METRIC

A-A-20369
May 17, 2023

COMMERCIAL ITEM DESCRIPTION

PLANT-BASED NON-DAIRY BEVERAGES

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has authorized the use of this Commercial Item Description (CID).

1. SCOPE. This CID covers plant-based non-dairy beverages (non-dairy beverages), packed in commercially acceptable containers, suitable for use by Federal, State, local governments, and other interested parties. **Please note: This document does not guarantee purchase of this item by USDA.**[1]

2. PURCHASER NOTES.

2.1 Purchasers *must specify* the following:

- Type(s), subtype(s), flavor(s), nutrient content claim(s), sweetener(s), distribution requirement(s), package type(s) and agricultural practice(s) (Sec. 3).
- When compliance with analytical requirements must be verified (Sec. 7.2).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 10.3) or USDA certification (Sec. 10.4).

2.2 Purchasers *may specify* the following:

- Food Defense (Sec. 10.1) and Manufacturer's Quality Assurance (Sec. 10.2). Purchaser may specify one of the following combinations: Sec. 10.1.1 with 10.2.1 or 10.1.2 with 10.2.2.
- Packaging requirements other than commercial (Sec. 11).

3. CLASSIFICATION. The non-dairy beverages must conform to the following list which must be specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

[1] USDA purchase specifications are available at: https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food/product-specs.

Types, subtypes, flavors, nutrient content claims, sweeteners, distribution requirements, package types and agricultural practices.[2]

Type I - Cereal-based
- **Subtype A** - Oat
- **Subtype B** - Rice
- **Subtype C** - Corn
- **Subtype D** - Wheat
- **Subtype E** - Barley
- **Subtype F** - Spelt
- **Subtype G** - Other (*as specified by purchaser*)

Type II - Nut-based
- **Subtype A** - Almond
- **Subtype B** - Coconut
- **Subtype C** - Hazelnut
- **Subtype D** - Walnut
- **Subtype E** - Pistachio
- **Subtype F** - Cashew
- **Subtype G** - Macadamia
- **Subtype H** - Other (*as specified by purchaser*)

Type III - Legume-based
- **Subtype A** - Soy
- **Subtype B** - Peanut
- **Subtype C** - Pea
- **Subtype D** - Other (*as specified by purchaser*)

Type IV - Seed-based
- **Subtype A** - Flax
- **Subtype B** - Sesame
- **Subtype C** - Sunflower
- **Subtype D** - Hemp
- **Subtype E** - Other (*as specified by purchaser*)

Type V - Pseudo-cereal-based
- **Subtype A** - Quinoa
- **Subtype B** - Teff
- **Subtype C** - Amaranth
- **Subtype D** - Other (*as specified by purchaser*)

[2] Not all options are available from every manufacturer. Check with the manufacturer/distributor for availability.

Type VI - Two or more blended

Type VII - Other (*as specified by purchaser*)

Flavor 1 - Original/plain
Flavor 2 - Vanilla
Flavor 3 - Chocolate
Flavor 4 - Other (*as specified by purchaser*)

Nutrient content claim a - Low sodium
Nutrient content claim b - Reduced sodium
Nutrient content claim c - Low fat
Nutrient content claim d - Reduced fat
Nutrient content claim e - Fortified
Nutrient content claim f - Gluten free
Nutrient content claim g - Other *(as specified by the purchaser)*

Sweetener (1) - Nutritive sweetener (sugar, cane syrup, etc.)
Sweetener (2) - Non-nutritive sweetener (sucralose, etc.)
Sweetener (3) - Unsweetened

Distribution requirement (a) - Shelf stable (aseptically processed and packaged)
Distribution requirement (b) - Refrigerated (pasteurized/ultra-pasteurized)

Package type (i) - Plastic bottle
Package type (ii) - Glass bottle
Package type (iii) - Can
Package type (iv) - Aseptic carton/pouch
Package type (v) - Bag-in-box
Package type (vi) - Other *(as specified by the purchaser)*

Agricultural practice (aa) - Conventional
Agricultural practice (bb) - Organic

4. MANUFACTURER'S/DISTRIBUTOR'S NOTES. Manufacturer's/distributor's products must meet the requirements of the:

- Processing guidelines (Sec. 5).
- Salient characteristics (Sec. 6).
- Analytical requirements: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 7).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's product assurance (Sec. 8).
- Regulatory requirements (Sec. 9).

