

**METRIC**

**A-A-20294A**  
**December 15, 2011**  
**SUPERSEDING**  
**A-A-20294**  
**June 24, 1999**

## **COMMERCIAL ITEM DESCRIPTION**

### **VEGETABLE BLENDS, FROZEN**

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

**1. SCOPE.** This CID covers frozen vegetable blends, packed in commercially acceptable containers, suitable for use by the Federal, State, local governments and other interested parties.

#### **2. PURCHASER NOTES.**

##### **2.1 Purchasers *shall specify* the following:**

- Blend(s), agricultural practice(s), vegetable(s), designation(s), style(s), and flavor(s) of frozen vegetable blends required (Sec. 3).
- When analytical requirements are different than specified (Sec. 6.1).
- When analytical requirements need to be verified (Sec. 6.4).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 9.3) or USDA certification (Sec. 9.4).

##### **2.2 Purchasers *may specify* the following:**

- Food Defense Section 9.2: Food Defense System Survey (FDSS) (Sec. 9.1.1), or Food Defense Addendum to Plant Systems Audit (PSA) (Sec. 9.1.2), or (Sec. 9.1.2 with 9.2.1).
- Manufacturer's quality assurance (Sec. 9.2 with 9.2.1) or (Sec. 9.2 with 9.2.2).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial (Sec. 10).

**3. CLASSIFICATION.** The frozen vegetable blends shall conform to the following list which shall be specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

**A-A-20294A**

**Blends, agricultural practices, vegetables, designations, styles, and flavors.**

**Blend I** - Two or more vegetable(s) packaged together

**Blend II** - Three way mix in accordance with the U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen Mixed Vegetables

**Blend III** - Four way mix in accordance with the U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen Mixed Vegetables

**Blend IV** - Five way mix in accordance with the U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen Mixed Vegetables

**Blend V** - Other Blends (as specified by the purchaser)

**Agricultural practice A** - Conventional

**Agricultural practice B** - Organic (100 percent)

**Vegetable 1** - Asparagus

**Designation a** - Spears or stalks

**Designation b** - Tips

**Designation c** - Cut spears or cuts and tips

**Designation d** - Center cuts or cuts

**Vegetable 2** - Beans, green (round)

**Designation a** - Whole

**Designation b** - Cut or cuts

**Designation c** - Short cut or short cuts

**Designation d** - Mixed

**Designation e** - Sliced lengthwise or French style

**Vegetable 3** - Beans, lima

**Designation a** - Thin-seeded

**Designation b** - Thick-seeded baby potato

**Designation c** - Thick-seeded

**Vegetable 4** - Beans, Romano (flat) or Italian

**Designation a** - Whole

**Designation b** - Cut or cuts

**Designation c** - Short cut or short cuts

**Designation d** - Mixed

**Vegetable 5** - Beans, wax

**Designation a** - Whole

**Designation b** - Cut or cuts

- Designation c** - Short cut or short cuts
- Designation d** - Mixed
- Designation e** - Sliced lengthwise or French style

**Vegetable 6** - Broccoli

- Designation a** - Spears or stalks
- Designation b** - Short spears or florets
- Designation c** - Cut
- Designation d** - Chopped
- Designation e** - Pieces or random cuts

**Vegetable 7** - Brussels sprouts

**Vegetable 8** - Carrot

- Designation a** - Whole or whole carrots
- Designation b** - Halves or halved
- Designation c** - Quarters or quartered
- Designation d** - Slices or sliced
- Designation e** - Dices
- Designation f** - Double-diced
- Designation g** - Strips
- Designation h** - Chips
- Designation i** - Cut
- Designation j** - “Baby” style

**Vegetable 9** - Cauliflower

- Designation a** - Clusters
- Designation b** - Nuggets or small clusters

**Vegetable 10** - Celery

**Vegetable 11** - Corn, sweet

- Designation a** - Whole-kernel, golden (or yellow)
- Designation b** - Whole-kernel, white
- Designation c** - Whole-kernel, bi-color (golden and white)
- Designation d** - Baby (4.5 - 10 cm [1.7 - 3.9 in] in length and 7 - 17 mm [2.8 - 6.7 in] in diameter)

**Vegetable 12** - Edamame soybeans - shelled

**Vegetable 13** - Mushroom

**Vegetable 14** - Onion

- Designation a** - Whole (20 - 48 mm [7/8 - 1-7/8 in] diameter)
- Designation b** - Whole (10 - 20 mm [3/8 - 7/8 in] diameter)

