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Program

Commodity Specification for Canned Soups

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GENERAL

U.S. Standards

Canned vegetables (product/commodity) produced under this Commodity Specification must meet the requirements specified in the applicable United States Standards for Grades of Canned Vegetables (U.S. Standards) and/or Commercial Item Description (CID) of Canned Vegetables effective on the date of the Solicitation/Invitation for Bid (IFB). The U.S. Standards and CIDs are published separately and are incorporated herein and made a part of this Commodity Specification.

Product Origin

1. Commodities delivered pursuant to this Commodity Specification shall have originated from crops that have been 100 percent grown, processed, and packed in the United States, its territories or possessions, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, (hereinafter referred to as the United States). See the Master Solicitation.
2. If the contractor handles any commodity originating from sources other than the United States, the contractor must have a written plan to segregate the commodity. This segregation plan will include an identification and record system for all commodities to ensure they are completely segregated and cannot be used to fulfill purchase orders awarded by USDA. Such segregation plan must be made available, within 10 days of purchase order award, to representatives of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS).
3. The contractor must maintain positive written documentation records evidencing 100 percent domestic origin to the grower level. Contractors must also ensure that the documentation provided by any subcontractors demonstrates the same level of traceability. The burden of proof of compliance is on the contractor.
4. Documentation may include load or warehouse storage receipts for raw product (i.e., bin tags), product blend (formulation) records, product coding explanations, finished product warehousing records, shipping or payment records, or other documentation or evidence that clearly establishes the product's domestic origin.
5. Contractors must provide the domestic origin certification and supporting documentation records to representatives of the AMS Fruit and Vegetable Program, Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division (USDA Inspector) when requesting inspection service. USDA Inspectors will select and review at least one code for each purchase order or IDIQ contract to determine compliance with the Agency's domestic origin requirements.
6. Such records must be available for review by the Government in accordance with FAR 4A52.225-1 U.S. Origin Product. In the event of an audit, AMS auditors will examine as many codes as is necessary to verify compliance.

7. Self-certifications by contractors and subcontractors will not be accepted. Failure to observe this requirement may lead to suspension or debarment, purchase order termination, and penalties at Title 18, Section 1001 of the U.S. Code concerning falsification of information.

Packing Season

All canned soups must be from the current packing season/crop year, unless otherwise specified in the applicable Solicitation/IFB.

Holding Period

No shipment of canned soups may be made earlier than 14 calendar days after packing. No delivery shall be case stamped prior to the completion of the 14 day holding period.

Fill of Container

1. Contractor must meet either the drained weight or the fill weight for the product as specified in the applicable U.S. Standards unless otherwise indicated herein.
2. The average net weight must meet the net weight as printed on the label and the Individual Commodity Specification Section II.

LABELS AND PACKAGING

Primary Containers (Cans and Labels)

1. Vendors have the option to use commercial labeling and packaging which meets all applicable FDA requirements and contains a code which allows traceability of the product in the event of a recall.
2. The processors' own commercially acceptable "brand" labels may be used on all Solicitations/IFBs. Distributor's "brand" labels are not acceptable.
3. All products must be packed in new, commercially acceptable primary containers (cans). Canned soups shall be packed only in the container size and type specified in the applicable Solicitation/IFB. The cans must be suitably code marked so that the product can be identified with related inspection certificates.
4. For containers 22 ounces or smaller (net weight), labels must also meet the following formatting criteria:
 - a. Must include, at a minimum, two (2) colors, in addition to black and white.

- b. Must incorporate a graphic (photo or illustration) depicting the product/contents on the principal display panel.

Secondary Containers (tray and case) for Commercial Labels

1. Commercially acceptable tray packs wrapped in plastic shrink wrap may be used on all Solicitations/IFBs for **all can sizes**. 24/#300 and 24/#1 cases may be achieved by shrink wrapping together two 12/#300 or 12/#1 tray packs.
2. Case flaps, gaps, and other openings may not exceed 1 inch and must be fully glued or sealed with tape. If tape is used in lieu of glue, it must be clear and of commercially acceptable width and strength. The tape must extend at least two inches down the sides or ends.
3. **Alternate packaging for canned products the secondary container - tray(s) or case.**
 - a. **Cases may have an opening that exceeds 1 inch if it is completely stretch-wrapped. The stretch-wrap may also have reasonably sized openings to allow for cooling.**
 - b. **This alternate packaging requirement must be able to withstand normal handling, shipping, and storage and be acceptable to the common carrier**
4. Mixing and matching of commercial and non-commercial labeling methods will not be acceptable.
5. Two or more different commercial labels will not be acceptable within a shipping unit (truckload).