- Quality assurance provisions: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 10).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 11).

5. PROCESSING GUIDELINES.

5.1 Processing. The non-dairy beverages must be processed in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis, and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food* (21 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 117). The shelf stable non-dairy beverages must be hermetically sealed and thermally processed to ensure commercial sterility.

5.2 Pasteurization. The manufacture of non-dairy beverages must be subjected to such temperatures and holding periods in approved systems as will assure proper pasteurization or ultra-pasteurization of the product. The heat treatment by either process will be sufficient to ensure public health safety and to assure adequate keeping quality yet retain the most desirable flavor and body characteristics of the finished product.

5.3 Shelf stable. The shelf stable non-dairy beverages must be subjected to sufficient heat processing and packaged in a hermetically sealed container, to conform to the applicable requirements of 21 CFR Parts 108, 113, and 117 to maintain the commercial sterility of the non-dairy beverages under normal non-refrigerated conditions.

5.4 Food defense. The non-dairy beverages must be processed and transported in accordance with *Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration* (21 CFR Part 121). This regulation identifies the kinds of preventive measures food manufacturers, processors, or handlers may take to minimize the risk that food under their control will be subject to tampering or other malicious, criminal, or terrorist actions. The implementation of enhanced food defense preventive measures provides for the security of a plant's production processes and includes the storage and transportation of pre-production raw materials, other ingredients, and post-production finished product.

5.5 Organic ingredients. When organic non-dairy beverages are specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, they must be produced, handled, and labeled in accordance with the USDA organic regulations by an operation that is certified organic in accordance with the requirements of the *National Organic Program* (7 CFR Part 205). A Certificate of Organic Production or Handling must be provided to verify that the product was processed and handled in accordance with the USDA organic regulations.

5.6 Temperature. Once the refrigerated non-dairy beverages are packaged, they must be maintained at a temperature greater than 0°C (32°F) but not more than 7°C (45°F).

5.7 Shelf life. Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the refrigerated non-dairy beverages must have a remaining shelf life of at least three months from the date of manufacturing when stored at 7°C (45°F). The shelf stable non-dairy beverages must have a remaining shelf life of at least six months from the date of manufacturing.

6. SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS.

6.1 Definitions.

6.1.1 Low sodium. The low sodium non-dairy beverages must comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in 21 CFR §101.61(b)(4).

6.1.2 Reduced sodium. The reduced sodium non-dairy beverages must comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in 21 CFR §101.61(b)(6).

6.1.3 Low fat. The low fat non-dairy beverages must comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in 21 CFR §101.62(b)(2).

6.1.4 Reduced fat. The reduced fat non-dairy beverages must comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in 21 CFR §101.62(b)(4).

6.1.5 Fortified. The fortified non-dairy beverages must comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in 21 CFR §104.20 and 21 CFR Part 101. If products are used for National School Lunch Program, they must comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in 7 CFR §210.10 (d)(3).

6.1.6 Gluten free. The gluten free non-dairy beverages must comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in 21 CFR §101.91.

6.1.7 Sweetener. The sweetened non-dairy beverages must comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in 21 CFR Part 168.

6.2 Labeling. All ingredients must be declared by their common or usual name in descending order of predominance by weight (21 CFR §101.4) unless exempted by 21 CFR §101.100.

6.3 Ingredients.

6.3.1 Raw ingredients. The ingredients used to produce the non-dairy beverages must be the latest season's crop, and be properly mature, wholesome, and clean.

6.3.2 Additional processing ingredients. When used, all additional ingredients must meet the standards specified in the Food Chemicals Codex (FCC) or, in the absence of FCC specification

at a minimum, meet the specifications for quality set by the U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP)-National Formulary. The additional ingredients must be approved food additives (21 CFR Part 170) or meet Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) requirements (21 CFR Parts 182 and 184) for those uses by Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

6.4 Finished product.

6.4.1 Flavor and odor. The non-dairy beverages must have appropriate characteristic flavors and odors. There must be no foreign flavors or odors such as, but not limited to, burnt, scorched, stale, rancid, musty, or moldy.