**A-A-20294A**

**Designation c** - Strips

**Designation d** - Diced

**Vegetable 15** - Onions, pearl

**Vegetable 16** - Okra

**Vegetable 17** - Peas, snow (*Pisum sativum* variety *saccharatum*)

**Vegetable 18** - Peas, sugar snap *Pisum sativum* variety *macrocarpon*)

**Vegetable 19** - Peas, garden (*Pisum sativum*)

**Vegetable 20** - Potato, white or Irish

**Designation a** - Whole

**Designation b** - Sliced

**Designation c** - Diced

**Designation d** - Wedge

**Vegetable 21** - Spinach

**Designation a** - Leaf

**Designation b** - Chopped

**Vegetable 22** - Squash (summer), green

**Designation a** - Sliced

**Designation b** - Cut

**Vegetable 23** - Squash (summer), yellow

**Designation a** - Sliced

**Designation b** - Cut

**Vegetable 24** - Sweet pepper, green

**Designation a** - Whole stemmed

**Designation b** - Whole unstemmed

**Designation c** - Halved

**Designation d** - Sliced

**Designation e** - Diced

**Vegetable 25** - Sweet pepper, red

**Designation a** - Whole stemmed

**Designation b** - Whole unstemmed

**Designation c** - Halved

**Designation d** - Sliced

**Designation e** - Diced

- Vegetable 26** - Sweet pepper, yellow  
**Designation a** - Whole stemmed  
**Designation b** - Whole unstemmed  
**Designation c** - Halved  
**Designation d** - Sliced  
**Designation e** - Diced

- Vegetable 27** - Turnip  
**Designation a** - Whole  
**Designation b** - Sliced  
**Designation c** - Cut or chopped

- Vegetable 28** - Water Chestnut  
**Vegetable 29** - Other

- Style (1)** - No added salt (21 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §101.61) 1/  
**Style (2)** - Low sodium (21 CFR §101.61)  
**Style (3)** - Sauce  
**Flavor (a)** - Butter  
**Flavor (b)** - Cheese  
**Flavor (c)** - Herb  
**Flavor (d)** - Garlic  
**Flavor (e)** - Other

- Style (4)** - Herbs (as specified by purchaser)  
**Style (5)** - Pasta (as specified by the purchaser)  
**Style (6)** - Rice  
**Style (7)** - Quinoa  
**Style (8)** - Dried beans (black, red kidney, small white, etc.) (as specified by purchaser)  
**Style (9)** - Fruit (as specified by the purchaser)  
**Style (10)** - Other

1/ “No Salt Added” and “Unsalted” must meet conditions of use and must declare “This Is Not A Sodium Free Food” on the information panel if food is not “Sodium Free.”

**4. MANUFACTURER’S/DISTRIBUTOR’S NOTES. Manufacturer’s/distributor’s products *shall meet the requirements of the:***

- Salient characteristics (Sec. 5).
- Analytical requirements: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 6).
- Manufacturer’s/distributor’s product assurance (Sec. 7).

**A-A-20294A**

- Regulatory requirements (Sec. 8).
- Quality assurance provisions: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 9).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 10).

**5. SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS.**

**5.1 Processing.** The frozen vegetable blends shall be prepared in accordance with current Good Manufacturing Practices (21 CFR Part 110).

**5.2 Food Security.** The frozen vegetable blends should be processed and transported in accordance to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) *Guidance for Industry: Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance*. <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/GuidanceDocuments/Food/DefenseandEmergencyResponse/ucm083075.htm>. This guidance identifies the kinds of preventive measures operators of food establishments 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 security 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 postproduction finished product.

**5.3 Ingredients.** The frozen vegetable blends shall be prepared and blanched from clean, sound, mature vegetables, which are frozen and maintained at a temperature necessary for preservation of the product. Peas shall conform to U.S. FDA standards of identity for frozen peas 21 CFR § 158.170. Unless otherwise stated in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, those individual frozen vegetables used in the frozen vegetable blend that have a U.S. Grade Standard shall be equivalent to U.S. Grade A. Peas, whole kernel corn, and cauliflower shall be equivalent to U.S. Grade A except for maturity, which shall be U.S. Grade B or better.

**5.4 Finished product.**

**5.4.1 Flavor and odor.** The frozen vegetable blends shall have characteristic flavors and odors of the vegetables in the blend.

**5.4.2 Color.** Each type of vegetable shall possess normal color-characteristic of each vegetable in the blend.

**5.4.3 Texture/Maturity.** Each type of vegetable shall be harvested at appropriate maturity with good texture. Peas, whole kernel corn, and cauliflower shall be reasonably tender.

**5.4.4 Defects.** Each type of vegetable shall be reasonably free from, but not limited to peels, stems, eyes, discoloration, damaged units, wilting, bruising, cuts, fuzziness, riciness, mold, fibrous, woody, and cob material.