Secondary Containers (case) for Non-Commercial Labels

Cans with non-commercial labels shall be further enclosed within new, corrugated fiberboard cartons (cases) acceptable by common or other carriers for safe transportation to destinations. Flaps, gaps and other openings may not exceed 1 inch and must be fully glued or sealed with tape. If tape is used in lieu of glue, it must be clear and of commercially acceptable width and strength. The tape must extend at least two inches down the sides or ends.

Cases must be marked in such a manner that they contain all of the required symbols, statements and information contained in Exhibits 1, 2 or 3 as applicable.

Cases may be marked by printing or stenciling or by preprinted, self-adhesive stickers. Self-adhesive stickers must be affixed to the case in such a manner that they cannot be removed intact.

Exact arrangement and adherence to font size is not required. The case markings must be clearly marked, easily read, and substantially the same as specified in Exhibits 1, 2 or 3 as applicable.

Exhibit 3 shows an alternative placard that may be applied to a non-commercial, new, corrugated fiberboard case acceptable by common or other carriers for safe transportation to destinations. This placard must be affixed to the case in such a manner that it cannot be removed intact.

Cases must have the recycling statement shown in Exhibit 5, "Please Recycle" Symbol and Statement or Exhibit 6, "Corrugated Recycles" Symbol and Statement.

UNIVERSAL PRODUCT CODES (UPC)

Contractor UPCs are acceptable for primary containers with commercial labels and/or secondary fiberboard cases enclosing commercially labeled product.

UPCs are not required for commercial labeling with tray pack shipping containers.

Products with alternative, non-commercial labels must use the UPCs listed in Exhibit 4 on the primary and secondary containers.

PALLETIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Pallets

Products must be on 48 X 40 inch, non-reversible, flush stringer, and partial four-way entry. New pallets must be good quality wood. Used pallets must be No.1 hardwood or its equivalent in new softwood. **Broken or damaged pallets are unacceptable.**

If pallet exchange is desired, the contractor shall arrange for pallet exchange with consignees. USDA is in no way responsible for arrangement of pallet exchange.

Unitization

Each delivery unit of canned soups must be unitized. Shipping cases must be stacked and secured from top to bottom, so that each container and layer of containers becomes an integral part of the pallet. Either stretch wrapping with plastic film or "lock 'n pop" is acceptable. The palletized product must be loaded in the conveyance in such a way that will prevent shifting and damage to the containers of product.

INDIVIDUAL COMMODITY SPECIFICATIONS

Cream of Mushroom Soup

Condensed - Container size: 24/#1 size can or equivalent size container.

Minimum net weight of 10.0 oz. per container.

The canned soup must comply with CID No. A-A-20145D – Effective on the date of the Solicitation/IFB (published separately.)

1. Type I – Condensed, Flavor VI – Vegetable, Style L – Cream of Mushroom.
2. Sodium content – (condensed)) will have a maximum of 410 mg per 1/2 cup serving (before reconstitution).
3. Formulation requirements:
 - a. Condensed soup will reconstitute at a 1+1 ratio with water
 - b. Mushrooms used in this formulation may be either fresh, dehydrated, frozen, or canned
 - c. Mushrooms used in this formulation may be either sliced or diced but may not be a combination of the two
 - d. If mushroom slices used in this formulation, they shall be approximately 3/16" x 3/8" x 3/8" or larger
 - e. If mushroom dices are used in the formulation, they shall be approximately 3/8 inch or larger
 - f. For contracts awarded in April 2020 and later: Ingoing percentages of mushrooms in the batch formulation must meet a minimum of 12 percent by weight. The percentages of mushrooms will be determined by SCI reviewing the vendor's product formula and relevant individual batch records.**
 - g. Optional ingredients – onion flavoring, garlic flavoring, other spice extracts, natural flavoring, other safe and suitable ingredients. Monosodium Glutamate is not allowed.
4. Overall color of the condensed soup must be as light as or lighter than the No. 3 color chip of the USDA Canned Mushrooms Color Standard.
5. After reconstituting and heating the soup:
 - a. The soup will have a smooth characteristic creamy texture which is neither excessively thick, or thin and watery and will visibly exhibit no more than slight separation of water after one minute.
 - b. The mushrooms will be fairly tender and will not be excessively tough, rubbery or soft. And, there will be some visible pieces of mushrooms that are 3/16 inches in diameter or larger.
6. Flavor profile: The reconstituted and heated soup will have a mildly earthy mushroom flavor which is not overpowered by other spices and flavorings.
7. Truckload case count (24/#1): 2,200 cases per truckload.

Vegetarian Soup

Container size: 24/1 size can or equivalent size container.

Minimum net weight of 10.0 oz. per container.

1. Vegetarian – The canned soup shall comply with CID No. A-A-20145 – effective on the date of the Solicitation/IFB (published separately), Type II – Condensed, low Sodium, Flavor VI, Vegetarian Vegetable. Sodium content – 36 mg - 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
2. Description – A vegetarian soup containing pasta, tomatoes and/or tomato paste, and at least four of the following vegetables: carrots, celery, corn, green peas, green beans, potatoes.
3. Truckload case count (24/#1): 2,200 cases per truckload.

