

STANDARD FOR CRACKERS FROM MARINE AND FRESHWATER FISH, CRUSTACEAN AND MOLLUSCAN SHELLFISH

CODEX STAN 222-2001

1. SCOPE

This standard shall apply to crackers prepared from marine and freshwater fish, crustacean and molluscan shellfish. It does not include ready-to-eat fried as well as artificially flavoured fish, crustacean and molluscan shellfish crackers.

2. DESCRIPTION

2.1 PRODUCT DEFINITION

The product is a traditional food made from fresh fish or frozen minced flesh of either marine (including both the red meat and white meat species) or freshwater fish, crustacean (including prawns and shrimps) and molluscan shellfish (including squids, cuttlefish, oysters, clams, mussels and cockles) as described in section 3.1 and other ingredients as described in section 3.2.

2.2 PROCESS DEFINITION

2.2.1 The product shall be prepared by mixing all the ingredients, forming, cooking, cooling, slicing and drying.

2.2.2 The product shall be packed in a suitable packaging material which is moisture proof and gas impermeable. It shall be processed and packaged so as to minimize oxidation.

2.3 HANDLING PRACTICE

Fresh marine and freshwater fish, crustacean and molluscan shellfish shall be preserved immediately after harvesting by chilling or icing to bring its temperature down to 0°C (32°F) as quickly as possible as specified in the Recommended International Code of Practice for Fresh Fish (CAC/RCP 9-1976) and kept at an adequate temperature to prevent spoilage and bacterial growth prior to processing.

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 RAW MATERIAL

Fresh marine and freshwater fish, crustacean and molluscan shellfish shall mean freshly caught, chilled or frozen marine and freshwater fish, crustacean and molluscan shellfish. Frozen minced flesh shall mean freshly caught, chilled or frozen marine and freshwater fish, crustacean and molluscan shellfish which has been appropriately processed. The marine and freshwater fish, crustacean and molluscan shellfish shall have a characteristic fresh appearance, colour and odour.

3.2 OTHER INGREDIENTS

Other ingredients shall be of food grade quality and conform to all applicable Codex Standards.

3.3 OPTIONAL INGREDIENTS

The product may contain sugar as well as suitable spices.

3.4 FINAL PRODUCT

3.4.1 The product shall display a uniform size, shape, colour, thickness and texture.

3.4.2 The product shall comply with the requirements prescribed in Table 1.

TABLE 1 : REQUIREMENTS FOR CRACKERS FROM MARINE AND FRESHWATER FISH, CRUSTACEAN AND MOLLUSCAN SHELLFISH

Characteristics	Grade	Fish	Crustacean and Molluscan Shellfish
Crude protein (N x 6.25), percent w/w min.	I	12	8
	II	8	5
	III	5	2
Moisture content, percent w/w	I))
	II) 8 to 14) 8 to 14
	III))

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

Additives

Maximum Level in the Final Product

Sequestrants

452 Polyphosphates 5g/kg expressed as P₂O₅, single or in combination

Flavour enhancers

621 Monosodium glutamate Limited by GMP

5. HYGIENE

5.1 It is recommended that the product covered by the provisions of this standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1985, Rev 2-1997), and the Recommended International Code of Practice for Fresh Fish (CAC/RCP 9 - 1976).

5.2 The products should comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997).

6. LABELLING

In addition to the provisions of the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev.1 -1991), the following specific provisions apply:

6.1 THE NAME OF THE FOOD

The name of the product from marine and freshwater fish shall be "Fish Crackers" and those from crustacean and molluscan shellfish shall depict the common name of the species, like "Prawn Crackers" or "Squid Crackers".

6.2 GRADES

When declared by grade, the package shall declare the grade as prescribed in Table 1.

6.3 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The package shall bear clear directions for keeping the product from the time it is purchased from the retailer to the time of its use and directions for cooking.

7. SAMPLING, EXAMINATION AND ANALYSIS

7.1 SAMPLING

Sampling of lots for examination of the products shall be in accordance with the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Sampling Plans for Prepackaged Foods (1969) (AQL-6.5) (CODEX STAN 233-1969).

7.2 DETERMINATION OF CRUDE PROTEIN

According to AOAC 920.87 or 960.52.

7.3 DETERMINATION OF MOISTURE

According to AOAC 950.46B (air drying).

7.4 SENSORY AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Samples taken for sensory and physical examination shall be assessed by persons trained in such examination and in accordance with Annex A.

8. DEFINITION OF DEFECTIVES

The sample unit shall be considered defective when it exhibits any of the properties defined below:

8.1 FOREIGN MATTER

The presence in the sample unit of any matter which has not been derived from materials specified in section 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, does not pose a threat to human health and is readily recognized without magnification that indicates non-compliance with good manufacturing and sanitation practices.

8.2 ODOUR AND FLAVOUR

Unfried crackers affected by persistent and distinct objectionable odours and fried crackers affected by persistent and distinct objectionable flavours indicative of decomposition (such as putrid), or contamination by foreign substances (such as fuel oil and cleaning compound).

8.3 BONES

Crackers with more than one bone greater than 3 mm in diameter and 5mm in length that affects more than 25% of the sample unit.

8.4 DISCOLOURATION

Pronounced black, whitish or yellowish discolouration indicative of mould or fungal growth on the surface of crackers that affects more than 10% of the sample unit.

9. LOT ACCEPTANCE

A lot shall be considered as meeting the requirements of this standard when:

1. the total number of defectives as classified according to Section 8 does not exceed the acceptable number of the appropriate sampling plan in the Sampling Plans for Prepackaged Foods (1969) (AQL-6.5) (CODEX STAN 233-1969).
2. the average net weight of all sample units is not less than the declared weight, provided no individual container is less than 95% of the declared weight; and
3. the Food Additives, Hygiene, Packing and Labelling requirements of Section 4, 5, 2.2 and 6 are met.

“ANNEX A” SENSORY AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

The sample used for sensory evaluation should not be same as that used for other examination.

1. Examine the sample unit for foreign matter, bones and discolouration.
2. Assess the odour in the uncooked sample in accordance with the Guidelines for the Sensory Evaluation of Fish and Shellfish In Laboratories (CAC/GL 31-1999).
3. Assess the flavour in cooked sample in accordance with the Guidelines for the Sensory Evaluation of Fish and Shellfish In Laboratories (CAC/GL 31-1999).
4. The sample shall be deep-fried in fresh cooking oil at 190oC for 20-60 seconds as appropriate to the thickness of the crackers.