



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Dairy
Programs

USDA Specifications for Cottage Cheese and Dry Curd Cottage Cheese

Effective February 13, 2001

USDA Specifications for Cottage Cheese and Dry Curd Cottage Cheese

1.0 Plant requirements.

Cottage cheese shall be manufactured and packaged in accordance with the applicable requirements contained in 7 CFR Part 58, Grading and Inspection, General Specifications for Approved Plants and Standards for Grades of Dairy Products and inspected by the AMS, Dairy Grading Branch. Alternatively, cottage cheese may be manufactured and packaged in accordance with the applicable requirements contained in the latest revision of the “Grade A Pasteurized Milk Ordinance,” Food and Drug Administration.

2.0 Product temperature requirements.

Cottage cheese shall be cooled after packaging and maintained at a temperature of 45°F (7.2°C) or lower.

3.0 Regulatory.

3.1 Cottage cheese and dry curd cottage cheese shall comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in the Food and Drug Administration’s Standard of Identity for Cottage Cheese 21 CFR Part 133.128 for cottage cheese or 21 CFR Part 133.129 for dry curd cottage cheese.

3.2 Reduced fat, light and fat free cottage cheese or dry curd cottage cheese shall comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in 21 CFR Part 133.128 for cottage cheese, 21 CFR Part 133.129 for dry curd cottage cheese, 21 CFR Part 101.62 for nutrient claims for fat, and 21 CFR Part 130.10 for foods named by use of a nutrient content claim and standardized term.

4.0 Composition requirements.

4.1 Dry Curd Cottage Cheese

- *Moisture* – not more than 80 percent by weight of the finished food.
- *Milkfat* – not more than 0.5 percent by weight of the finished food.
- *pH* – not more than 5.2

4.2 Creamed Cottage Cheese

- *Moisture* – not more than 80 percent by weight of the finished food.
- *Milkfat* – not less than 4 percent by weight of the finished food.
- *pH* – not more than 5.2

5.0 Dairy ingredients.

Dry dairy products (such as nonfat dry milk) used as ingredients for which there are U.S. grades established, shall meet the criteria of U.S. Extra Grade. Dairy products for which there are no U.S. grades established shall meet the applicable requirements of 7 CFR Part 58. The plants that produce dairy products for use in cottage cheese shall be approved by the Dairy Grading Branch, Dairy Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Alternatively, all dairy products used in the manufacture of cottage cheese, and the plant in which the cottage cheese is processed may comply with all applicable requirements of the latest revision of the "Grade A Pasteurized Milk Ordinance," Food and Drug Administration.

6.0 Non-dairy ingredients.

- 6.1 All optional non-dairy ingredients shall be clean and wholesome, and shall be approved by the U. S. Food and Drug Administration in accordance with 21 CFR Part 133.128 (b), as applicable.

7.0 Quality requirements.

7.1 Flavor.

Shall possess a pleasing and desirable flavor similar to fresh whole milk or cream (if creamed) and may possess the delicate flavor and aroma of lactic acid and diacetyl. The product may possess to a slight degree a feed, acid, flat, or salty flavor, but shall be free from chalky, utensil, fruity, yeasty, or other objectionable flavors. Flavoring ingredients shall be uniformly distributed throughout the product. The flavor shall be pleasing, and characteristic of the flavoring ingredient used. The flavor shall not be harsh or unnatural.

7.2 Body and Texture.

Shall have a meaty texture, but if creamed shall be sufficiently tender to permit proper absorption of cream or creaming mixture. The texture shall be smooth and velvety and shall not be mealy, crumbly, pasty, sticky, mushy, watery, or slimy, or possess any other objectionable characteristics of body and texture. Small curd style (cut with ¼ inch knives) should have curd particles approximately ¼ inch or less in size. Large curd style (cut with knives over ¼ inch) should have curd particles approximately 3/8 inch in size.

7.3 Color and Appearance.

Shall present a clean, natural creamy white color. Cottage cheese should have uniform sized particles (regardless of style or cut of curd). Creamed cottage cheese should have a uniform layer of cream around the curd particles with a minimum of free cream. Any excess cream should be of thick consistency (not whey like or watery). Flavoring ingredients shall be consistent in size, distribution, and color to produce a pleasing, natural appearance and appeal of the finished product.

8.0 Analytical and Microbial requirements.

Analytical and microbial analyses shall be made in accordance with procedures published in the latest revision of the “Official Methods of Analysis of the Association of Official Analytical Chemists,” or procedures published in the latest revision of “Standard Methods for the Examination of Dairy Products,” published by the American Public Health Association. Samples shall be taken as often as necessary to insure composition and microbial control.

Analytical Requirements

- Fat – See section 4.1 and 4.2
- Moisture – See section 4.1 and 4.2
- pH – See section 4.1 and 4.2

Microbial requirements

- Coliform – Not more than 10 per gram
- Psychrotrophic – Not more than 100 per gram
- Yeast and Mold – Not more than 10 per gram

9.0 Official identification.

Products officially inspected and found to meet these requirements may be identified with the official USDA Quality Approved Inspection Shield.