Tomato Soup

Container size: 24/1 size can or equivalent size container

Minimum net weight of 10.0 oz. per container.

1. Tomato – The canned soup shall comply with CID No. A-A-20145 – effective on the date of the Solicitation/IFB (published separately), Type II – Condensed, Low Sodium, Flavor I, Tomato. Sodium content – 36 mg - 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
2. Truckload case count (24/#1): 2,200 cases per truckload.

Cream of Chicken Soup

Container size: 24/#1 size can or equivalent size container

Minimum net weight of 10.0 oz. per container.

The canned soup must comply with CID No. A-A-20145D – Effective on the date of the Solicitation/IFB (published separately.)

1. **Type II – Condensed, Flavor II, Style E – Cream of Chicken.**
2. **Formulation requirements:**
 - a. **Condensed soup will reconstitute at a 1+1 ratio with water**

- b. **Chicken used in this formulation will be either light or dark meat, not a mixture**
 - c. **Minimum 4% by weight cooked chicken meat (FSIS regulation)**
 - d. **The condensed soup may be made from various creams, whole milk, or dry milk powder. The amount of cream, whole milk, or dry milk powder should provide a minimum of .45 percent butterfat to the final product (FSIS requirement)**
 - e. **The above required percentages will be determined by SCI reviewing the relevant vendor's batch records.**
 - f. **Other ingredients – onion flavoring, celery flavoring, other spice extracts, natural flavoring, and other safe and suitable ingredients. Monosodium Glutamate is not allowed.**
3. **Sodium content – will have a maximum of 410mg per 1/2 cup serving (before reconstitution).**
 4. **Overall color of the condensed soup must possess a bright yellow to golden hue similar to Munsell Color Chip 5Y 8/8. The condensed soup shall not be excessively dull, brown or grey.**
 5. **Consistency of the condensed soup**
 - a. **Using a Bostwick Consistometer, the measured distance will not be more than 6.0 centimeters in 30 seconds at approximately 20°C (68°F), (after cooling at room temperature) or,**
 - b. **Using a Bostwick Consistometer, the measured distance will not be more than 9.0 centimeters in 30 seconds (post thermal process) at approximately 74°C (165°F)**
 6. **After reconstituting and heating the soup:**
 - a. **The soup will have a smooth characteristic creamy texture which is neither excessively thick, or thin and watery, and will visibly exhibit no more than slight separation of water after one minute.**
 - b. **The soup shall contain visible pieces and bits of chicken, and those pieces will be tender, and will not be excessively tough or rubbery.**
 7. **Flavor profile: The reconstituted and heated soup will have a pleasant chicken flavor which is not overpowered by other spices and flavorings or possess a scorched taste.**

8. **Truckload case count – 2,200 cases per truckload.**

INSPECTION AND CHECKLOADING

Requirements

Representatives of the AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Program, Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division (USDA Inspector) must perform the inspection and checkloading. See the Master Solicitation. **The cost of inspection, samples taken for inspection, mailing of review samples submitted for evaluation, and any chemical analysis required for testing shall be for the account of the Contractor.**

Inspection of canned products must be performed not more than 12 months prior to shipment. Whether each lot offered meets the product and container requirements of the purchase order must be determined on the basis of representative sample units.

Representative sample units will be graded according to the Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Canned Fruits and Vegetables and Related Products (7 C.F.R. Part 52), and United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 C.F.R. Part 42.140), effective on the date of the Solicitation/IFB.

Case stamping in lieu of checkloading is acceptable, at the USDA Inspector's discretion and may be performed at any time up to 28 calendar days prior to shipment of the product.

Contractors must be aware that if this option is exercised, and an AMS Inspector does not perform checkloading, the Contractor assumes all risk for these shipments and deliveries.

Certification

Subject to (See the Master Solicitation) the acceptability of the quality, weight, packaging, and checkloading of the product must be evidenced by certificates issued by the USDA Inspector.

No product shall be shipped unless the USDA Inspector informs the Contractor that a designated lot is acceptable. Notice by the USDA Inspector that a designated lot scheduled for shipment does not meet requirements of the purchase order shall constitute rejection of such lot.

Procedures

The Contractor must give the USDA Inspector at least 7 days advance notice when scheduling inspection service. Prior to sampling, the Contractor must furnish the USDA Inspector with a list of codes and the approximate number of cases per code.

Contractors are encouraged to submit requests for inspection in writing with verifiable receipt notice, such as fax log, to alleviate possible miscommunication.

Laboratory Tests

The Contractor must allow 14 days after product sampling for laboratory tests (when required) to be completed and returned.

