

INTRODUCTION

The Codex Standard for "Gluten-Free Foods" was adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission at its 11th Session in 1976. In 1983, the 15th Session adopted amendments to the Section on Labelling. This standard has been submitted to all Member Nations and Associate Members of FAO and WHO for acceptance in accordance with the General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius.

CODEX STANDARD FOR "GLUTEN-FREE FOODS" CODEX STAN 118-1981 (amended 1983)

1. SCOPE

- 1.1 This standard applies to those processed foods which have been specially prepared to meet the dietary needs of persons intolerant to gluten.
- 1.2 The standard refers only to the specific provisions related to the special dietary purpose for which these foods are intended.
- 1.3 This standard does not apply to foods which in their normal form do not contain gluten.

2. DESCRIPTION

2.1 Definition

Gluten-free food is a food so described:

- (a) consisting of or containing as ingredients such cereals as wheat, triticale, rye, barley or oats or their constituents, which have been rendered "gluten-free"; or
- (b) in which any ingredients normally present containing "gluten" have been substituted by other ingredients not containing "gluten".

2.2 Subsidiary Definitions

- 2.2.1 For the purpose of this standard, **gluten** is defined as those proteins, commonly found in wheat, triticale, rye, barley or oats to which some persons are intolerant.
- 2.2.2 For the purpose of this standard, **gluten-free** means that the total nitrogen content of the gluten-containing cereal grains used in the product does not exceed 0.05 g per 100 grammes of these grains on a dry matter basis.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 A **gluten-free food** shall be based on or shall contain:

- (a) gluten-containing cereals such as wheat, triticale, rye, barley or oats or their constituents, which have been rendered "gluten-free" according to Section 2.2.2; or
- (b) ingredients which do not contain gluten in substitution for the ingredients containing gluten which are normally used in food of that kind; or
- (c) any mixture of two or more ingredients as in (a) and (b).

3.2 **Gluten-free foods** substituting important basic foods like flour or bread, must supply approximately the same amount of vitamins and minerals as the original foods they replace in accordance with the national legislation of the country in which the food is sold.

4. LABELLING

In addition to the general labelling provisions contained in the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991, Codex Alimentarius Volume 1), and any specific labelling provisions set out in a Codex standard applying to the particular food concerned, the following provisions for the labelling of "gluten-free foods" shall apply:

4.1 The Name of the Food

The term "gluten-free" shall be given in the immediate proximity to the name of the product.

4.2 List of Ingredients

4.2.1 A complete list of ingredients shall be declared on the label in descending order of proportion except that in the case of added vitamins and added minerals, these shall be arranged as separate groups of vitamins and minerals, respectively, and within these groups the vitamins and minerals need not be listed in descending order of proportion.

4.2.2 The nature and source of the starch or starches shall be declared on the label. In the case of starch prepared from gluten-containing cereal grains the declaration of this starch shall be accompanied by a statement "containing not more than 0.3% protein in the dry matter".

4.3 Declaration of Nutritive Value

The label shall include the following nutritional information:

4.3.1 The amount of energy, expressed in calories (Kcal) or kilojoules (kJ), and the number of grammes of protein, carbohydrate and fat per 100 grammes of the food and where appropriate per specified quantity (e.g. one biscuit) of the food as suggested for consumption.

4.3.2 In addition to any other nutritional information required by national legislation, the total quantity in the final product of those vitamins and minerals which have been added in accordance with Section 3.2 shall be declared per 100 g as well as according to the serving size of the food

suggested for consumption.

4.4 **Date Marking and Storage Instructions**

4.4.1 The date of minimum durability (preceded by the words "best before") shall be declared by the day, month and year in uncoded numerical sequence except that for products with a shelf-life of more than three months, the month and year will suffice. The month may be indicated by letters in those countries where such use will not confuse the consumer. In the case of products requiring a declaration of month and year only, and the shelf-life of the product is valid to the end of a given year, the expression "end (stated year)" may be used as an alternative.

4.4.2 In addition to the date, any special conditions for the storage of the food shall be indicated if the validity of the date depends thereon.

Where practicable, storage instructions shall be in close proximity to the date marking.

5. **CLAIMS**

5.1 A food prepared according to Section 3.1 may be called a "gluten-free food".

5.2 A food which naturally has no gluten may not be called "gluten-free"; however, a cereal or a food product containing a cereal which naturally has no gluten, may be labelled to show that it is naturally free of gluten and is suitable for use in gluten-free diet.

6. **PACKAGING**

6.1 The product shall be packed in containers which will safeguard the hygienic and other qualities of the food.

6.2 The containers including packaging material shall be made only of substances which are safe and suitable for their intended use. Where the Codex Alimentarius Commission has established a standard for any such substance used as packaging material, that standard shall apply.

7. **METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING**

See Codex Alimentarius Volume 13.