

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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CX 5/70.2

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TO: Codex Contact Points
International Organisations

FROM: Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla,
00100 Rome, Italy

SUBJECT: Request for Comments on the Minimum Cheese Contents in Processed Cheese

DEADLINE: 1 November 2001

COMMENTS: To:

Copies to:

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BACKGROUND

1. The 3rd Session (May 1998) of the Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP) created¹ a Working Group on Individual and Processed Cheeses and established the following mandate in regard to processed cheeses:

Determine if the use of a minimum cheese content was adequate to characterize the products covered, and if so, identification of the relevant minimum contents. If not adequate, guidance on an alternative approach.

2. At the 4th Session of the CCMMP (February 2000) the Chairperson of the Working Group indicated that the group was not able to provide additional recommendations to those already provided in CX/MMP 00/7 in regard to the minimum cheese content that would be required or the way it would be expressed in the proposed draft revised Codex Standard for Processed Cheese.² The WG recommended that alternative solutions be sought on these issues, particularly on the basis of two proposals contained in CX/MMP 00/7.

3. In this regard, the main Working Group conclusions were that there was a high diversity of products covered by the standard and opinions about the necessity or not to fix a minimum cheese content were divided.

¹ ALINORM 99/11, paras. 84-88

² ALINORM 01/11, paras. 76-77 and 122

4. Consequently, the working group on cheeses recommended to seek alternative solutions, in particular on the basis of the two following proposals:

- The product is qualified by a cheese content, in quantity or characterization terms, and;
- Cheese is a significant ingredient of processed cheese and cheese preparations.

5. The Committee therefore agreed that the Codex Secretariat, in collaboration with France, the United States and IDF, would prepare a circular letter to obtain information and data on minimum cheese contents in processed cheeses as well as comments on the two alternative proposals and on any other relevant points. The Committee also agreed to seek information on methods of analysis used at the national level to determine cheese content in processed cheese. It was further agreed that France, the United States and IDF would collate and present the information to the next session of the Committee so as to further examine the prospect of establishing an absolute minimum cheese content for processed cheeses or alternative approaches.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

6. Comments and information are requested on the following questions:

Question 1: Do your national regulations set a minimum cheese content requirement:

a) For processed cheese?

As a figure ? YES NO

What is the minimum ?

Specify reference to the national legislation:

In another manner ? YES NO

Please explain the approach that establishes minimum cheese content:

Specify reference to the national legislation :

b) For processed cheese preparations ?

As a figure ? YES NO

What is the minimum ?.....

Specify reference to the national legislation :

In another manner ? YES NO

Please explain the approach that establishes minimum cheese content:

Specify reference to the national legislation :

c) In processed cheese bearing a variety name ?

As a figure ? YES NO

