RECOMMENDED INTERNATIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE PRODUCTION, STORAGE AND COMPOSITION OF MECHANICALLY SEPARATED MEAT AND POULTRY MEAT INTENDED FOR FURTHER PROCESSING (CAC/RCP 32-1983)

NOTE

1. In the preparation of this Code recognition has been given to the need to avoid precluding the adoption of new technical developments provided these are consistent with the hygienic production of wholesome meat.

2. This Code should be read in conjunction with the Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Processed Meat Products (CAC/RCP 13-1976).

SCOPE

This Code of Practice describes the procedure for mechanical separation of raw meat and raw poultry meat from bones, carcases or parts of carcases including the conditions for storage and handling of raw materials and separated meat as well as the composition of the separated meat to be used for further processing in meat products.

RAW MATERIAL

1. Only bones, carcases or parts of carcases from slaughter animals or from poultry which have been approved for human consumption should be used. Skulls should not be used.

TREATMENT OF BONES PRIOR TO MECHANICAL SEPARATION

2. Bones, carcases or parts of carcases should be kept or transported at time/temperature combinations that will ensure their hygienic acceptability when used for mechanical separation.

> ***CCP-Note**:From the time of boning to the time of mechanical separation, bones should be kept under such conditions that they would be of good microbiological quality and fit for separation. This would normally include storage under temperature controlled conditions. To allow for variation in technology and since different time-temperature combinations may be suitable, no single time-temperature requirement is suggested. The following offers a choice of acceptable time-temperature conditions; however, other intermediate combinations may be used:*
>
> *(a) maintained at 10^{o}C and mechanically separated within 5 hours of boning; or*
>
> *(b) chilled to 4^{o}C and mechanically separated within 72 hours of boning; or*
>
> *(c) chilled to -2^{o}C and mechanically separated within 120 hours of boning; or*

(d) immediately placed in a freezer and frozen within 48 hours of boning.

For microbiological reasons the combinations under (a) and (b) may not be stringent enough for poultry carcases and bones, and for some other carcases or bones where the meat after separation is not heat-treated. The time and temperature during storage before separation should be regularly monitored.

MECHANICAL SEPARATION PROCESS

3. The separation process should be carried out in such a way that bones and mechanically separated meat do not accumulate in the processing room in excess of good manufacturing practice. The temperature in the processing room should be controlled and held suitably low. The separated meat should be identified according to the species.

4. Unless mechanically separated meat is used directly after the separation process as an ingredient of a meat product, it should be cooled down to a maximum of +4^{o}C in conjunction with the deboning process or immediately afterwards.

TREATMENT OF MECHANICALLY SEPARATED MEAT

5. Frozen mechanically separated meat should be kept in a manner to prevent microbial growth and retard oxidative deterioration. Mechanically separated meat should be stored or transported in a hygienically acceptable manner. If it is not frozen immediately the material should be kept at a temperature of +4^{o}C or below measured in the meat and should be used for further processing within 48 hours.

HYGIENE OF EQUIPMENT

6. Dismantling, cleaning and disinfection of separation equipment should be carried out in accordance with the Recommended International Code of Hygienic Practice for Processed Meat and Poultry Products (CAC/RCP 13-1976).

COMPOSITIONAL STANDARD

7. The bone content should be reduced to the minimum level consistent with current technology. On this basis the calcium content expressed on dry matter should not exceed 1.5%.