**5.4.5 Foreign material.** The frozen vegetable blends shall be free from foreign material such as, but not limited to, stones, dirt, insect parts, hair, wood, glass, plastics or metal. The frozen vegetable blends shall conform to the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, and applicable State laws and regulations.

**5.4.6 Temperature:** Unless otherwise stated in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, storage and delivery temperatures shall be -17.8°C (0°F).

**5.5 Organic frozen vegetable blends.** When organic frozen vegetable blends are specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the produce shall be grown following organic agricultural practices and processed in accordance with the requirements of the National Organic Program (7 CFR Part 205). A certificate of organic operation shall be provided to verify that the product was produced and processed in accordance with the National Organic Program requirements. The use of the term “100 percent organic,” “organic,” and “made with organic (specified ingredients or food group(s))” shall comply with the product composition requirements as listed in 7 CFR § 205.301. Non-synthetic and synthetic substances allowed in organic handling are listed in 7 CFR § 205.605, National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances.

**6. ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS.**

**6.1 Analytical requirements.** Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the analytical requirements for the frozen vegetable blends shall be as follows.

<u>Test</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
<i>Staph. aureus</i>	Shall be negative
<i>E. coli</i> /Coliforms	Less than 3 per gram using Most Probable Number (MPN) technique or less than 10 Colony Forming Units (CFU)
Salt	Shall not exceed designation specified by purchaser
Yeast and mold	Less than 100 CFU per g

**6.2 Product Verification.** When USDA verification of analytical requirements is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, analytical testing shall be performed on a composite

**A-A-20294A**

sample. The composite sample shall be 227 g (8 oz) prepared from five randomly selected subsamples. Subsamples shall be a minimum of one container and shall contain the appropriate number of containers to yield a 227 g (8 oz) sample when composited.

**6.3 Analytical testing.** When specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, analyses shall be in made accordance with the following methods from the Official Methods of Analysis of the AOAC International.

<u>Test</u>	<u>Method</u>
<i>E.coli</i> /Coliforms	991.14
<i>Staph. aureus</i>	987.09 or 2001.05
Salt	937.09, 971.27 or 935.47
Yeast and Mold	997.02

**6.4 Test results.** The test results for *E. coli*/coliforms and *Staph. aureus* shall be reported to the nearest MPN per g or to the nearest CFU per g. The test results for yeast and mold shall be reported to the nearest CFU per g. The test results for salt shall be reported to the nearest 0.1 percent. Any result not conforming to the analytical testing shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

**7. MANUFACTURER’S/DISTRIBUTOR’S PRODUCT ASSURANCE.** The manufacturer/distributor shall certify that the frozen vegetable blends provided shall meet the salient characteristics of this CID, conform to their own specifications, standards, and quality assurance practices, and be the same frozen vegetable blends offered for sale in the commercial market. The purchaser reserves the right to require proof of conformance.

**8. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS.** The delivered frozen vegetable blends shall comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local mandatory requirements and regulations relating to the preparation, packaging, labeling, storage, distribution, and sale of frozen vegetable blends within the commercial marketplace. Delivered frozen vegetable blends shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act; and regulations promulgated thereunder. The frozen vegetable blends shall comply with the allergen labeling requirement of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

**9. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS.** Purchaser shall specify 9.3 or 9.4; purchaser may specify 9.1 with 9.2.1, or 9.1 with 9.2.2, or 9.2 with 9.2.1, or 9.2 with 9.2.2.



**9.1 Food Defense.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a Food Defense System Survey (FDSS) shall be conducted by USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Processed Products Division (PPD). 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 shall address the following areas: (1) food security plan management; (2) outside and inside security of the production and storage facilities; (3) slaughter, when applicable, and 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.

**9.1.1 FDSS.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a FDSS shall be conducted by USDA, AMS, FV, PPD. 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 the FDA's "Guidance for Industry - Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance.") For further information, see section 12.1 and 12.3.2.*

**9.1.2 Food Defense Addendum to Plant Systems Audit (PSA).** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a Food Defense addendum to a PSA audit shall be conducted by USDA, AMS, FV, PPD 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. *(An AMS, FDSS verifies the participating company's adherence to the FDA's "Guidance for Industry - Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance.") For further information, see section 12.1 and 12.3.2.*

**9.2 Manufacturer's quality assurance.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the product manufacturer shall 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 awarding of the contract. Failure to provide this documentation within the proper time frame may result in the contract being terminated for cause.

