

USDA United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Dairy
Division

USDA Specifications for Reduced Fat Cheddar Cheese

Effective September 1993

USDA Specifications for Reduced Fat Cheddar Cheese

- A. Reduced fat Cheddar cheese shall comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in 21 CFR Part 133.113 for Cheddar cheese, 21 CFR Part 101.62 for nutrient content claims for fat, and 21 CFR Part 130.10 for foods named by use of a nutrient content claim and a standardized term.
- B. The reduced fat Cheddar cheese delivered to CCC shall be manufactured in plants which have been inspected and approved by the Dairy Grading Branch, Dairy Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, prior to submission of offer.
- C. Reduced fat Cheddar cheese should contain between $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ less fat than that of traditional Cheddar cheese. The reduced fat Cheddar cheese shall contain not less than 19.2 percent total fat (as marketed) and not more than 22.9 percent total fat (as marketed). The moisture content shall not exceed 49.0 percent. The cheese shall contain not less than 1.4 percent but not more than 2.0 percent salt. No vat may have a pH value higher than 5.30 using the quinhydrone method.

All dairy ingredients shall be pasteurized at a temperature of not less than 161⁰ F. for a period of not less than 15 seconds, or for a time and at a temperature equivalent thereto in phosphatase destruction.

The shelf life of the reduced fat Cheddar cheese should be 5 months after manufacture, when stored at 40⁰ F.

The cheese shall demonstrate satisfactory meltability characteristics, as represented by No. 3 or greater in the official meltability scale below:

Explanation of Terms.

The original, unheated sample is equivalent to number 1. The melted sample is assigned the value of the concentric circle which any portion of the melted sample reaches.

- *Poor* -- meltability scale reading is No. 2 or less.
- *Good* -- meltability scale reading equal to No. 3.
- *Very good* -- meltability scale reading equal to No. 4 or greater.

Precaution.

Be sure the oven and interior shelving are kept level.

Reference.

USDA/AMS/DA DIV
DA Instruction No. 918-RL, Section D.1.j. for laboratory analysis procedures.

Quality Specifications.

The cheese shall have a pleasing flavor. It may be lacking in flavor development or may possess slight characteristic Cheddar cheese flavor. May possess very slight acid, bitter, or slight feed, but shall not possess any undesirable flavors and odors.

The cheese body and texture shall be firm, compact, and should be slightly translucent and

shiny. It may have a few mechanical openings (1 to 3 openings per plug) if not large and connecting. The cheese shall be free from gas holes. The body may be very slight gummy, slight mealy or coarse and definite curdy.

The cheese shall have a fairly uniform, bright attractive appearance. May be slightly wavy. May be colored or uncolored but if colored, it shall be a medium yellow-orange. The cheese surfaces shall be free of mold but may be slightly soiled or rough. The cheese blocks may be slightly lopsided.

D. Offeror must comply with the following requirements:

- (1) Cheese must be at least 30 days old when graded.
- (2) Cheese must be located in a cooler and stored at temperatures between 35⁰ F. - 45⁰ F. until delivered to CCC.

Container and Marking Specifications.

Containers.

The cheese shall be packaged in commercially acceptable wrappers or bags which shall permanently exclude air between the wrapper and cheese surface as a result of shrinkage, vacuumizing, mechanical means, or a combination of these methods. Closure of the bag should be by heat sealing. May be slightly wrinkled but shall be of such condition as to fully protect the surface of the cheese.