

**PROPOSED DRAFT AMENDMENT TO THE
CODEX GENERAL STANDARD FOR CHEESE: APPENDIX**

(At Step 1/2/3 of the Codex Procedure)

Insert a new Appendix concerning cheese coatings as follows in the Codex General Standard for Cheese (CODEX STAN A-6-1978, Rev.1-1999):

“APPENDIX

CHEESE RIND

During ripening of the moulded cheese curd in natural creation or in environments in which the air humidity and, possibly, air composition are controlled, the outside of the cheese will develop into a semi-closed layer with a lower moisture content. This part of the cheese is called **rind**. The rind is constituted of cheese mass which, at the start of the ripening, is of the same composition as the internal part of the cheese. In many cases, the brining of cheese initiates the formation of rind. Due to the influence of the salt gradient in the brine, of oxygen, of drying out and of other reactions, the rind successively becomes of a somewhat different composition than the interior of the cheese and often presents a more bitter taste.

During or after ripening the cheese rind can be treated or can be naturally colonized with desired cultures of microorganisms, for instance *Penicillium candidum* or *Brevibacterium linens*. The resulting layer, in some cases referred to as **smear**, forms a part of the rind.

Rindless cheese is ripened in a (semi-) airtight barrier such as ripening film (normally a plastic bag). The outer part of that cheese do not develop a rind with a lower moisture content although influence of light of course can cause some difference to the inner part.

CHEESE SURFACE

The term "**cheese surface**" is used for the outside layer of cheese or parts of cheese, even in the sliced, shredded or grated form. The term includes the outside of the whole cheese, disregarding whether a rind has been formed or not.

CHEESE COATINGS

Cheese can be coated prior to the ripening, during the ripening process or when the ripening has been finished. When a coating is used during ripening the purpose of the coating is to regulate the moisture content of the cheese and to protect the cheese against microorganisms.

Coating of a cheese after the ripening has been finished is done to protect the cheese against microorganisms and other contamination, to protect the cheese from physical damage during transport and distribution and/or to give the cheese a specific appearance (e.g. coloured).

Coating can be distinguished very easily from rind, as coatings are made of non-cheese material, and very often it is possible to remove the coating again by brushing, rubbing or peeling it off.

Cheese can be coated with:

- A film, very often polyvinylacetate, but also other artificial material or material composed of natural ingredients, which helps to regulate the humidity during ripening and protects the cheese against microorganisms.
- A layer, mostly wax, paraffin or a plastic, which normally is impermeable to moisture, to protect the cheese after ripening against microorganisms and against physical damage during retail handling and, in some cases to contribute to the presentation of the cheese.

In the national legislation of some countries, coating materials and their composition are regulated.”