FAILURE TO MEET SPECIFICATIONS

Any lot which fails applicable specifications prescribed herein will be rejected as not acceptable for delivery. If any lot of canned soups fails to meet the product or packaging requirement, the Contractor may request in writing that USDA accept delivery of the lot. USDA may, at its option, accept delivery, provided that the purchase price is the purchase order price less a discount, to be determined by the Contracting Officer.

EXHIBITS

**Exhibit 1 - Required Markings for Non-Commercial Shipping Containers
ALL PRINTING TO BE IN BLACK INK**

BOTH SIDE PANELS

PRODUCT NAME

1/2/BOTH END PANELS

PRODUCT NAME

PURCHASE ORDER NO. 3/4/

USDA SYMBOL - Optional

STORE IN COOL, DRY PLACE

5/

Product name must be printed or stenciled on a separate line in letters at least three-fourths inch high, and all other information must be in letters less than three-fourths inch but at least three-eighths inch high. The USDA Food Symbol must be printed, stamped, or labeled and be of sufficient size to stand out prominently. Case markings must be limited to case codes and those contained in this Exhibit.

1/ Insert any additional product style, pack, packing media, or further definition as applicable; (i.e. Crushed, Cut, Chopped, etc.).

2/ Insert the size and number of packages per case, i.e. 6 /No. 10 cans, 6/5 pound bags, 12/46 ounce cans, 1/25 pound bag.

3/ Insert the last five digits of the purchase order number.

4/ Insert name of Packer and Packer's Address - City, State, and Zip Code. This information can be placed on the end panels or the side panels.

5/ Insert Universal Product Code (see Exhibit "4").

**Exhibit 2 - Alternative Label for Shipping Containers
(Includes all Required Information)**



Product Name
Style
Packing Media Size/Number per case
Purchase Order Number xxxxx

Packed by: ABC Growers
Any Town, CA 99999

(USDA Symbol is optional)

STORE IN A COOL DRY PLACE



1234567891012345678910

Exhibit 3 - Sample Alternative Label for Shipping Containers



Tomato Soup

24/No. 1 cans

Purchase Order Number xxxxx

Packed by: ABC Growers

Any Town, CA 99999

(USDA Symbol is optional)

STORE IN A COOL DRY PLACE

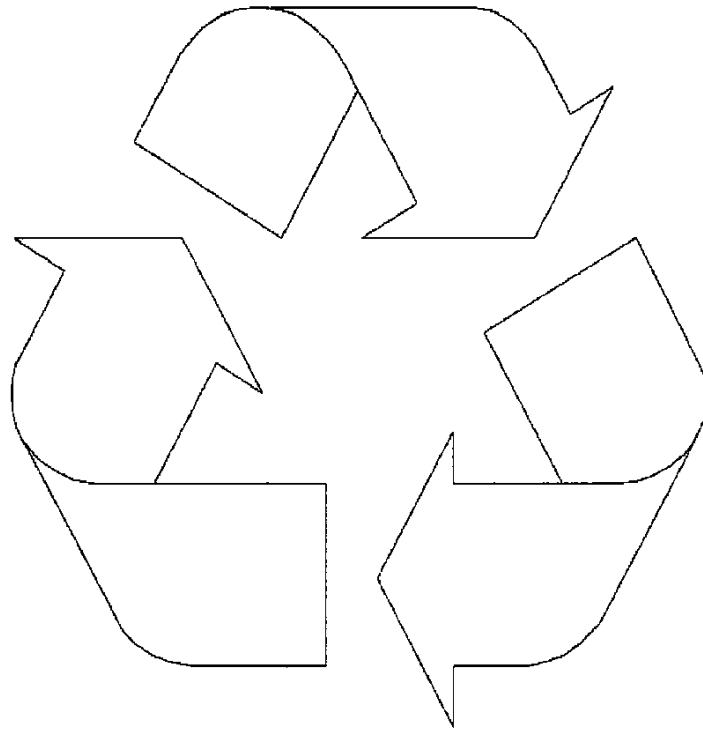


1 11 07 15001 01434 1

Exhibit 4 - Universal Product Codes

Type Condensed Soup - Size	Material Code	Primary Container	Secondary Container
Cream of Mushroom - 24/#1	110164	7 15001 101164 8	1 07 15001 10164 5
Tomato – 24/#1	100322	7 15001 00322 5	1 07 15001 00322 2
Vegetable – 24/#1	100321	7 15001 00321 8	1 07 15001 00321 5
Cream of Chicken – 24/#1	111210	7 15001 11210 1	1 07 15001 11210 8

Exhibit 5 - "Please Recycle" Symbol and Statement



PLEASE RECYCLE

Exhibit 6 - “Corrugated Recycles” Symbol and Statement



**Corrugated
Recycles**

Exhibit 7 - USDA Symbol

(USDA Symbol is optional)

