying to carry-over of food additives from ingredients and raw materials into foods, shall apply.

5. CONTAMINANTS

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).

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

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), the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat* (CAC/RCP 58-2005), the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods* (CAC/RCP 23-1979), the *Guidelines on the Application of General Principles of Food Hygiene to the Control of Listeria monocytogenes in Ready-to-Eat Foods* (CAC/GL 61-2007) and other relevant Codex texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

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. LABELLING

The provisions of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods* (CODEX STAN 1-1985), shall apply:

7.1 The Name of the Food

The name of the food to be declared on the label shall be "Luncheon Meat".

A declaration of the presence of binders and of edible offal and a declaration indicating the species of animal from which the meat, poultry meat or a combination of these is derived shall be given in connection with the name of the product if their omission would mislead the consumer.

7.2 List of Ingredients

The list of ingredients shall indicate the species of animals from which the meat, poultry meat or a combination of these is derived.

7.3 Date Marking and Storage Instructions

For shelf-stable products the date of minimum durability shall be declared by the year.

For products which are not shelf-stable i.e. which may be expected not to keep for at least 18 months in normal conditions of storage and sale, and which are packaged in a container ready for offer to the consumer or for catering purposes, the date of minimum durability shall be declared by day, month and year.

For products which are not shelf-stable and which are packaged in containers not sold directly to the consumer or for catering purposes, adequate storage and distribution instructions shall be declared.

7.4 Labelling of Non-Retail Containers

Information, as appropriate needed for the labelling of retail containers is given either on the non-retail containers or in accompanying documents except that the name of the food, date marking and storage instructions, lot identification and the name and address of the manufacturer or packer shall appear on the non-retail container.

However, lot identification, and the name and address of the manufacturer or packer may be replaced by an identification mark provided that such mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

8. METHODS OF ANALYSIS

See CODEX STAN 234-1999.