**9.2.1 Plant systems audit.** A plant systems audit (PSA) conducted by USDA, AMS, or other audit performed by a third party auditing service is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. *(An AMS PSA verifies the manufacturer's capability to produce products in a clean sanitary environment in accordance with 21 CFR Part 110 - Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food, and verifies that the manufacturer has in place an internal quality assurance program.)*

## A-A-20294A

**9.2.2 Plant survey.** A plant survey conducted by USDA, AMS, or other survey performed by a third party auditing service is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. *(An AMS plant survey audit verifies that at the time of the survey, the manufacturer produces products in a clean sanitary environment in accordance with 21 CFR Part 110 - Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food.)*

**9.3 Manufacturer's/distributor's certification.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the manufacturer/distributor will certify that the finished frozen vegetable blends distributed meets or exceeds the requirements of this CID.

**9.4 USDA certification.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order that product quality and acceptability or both be determined, the PPD, Fruit and Vegetable Programs (FV), AMS, USDA, shall be the certifying program. PPD inspectors shall certify the quality and acceptability of the frozen vegetable blends in accordance with PPD procedures which include selecting random samples of the packaged frozen vegetable blends, evaluating the samples for conformance with the salient characteristics of this CID and other contractual requirements, and documenting the findings on official PPD score sheets and/or certificates. In addition, when required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, PPD inspectors will examine the frozen vegetable blends for conformance to the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers in effect on the date of the solicitation.

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

**11. USDA INSPECTION NOTES.** When Section 9.4 is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA certification shall include evaluation of the quality and condition of samples of packaged frozen vegetable blends, and compliance with requirements in the following areas:

- Salient characteristics (Sec. 5).
- Analytical requirements *when specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order* (Sec. 6.1). When USDA analytical testing is specified, PPD inspection personnel shall select samples and submit them to the USDA, Science and Technology Programs (S&TP) laboratory for analysis.
- Packaging requirements (Sec. 10 or as specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order).

**12. REFERENCE NOTES.**

**12.1 PPD certification, Plant Survey, PSA, and FDSS.** For PPD certification, Plant Survey, PSA, and FDSS, contact the **Chief, Inspection and Standardization Branch, PPD, FV, AMS, USDA, STOP 0247, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0247,** telephone (202) 720-4693, Fax (202) 690-1527, or via E-mail: [albert.hoover@ams.usda.gov](mailto:albert.hoover@ams.usda.gov) or [chere.shorter@ams.usda.gov](mailto:chere.shorter@ams.usda.gov).

**12.2 Analytical testing and technical information contact.** For USDA technical information on analytical testing, contact the **Technical Service Staff, S&TP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0272, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0272,** telephone (202) 690-0621, or via E-mail: [shirleyj.wright@ams.usda.gov](mailto:shirleyj.wright@ams.usda.gov).

### **12.3 Sources of documents.**

#### **12.3.1 Sources of information for nongovernmental documents are as follows:**

Copies of the Official Methods of Analysis of the AOAC International may be obtained from: **AOAC International, 481 North Frederick Avenue, Suite 500, Gaithersburg, MD 20877,** telephone (301) 924-7077 or on the Internet at: <http://www.aoac.org>.

#### **12.3.2 Sources of information for governmental documents are as follows:**

Applicable provisions of 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 on (866) 512-1800, (202) 512-1800 or on the Internet at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?collectionCode=CFR>.

Copies of Guidance for Industry - Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance is available from: **FDA, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) on the Internet at:** <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/GuidanceDocuments/FoodDefenseandEmergencyResponse/ucm083075.htm>.

## **A-A-20294A**

Copies of the U.S. Grade Standards for Frozen Asparagus, Green and Wax Beans, Lima Beans, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Corn, Okra, Peas, Sweet Peppers, Turnip Greens with Turnips, and Mixed Vegetables are available from: **Director, PPD, FV, AMS, USDA, STOP 0247, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0247, telephone (202) 720-4693, Fax (202) 690-1527, or on the Internet at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/processedinspection>.**

Copies of this CID, the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers, and beneficial comments, recommendations, additions, deletions, clarifications, etc. and any data which may improve this CID are available from and/or provided to: **Director, PPD, FV, AMS, USDA, STOP 0247, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0247, telephone (202) 720-9939, Fax (202) 690-1527, via E-mail: [FQASStaff@ams.usda.gov](mailto:FQASStaff@ams.usda.gov) or on the Internet at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/FQAS>.**

### **CIVIL AGENCY COORDINATING ACTIVITIES:**

DOJ - BOP  
HHS - NIH, IHS, FDA  
USDA - FV  
VA - OSS

### **PREPARING ACTIVITY:**

USDA - FV

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