METRIC

A-A-20291B
May 18, 2023
SUPERSEDING
A-A-20291A
July 13, 2011

COMMERCIAL ITEM DESCRIPTION

CAULIFLOWER, FRESH CUT, READY-TO-EAT OR READY-TO-USE

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

1. SCOPE. This CID covers ready-to-eat or ready-to-use, fresh cut cauliflower (cauliflower), 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:

- Style(s), size(s), color(s), purpose(s), packaging and agricultural practice(s) (Sec. 3).
- When compliance with analytical requirements must be verified (Sec. 7.2).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 10.4) or USDA certification (Sec. 10.5).

2.2 Purchasers *may specify* the following:

- Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Audit (Sec. 10.1).
- Food Defense (Sec. 10.2) and Manufacturer's Quality Assurance (Sec. 10.3). *Purchaser must specify 10.4 or 10.5. In addition, purchaser may specify 10.1 or one of the following combinations: 10.2 with 10.3.1, 10.2 with 10.3.2, 10.3 with 10.3.1, or 10.3 with 10.3.2.*
- Packaging requirements other than commercial (Sec. 11).

3. CLASSIFICATION. The cauliflower 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.

Styles, sizes, colors, purposes, packaging and agricultural practices.[2]

Style I - Florets
Size A - 1.91 to 6.99 centimeters (cm) (0.75 to 2.75 inches (in)) in diameter at the widest part of the crown with 10 percent or less over 6.99 cm (2.75 in) and no more than 10 percent less than 1.91 cm (0.75 in) and a length of 1.91 to 6.99 cm (0.75 to 2.75 in) with 10 percent or less of the florets having a length over 6.99 cm (2.75 in).
Size B - Other *(as specified by the purchaser)*

Style II - Crowns

Style III - Other *(as specified by the purchaser)*

Color 1 - White cauliflower
Color 2 - Green cauliflower
Color 3 - Orange cauliflower
Color 4 - Purple cauliflower
Color 5 - Other *(as specified by the purchaser)*

Purpose a - Ready-to-Eat
Purpose b - Ready-to-Use

Packaging (1) - Modified Atmosphere Packaging (MAP)
Packaging (2) - Vacuum packaging
Packaging (3) - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

Agricultural practice (a) - Conventional
Agricultural practice (b) - 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).

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

5. PROCESSING GUIDELINES.

5.1 Processing. The cauliflower must be harvested and handled in accordance with the Federal Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) Draft Guidance for Industry: *Guide to Minimize Food Safety Hazards of Fresh-cut Produce*[3], Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Final Rule on Produce Safety[4] and *Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis, and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food* (21 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 117).

5.2 Food defense. The cauliflower 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.

5.3 Organic ingredients. When organic cauliflower is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the cauliflower 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.

5.4 Temperature. The cauliflower must be kept under refrigeration to maintain quality. Unless otherwise recommended, preparation, storage, and delivery temperatures must be greater than 0°C (32°F) but not more than 5°C (41°F).

5.5 Shelf life. Once the cauliflower is packaged, the remaining shelf life must be at least 14 days when stored at 5°C (41°F).

6. SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS.

6.1 Definitions.

6.1.1 Ready-to-Eat. Product is intended for consumption by the public and to be consumed directly from the container without washing or other preparation.

[3] Draft Guidance for Industry: *Guide to Minimize Food Safety Hazards of Fresh-cut Produce* is available at: https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/draft-guidance-industry-guide-minimize-food-safety-hazards-fresh-cut-produce.
[4] FSMA Final Rule on Produce Safety is available at: https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-modernization-act-fsma/fsma-final-rule-produce-safety.

6.1.2 Ready-to-Use. Product is intended for consumption by the public and to be consumed after additional processing such as but not limited to washing or cooking by the end user.

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 Cauliflower. The cauliflower must be prepared from U.S. Grade No. 1 or better for the U.S. Standards for Grades of Cauliflower for Processing.[5]

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 FDA.

6.4 Finished product.

6.4.1 Flavor and aroma. The cauliflower must possess good, normal characteristic flavor and odor. The finished cauliflower must be free from objectionable flavors and odors of any kind.

6.4.2 Color. The cauliflower must possess good, bright, color characteristic for the color type. Color 1 must possess a uniformly bright white to creamy white color. Color 2 must possess a uniformly bright light green color. Color 3 must possess a uniformly bright golden to light orange color. Color 4 must possess a uniformly bright blue to purple color.

6.4.3 Texture. The cauliflower must be compact, fresh and firm to the touch and not tough, fibrous, or mushy and must be free from tough core. Curds must be fresh, firm and crisp, and stems must not be excessively elongated.