6.4.2 Color. The non-dairy beverages must be uniformly colored throughout and characterized by the type and/or flavor it represents.

6.5 Defects and foreign material. The ingredients used to produce the non-dairy beverages that have Defect Action Levels must not exceed those tolerances specified in 21 CFR §117.110. All other ingredients must be clean, sound, wholesome, and free from foreign material including but not limited to extraneous plant material, dirt, plastic, wood, metal, and evidence of insect or rodent infestation.

6.6 Aflatoxin testing. All USDA certified non-dairy beverages must be tested by USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Science and Technology Program (S&T) for aflatoxin. The aflatoxin content of the finished product will not be greater than 20 parts per billion (ppb) as evidenced by an AMS, USDA certificate. When non-dairy beverages are certified by the manufacturer, a Certificate of Analysis as verification of aflatoxin testing will be provided by the manufacturer. The aflatoxin content of the finished product must not be greater than 20 ppb.

7. ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS.

7.1 Analytical and microbiological requirements. Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract or purchase order, the following analytical and microbiological requirements for the non-dairy beverages must conform to those in Table I:

TABLE I. Analytical and microbiological requirements

Test	Requirement
Sodium	Must not exceed the limit specified by the purchaser in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.
Fat	Must not exceed the limit specified by the purchaser in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.
Aflatoxin	Less than 20 ppb
Salmonella	Must be negative
Escherichia coli (E. coli)	Less than 3 Colony Forming Units (CFU) per gram (g) or Most Probable Number (MPN) per g[3]
Listeria monocytogenes (L. monocytogenes)	Must be negative

7.2 Analytical verification. Purchaser must specify manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 10.3) or USDA certification (Sec. 10.4).

7.3 USDA verification procedures. When USDA certification (Sec. 10.4) is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, analytical testing must be performed as follows.

7.3.1 Product verification sampling. When USDA verification of analytical requirements is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, analytical testing must be performed on subsamples of packages randomly selected from the lot. The number of subsamples must be based on USDA inspection service sampling procedures and plans (7 CFR §52.38). The contents of each will be used to create a composite sample that will be used in the analytical testing.

7.3.2 Analytical testing and reporting. When specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the analyses must be made in accordance with the following methods from the Association of Official Analytical Collaboration (AOAC) International Official Methods of Analysis (OMA) or as specified in Table II. Any result not conforming to the analytical requirements may be cause for rejection of the lot.

[3] Findings indicate zero colonies (CFU) per plate or zero tubes producing gas for MPN.

TABLE II. Analytical and microbiological testing and reporting

Test	Method	Reported as
Sodium	AOAC 963.09, 985.35, 2011.14, or 2015.06	Nearest 0.1 percent
Fat	AOAC 932.06, 983.23, 996.06, or 2008.06	Nearest 0.1 percent
Aflatoxin	AOAC 991.31 or 998.03	Nearest 1 ppb
Salmonella	AOAC 967.26, 967.28, 996.08, 2003.09, 2004.03, 2011.03, 2011.17, 2013.09, or BAM Ch. 5[4]	Must be reported as positive or negative
E. coli	AOAC 991.14, 2011.17, or BAM Ch. 4[4]	Must be reported as positive or negative
L. monocytogenes	AOAC 2003.12, 2013.11, 2016.08, or BAM Ch. 10[4]	Must be reported as positive or negative

8. MANUFACTURER'S/DISTRIBUTOR'S PRODUCT ASSURANCE. The manufacturer/ distributor must certify that the non-dairy beverages provided meet the salient characteristics of this CID, conform to their own specifications, standards, and quality assurance practices, and be the same non-dairy beverages offered for sale in the commercial market. The purchaser reserves the right to require proof of conformance.

9. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS. The delivered non-dairy beverages must comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local mandatory requirements and regulations relating to the preparation, packaging, labeling, storage, distribution, and sale of the non-dairy beverages in the commercial marketplace. Delivered non-dairy beverages must comply with all applicable provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic (FD&C) Act, the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act, Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA), and regulations promulgated thereunder. The allergen statement must be provided in a format which complies with FALCPA for any product which contains wheat, fish, milk, soy, tree nuts, eggs, peanuts, sesame, and Crustacean shellfish or those in effect on the date of the solicitation, contract, or purchase order. When the non-dairy beverages are used for the Child Nutrition Programs, the non-dairy beverages must comply with all applicable provisions of those programs.

[4] 8th Edition, FDA *Bacteriological Analytical Manual* (BAM) or the FDA BAM Online is available at https://www.fda.gov/food/laboratory-methods-food/bacteriological-analytical-manual-bam.

10. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS. *Purchaser must specify 10.3 or 10.4. Purchaser may specify one of the following combinations: 10.1.1 with 10.2.1 or 10.1.2 with 10.2.2.*

10.1 Food defense. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a Food Defense Systems Survey (FDSS) or audit must be conducted by USDA, AMS, Specialty Crops Program (SCP), Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division. Food defense requirements include a documented and operational food defense plan that provides for the security of a plant's production processes and includes the storage and transportation of pre-production raw materials and other ingredients and post-production finished product. The plan must address the following areas: (1) food security plan management; (2) outside and inside security of the production and storage facilities; (3) processing, including all raw material sources; (4) shipping and receiving; (5) storage; (6) water and ice supply; (7) mail handling; (8) personnel security; and (9) transportation, shipping, and receiving.

10.1.1 FDSS. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a FDSS must be conducted by USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division. The FDSS verifies that operators of food establishments have implemented measures to minimize the risk of tampering or other criminal actions against the food under their control. An AMS FDSS verifies the participating company's adherence to *Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration* (21 CFR Part 121).

10.1.2 Food defense section of the Plant Systems Audit (PSA). When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a food defense audit will be conducted as part of the PSA. The audit will be conducted by USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division auditors. This verifies that operators of food establishments have implemented measures to minimize the risk of tampering or other criminal actions against the food under their control. The food defense section of the PSA verifies the participating company's adherence to *Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration* (21 CFR Part 121).

10.2 Manufacturer's quality assurance. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the product manufacturer will be required to provide evidence, by certificate that the manufacturing plant has undertaken one of the following quality assurance measures within 12 months prior to providing a bid or no later than 10 business days from the date of the awarding of the contract. Failure to provide this documentation within the proper time frame may result in the contract being terminated for cause.

10.2.1 Plant survey. A plant survey conducted by USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. The plant survey audit verifies that, at the time of the survey, the manufacturer produces products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis, and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food* (21 CFR Part 117).

10.2.2 PSA. A PSA conducted by USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. The PSA verifies the manufacturer's capability to produce products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis, and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food* (21 CFR Part 117) and verifies that the manufacturer has in place an internal quality assurance program that meets or exceeds USDA requirements.

10.3 Manufacturer's/distributor's certification. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the manufacturer/distributor must certify that the non-dairy beverages delivered meet or exceed the requirements of this CID. The manufacturer/distributor must certify via a Certificate of Conformance or other adequate documentation (*as specified by the purchaser*) that the non-dairy beverages meet analytical requirements specified in Sec. 7 of this CID.

10.4 USDA certification. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order that product quality and acceptability or both be determined, the USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division inspectors, must be the certifying program. SCI Division inspectors must certify the quality and acceptability of the non-dairy beverages in accordance with SCI Division procedures, which include selecting random samples of the non-dairy beverages, evaluating the samples for conformance with the salient characteristics and analytical requirements of this CID and other contractual requirements, and documenting the findings on official SCI Division score sheets and/or certificates. In addition, when required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, SCI Division inspectors will examine the non-dairy beverages for conformance to the *Standards for Condition of Food Containers* (7 CFR Part 42) in effect on the date of the solicitation.

