

**CODEX STANDARD FOR CORNED BEEF**  
**CODEX STAN 88-1981 (Rev. 1 - 1991)**

**1. SCOPE**

This standard applies to canned beef products designated as "Corned Beef" and sold in hermetically sealed containers which have been heat treated after sealing to such an extent that the product is shelf-stable.

It does not apply to meat products of the type "Corned Beef" with compositional characteristics different from those specified. These products shall be designated with a qualifying statement which describes the true nature in such a way that it does not mislead the consumer and that it does not lead to confusion with products covered by this standard.

**2. DESCRIPTION**

Corned beef is chopped, cured, boneless carcass meat from animals of bovine species and may include head meat, heart meat and skirt meat.

The product shall be prepared from coarsely cut beef which has been precooked or a mixture of such precooked beef to which a maximum of 5% raw beef has been added; in either case, the meat shall be cured before or after filling into the container.

The heat treatment shall be applied after the container is sealed and shall be sufficient to ensure that the product is shelf-stable and that it presents no public health hazard.

**Subsidiary Definition**

Hermetically sealed container means a container which is completely sealed and impermeable and which is made of any appropriate material which is suitable for the product covered by the standard.

**3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS**

**3.1 Essential Ingredients**

- uncured beef;
- curing ingredients consisting of food-grade salt and sodium or potassium nitrite.

**3.2 Optional Ingredients**

- sucrose, invert sugar, dextrose (glucose), lactose, maltose, glucose syrup (including corn syrup).

**3.3 Composition**

The total protein content in the final product shall not be less than 21% m/m.

### 3.4 Essential Quality Factors

#### 3.4.1 Raw Material

The meat 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 Products

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

## 4. FOOD ADDITIVES

### Maximum Ingoing Amount

### 4.1 Preservatives

4.1.1 Nitrite, potassium and/or sodium salts 100 mg/kg total nitrite expressed as sodium nitrite

### Maximum level calculated on the total net content of the final product

4.1.2 Nitrite, potassium and/or sodium salts 50 mg/kg total nitrite expressed as sodium nitrite

4.1.3 Potassium chloride Limited by Good Manufacturing Practice

### 4.2 Antioxidants

4.2.1 Ascorbic acid and its sodium salt 300 mg/kg (expressed as ascorbic acid singly or in

4.2.2 Iso-ascorbic acid and its sodium salt combination)

### 4.3 Carry-over

Section 3 of the Principle relating to the Carry-Over of Additives into Food, as set forth in Section 5.2, Volume 1 of the Codex Alimentarius, shall apply.

## 5. CONTAMINANTS

### Maximum Level

5.1 Lead (Pb) 1 mg/kg<sup>1</sup>

5.2 Tin (Sn)

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<sup>1</sup> Temporarily endorsed.

5.2.1	Tin (Sn): For products in tinplate	200 mg/kg <sup>1</sup>
5.2.2	Tin (Sn): For products in other	50 mg/kg <sup>1</sup>

## 6. HYGIENE

**6.1** It is recommended that the Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Processed Meat and Poultry Products (Ref. No. CAC/RCP 13-1976 (Rev. 1, 1985)), the Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods (Ref. No. CAC/RCP 23-1979 (Rev. 1, 1989)), the Recommended International Code of Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (Ref. No. CAC/RCP 1-1969 (Rev. 2, 1985)) and the Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Meat (CAC/RCP 11-1976) should apply.

**6.2** All meat used in the manufacture of corned beef shall have been subjected to the inspection processes prescribed in the Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Meat and in the Code for Ante-Mortem and Post-Mortem Inspection of Slaughter Animals and for Ante-Mortem and Post-Mortem Judgement of Slaughter Animals and Meat (CAC/RCP 41-1993). It shall have been passed by an inspector as fit for human consumption. Meat shall not, subsequent to being examined by an inspector, have been exposed to contamination or processed or handled or subjected to the addition of any harmful substance, which renders it unfit for human consumption.

**6.3** Raw or semi-processed meat and corned beef shall be handled, stored or transported in an establishment in a manner that will protect the meat and the corned beef from contamination and deterioration.

**6.4** Corned beef shall be packed in hermetically sealed containers in compliance with Sub-section 7.4 of the Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods.

**6.5** Corned beef shall be thermally processed in compliance with Sub-sections 7.5 and 7.6.1 to 7.6.7 inclusive, of the Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods.

**6.6** The cooling of the thermally processed filled and sealed containers shall be carried out in compliance with Sub-section 4.6.8 of the Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods.

**6.7** After thermal processing the fitted, sealed containers shall be handled in compliance with Sub-section 7.7 of the Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Low-Acid and Acidified Low-Acid Canned Foods.

## 7. LABELLING

The provisions of the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985), excepting Section 5.2 (Irradiated Foods) which is not relevant, shall apply:

### 7.1 The Name of the Food

The name of the food to be declared on the label shall be "Corned Beef".

## **7.2 Date Marking and Storage Instructions**

For canned corned beef which is a shelf-stable product the date of minimum durability shall be indicated by the year.

## **7.3 Labelling of Non-Retail Containers**

Information, as appropriate needed for labelling of retail containers is given either on the non-retail container 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 a mark is clearly identifiable with the accompanying documents.

## **8. METHODS OF ANALYSIS**

See *Codex Alimentarius* Volume 13

### **8.1 Nitrite**

Recommended method: ISO/DIS 2918

### **8.2 Lead**

According to the AOAC (1990, 15th Edition), Lead in Food by General Dithizone Method, 934.07.

### **8.3 Tin**

According to AOAC (1990, 15th Edition), Tin in Canned Foods by Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometric Method, 985.16.