6.4.4 Packaging. The cauliflower can be packaged using Modified Atmosphere Packaging (MAP) or vacuum packaging to retain quality. Packaging must not bloat to the extent that the bag is on the verge of rupturing or otherwise opening. Product package seals or seams must be free from any entrapped product and product must be free from excessive "free" liquid. Packaging must contain a code which allows traceability of the product in the event of a recall.

[5] U.S. Standards for Grades of Cauliflower for Processing is available at: https://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/cauliflower-processing-grades-and-standards.

6.4.5 Foreign material. The cauliflower must be clean, sound, wholesome, and free from foreign material, such as, but not limited to extraneous plant material, dirt, plastic, wood, metal, and evidence of insect or rodent infestation.

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 cauliflower must conform to those in Table I:

TABLE I. Analytical and microbial requirements

Test	Requirement
Salmonella	Must be negative
Escherichia coli (*E. coli*)/Coliforms	Less than 10 Colony Forming Units (CFU) or Most Probable Number (MPN) per gram (g)[6]
E. coli O157:H7	Must be negative
Non-O157:H7 Shiga-toxin Producing *E. coli* (STEC)	Must be negative
Coagulase positive *Staphylococcus aureus (S. aureus)*	Less than 10 CFU or MPN per g[6]
Listeria monocytogenes (L. monocytogenes)	Must be negative

7.2 Analytical verification. Purchaser must specify manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 10.4) or USDA certification (Sec. 10.5).

7.3 USDA verification procedures. When USDA certification (Sec. 10.5) 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.

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

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.

TABLE II. Analytical and microbiological testing and reporting

Test	Method	Reported as
Salmonella	AOAC 967.26, 2013.09, or BAM Ch. 5[7]	Must be reported as positive or negative
E. coli/Coliforms	AOAC 991.14, 992.30, 990.11, 2005.03, 2017.01, or BAM Ch. 4[7]	Must be reported to the nearest CFU per g or the nearest MPN per g
E. coli O157:H7	AOAC 2000.13, 2017.01 or BAM Ch. 4A[7]	Must be reported as positive or negative
Non-O157:H7 STEC	AOAC Performance Tested Methods (PTM) 071902, BAM Ch. 4A[7]	Must be reported as positive or negative
Coagulase positive *S. aureus*	AOAC 2003.07, 975.55, 987.09, or BAM Ch. 12[7]	Must be reported to the nearest CFU per g or the nearest MPN per g
L. monocytogenes	AOAC 2016.08, 995.22, 997.03, 2004.02, or BAM Ch. 10[7]	Must be reported as positive or negative

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

9. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS. The delivered cauliflower 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 cauliflower in the

[7] FDA *Bacteriological Analytical Manual* (BAM) is available at: https://www.fda.gov/food/laboratory-methods-food/bacteriological-analytical-manual-bam.

commercial marketplace. Delivered cauliflower 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 cauliflower is used for USDA, Child Nutrition Programs, the cauliflower must comply with all applicable provisions of those programs.

10. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS. *Purchaser must specify 10.4 or 10.5. In addition, purchaser may specify 10.1 or one of the following combinations: 10.2 with 10.3.1, 10.2 with 10.3.2, 10.3 with 10.3.1, or 10.3 with 10.3.2.*

10.1 Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) audit verification program. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a GAP audit must be conducted by USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Specialty Crops Program (SCP), Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division. A GAP audit must be performed at the site where the cauliflower is grown and at the packing house where the cauliflower is packed. The audit program consists of one initial audit, and at least one unannounced audit depending on how long the facility is in operation during a growing season. The purpose of the GAP audit verification program is to demonstrate that the participating company is adhering to generally recognized GAP principles.

10.2 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, SCP, 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.

10.2.1 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).

10.2.2 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).

10.3 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.

10.3.1 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).

10.3.2 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.

10.4 Manufacturer's/distributor's certification. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the manufacturer/distributor must certify that the cauliflower delivered meets or exceeds 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 cauliflower meets analytical requirements specified in Sec. 7 of this CID.

10.5 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 cauliflower in accordance with SCI Division procedures, which include selecting random samples of the cauliflower, 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 cauliflower 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. 10.5 is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA certification must include evaluation of the quality and condition of samples of cauliflower 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 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 (BAM) 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.**

CIVIL AGENCY COORDINATING ACTIVITY:

DOJ - BOP
HHS - FDA
USDA - SCP
VA - OSS

PREPARING ACTIVITY:

USDA - SCP

Non-Discrimination Policy: In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.