11. PACKAGING. Preservation, packaging, packing, labeling, and case marking must be commercial unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

12. USDA INSPECTION NOTES. When Sec. 10.4 is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA certification must include evaluation of the quality and condition of samples of non-dairy beverages and compliance with requirements in the following areas:

- Processing guidelines (Sec. 5).
- Salient characteristics (Sec. 6).
- Analytical requirements *when specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order* (Sec. 7). When USDA analytical testing is specified, SCI Division inspection personnel must select samples and submit them to the USDA, AMS, Science and Technology Program (S&T) laboratory for analysis.
- Packaging requirements (Sec. 11).

13. REFERENCE NOTES.

13.1 USDA services.

13.1.1 USDA certification. For USDA certification information contact: **National Program Mission Support, SCI Division, SCP, AMS, USDA, via E-mail: SCIinspectionoperations@usda.gov.**

13.1.2 USDA FDSS, plant survey, and PSA. For a USDA FDSS, plant survey, and PSA contact the **Chief, Auditing Services Branch, SCI Division, SCP, AMS, USDA, Room 1566 South Building, STOP 0247, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0247, telephone (202) 720-5021, fax (866) 230-9168, or via E-mail: SCAudits@usda.gov.**

13.1.3 Analytical testing and technical information. For USDA technical information on analytical testing, contact the **Laboratory Approval and Testing Division, S&T, AMS, USDA, STOP 0272, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0272, telephone (202) 690-4089 or via E-mail: LATD@usda.gov.** Samples for specified USDA analytical testing should be sent to the USDA, AMS, S&TP laboratory for analysis at: **USDA, AMS, S&T, National Science Laboratory, 801 Summit Crossing Place, Suite B, Gastonia, NC 28054.**

13.2 Sources of documents.

13.2.1 Sources of information for nongovernmental documents are as follows:

Copies of the AOAC International OMA may be obtained from: **AOAC International, 2275 Research Boulevard, Suite 300, Rockville, MD 20850-3250, telephone (301) 924-7077.** Internet address: **https://www.aoac.org** for nonmembers and **https://www.eoma.aoac.org** for members and AOAC OMA subscribers.

Copies of the Food Chemicals Codex and U.S. Pharmacopeia may be purchased from: **United States Pharmacopeia Convention, 12601 Twinbrook Parkway, Rockville, MD 20877, telephone (800) 227-8772 or (301) 881-0666, fax (301) 816-8148 or on the Internet at: https://www.usp.org.**

13.2.2 Sources of information for governmental documents are as follows:

Applicable provisions of the Standards for Condition of Food Containers are contained in 7 CFR Part 42, the National Organic Program are contained in 7 CFR Part 205, the National School Lunch Program are contained in 7 CFR Part 210, the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act are contained in 16 CFR Parts 500 to 503, and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act are contained in 21 CFR Parts 1 to 199. These documents may be purchased from: **Superintendent of Documents, New Orders, P.O. Box 979050, St. Louis, MO 63197-9000. Credit card**

(Visa, MasterCard, Discover/NOVUS, and American Express) purchases may be made by calling the Superintendent of Documents at (866) 512-1800, (202) 512-1800. These documents may also be obtained free of charge on the Internet at: https://www.ecfr.gov/.

Copies of U.S. standards and inspection instructions for fruits, vegetables, and other specialty products may be obtained from: **SCI Division, SCP, AMS, USDA, 100 Riverside Parkway, Suite 101, Fredericksburg, VA 22406, telephone (650) 552-9073, fax (650) 552-9147, or via E-mail: FVSupplyDepot@usda.gov or on the Internet at: https://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards** and **https://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/how-purchase-equipment-and-visual-aids.**

Copies of the FDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual are available online from: **FDA, Center of Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) on the Internet at: https://www.fda.gov/food/laboratory-methods-food/bacteriological-analytical-manual-bam.**

Copies of this CID and the Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 CFR Part 42) are available from: **Director, SCI Division, SCP, AMS, USDA, Room 1536 South Building, STOP 0240, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0240, via E-mail: CIDS@usda.gov or on the Internet at: https://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/cids and https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-I/subchapter-A/part-42.**

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