

SECTION C

This document covers thermostabilized vegetable crumbles with pasta in taco style sauce packaged in a flexible pouch for use by the Department of Defense as a component of operational rations.

C-1 ITEM DESCRIPTION

PCR-V-010, VEGETABLE CRUMBLES WITH PASTA IN TACO STYLE SAUCE, PACKAGED IN A FLEXIBLE POUCH, SHELF STABLE

C-2 PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

A. Product standard. A sample shall be subjected to first article (FA) or product demonstration model (PDM) inspection as applicable, in accordance with the tests and inspections of Section E of this Performance-based Contract Requirements (PCR) document. The approved sample shall serve as the product standard. Should the contractor at any time plan to or actually produce the product using different raw material or process methodologies from the approved product standard, which result in a product noncomparable to the product standard, the contractor shall submit a replacement FA or PDM for approval. In any event, all product produced must meet all requirements of this document including product standard comparability.

B. Commercial sterility. The packaged food shall be processed until commercially sterile.

C. Shelf life. The packaged product shall meet the minimum shelf life requirement of 36 months at 80°F.

D. Appearance.

(1) General. The finished product shall be a uniform mixture of vegetable sausage crumbles, mafalda noodles, black beans, and vegetables in a taco style sauce. The finished product shall be free from foreign materials.

(2) Pasta. The mafalda noodles shall be an enriched pasta product. The cooked mafalda noodles shall be broad and flat with ruffled edges, approximately 1-1/4 inches in length by 3/4 inch in width and shall have a cooked pasta color.

(3) Vegetable sausage crumbles. The vegetable sausage crumble pieces shall be of random size with the largest piece not to exceed 1/2 inch. The vegetable sausage crumbles shall have a cooked ground meat appearance.

(4) Sauce. The taco style sauce shall be glossy, opaque, an orange-brown color and shall contain whole black beans. The sauce shall have discernible pieces of tomato, diced green and red bell peppers, and onions and may contain flecks of herbs and spices.

E. Odor and flavor. The packaged food shall be free from foreign odors and flavors.

(1) Pasta. The mafalda noodles shall have a cooked pasta odor and flavor.

(2) Vegetable sausage crumbles. The vegetable sausage crumbles shall have the odor and flavor typical of cooked ground meat, and may have a slight soy protein odor and flavor.

(3) Sauce. The sauce shall have a moderately intense taco seasoning odor and flavor and shall elicit a sensation of mild heat. The sauce shall have a flavor of tomatoes, green and red bell peppers, onions and black beans.

F. Texture.

(1) Pasta. The mafalda noodles shall be slightly soft to slightly firm and shall not be pasty.

(2) Vegetable sausage crumbles. The vegetable sausage crumbles shall have a texture similar to cooked ground meat.

(3) Sauce. The taco style sauce shall be smooth and moderately thick. The tomatoes, green and red bell peppers, and onions shall be tender. The black beans shall be slightly firm.

G. Net weight. The average net weight shall be not less than 8.0 ounces (227 grams). The net weight of an individual pouch shall be not less than 7.5 ounces (213 grams).

H. Drained weight. The average drained weight of vegetable sausage crumbles, pasta, and black beans (combined) shall be not less than 5.6 ounces (159 grams). The drained weight of vegetable sausage crumbles, pasta, and black beans (combined) in an individual pouch shall be not less than 5.2 ounces (148 grams).

I. Palatability and overall appearance. The finished product shall be equal to or better than the approved product standard in palatability and overall appearance.

J. Analytical requirements.

(1) Protein. The protein content shall be not less than 4.6 percent.

(2) Fat. The fat content shall be not greater than 3.4 percent.

(3) Salt. The salt content shall be not less than 0.5 percent and not greater than 1.4 percent.

K. Vegetarian requirement. This product shall contain no ingredients, major or trace, and/or processing aids derived from the flesh, skin, blood, entrails, or bones of animals. This includes, but is not limited to oils, fats, fatty acids and their esters, flavorings, gelling agents, coagulants, binders, emulsifiers, fatty alcohol, aldehydes, and ketones, lactones, glycerol, amino acids, hydrolyzed proteins, enzymes, and enzyme modified products. Furthermore, these products shall contain no ethyl alcohol, or ingredients derived from or containing methyl alcohol. Milk and eggs, and ingredients derived from them such as yogurt, or cheese (produced without animal based rennet or pepsin), are allowed.

C-3 MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

THE FOLLOWING IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY. THIS IS NOT A MANDATORY CONTRACT REQUIREMENT.

A. Ingredients. Water, tomatoes in juice, vegetarian sausage crumbles (no meat) (water, texture soy flour [soy flour, caramel color], spices [including paprika], salt, sugar, dextrose, dehydrated garlic, sodium phosphate), red bell peppers, green bell peppers, whole grain pasta [whole durum wheat flour, semolina (wheat), oat fiber, egg whites, niacin, iron (ferrous sulfate), thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin and folic acid], black beans, cheddar cheese blend (cheddar cheese [milk, salt, cheese cultures, enzymes], disodium phosphate and annatto), taco seasoning (spices [including chili pepper and paprika], dehydrated onion and garlic, monosodium glutamate), contains 2 percent or less of the following: tomato paste, olive oil, dehydrated onion, salt, garlic (garlic and water), guar gum, xanthan gum.

SECTION D

D-1 PACKAGING

Product shall be filled into pouches, processed and each pouch placed into a carton in accordance with MIL-PRF-44073, Packaging of Food in Flexible Pouches, Type I.

D-2 LABELING

A. Pouches. Each pouch shall be correctly and legibly labeled. Printing ink shall be permanent black ink or any other contrasting color, which is free of carcinogenic elements. Prior to thermal processing of the pouches, the product name, lot number, filling equipment

number and time stamp shall be applied. All other marking may be applied before or after thermal processing.

(1) Product name (not less than 1/8 inch high). Commonly used abbreviations may be used.

(2) Pouch code includes: 1/

Lot number
Filling equipment identification number
Company code
Retort identification number and Retort cook number (Optional)
Time stamp (hour and minute of filling/sealing operation)

1/ The lot number shall be expressed as a four digit Julian code. The first digit shall indicate the year of production and the next three digits shall indicate the day of the year (Example, 14 February 2014 would be coded as 4045). The Julian code shall represent the day the product was packaged into the pouch and processed. Following the four digit Julian code, the other required code information shall be printed in the sequence as listed above.

B. Cartons.

(1) The cartons shall be clearly printed on one of the largest panels with permanent black ink as follows:

Product name (7/32 to 9/32 inch block letters)
Ingredients
Net weight
Name and address of packer
Code (same as pouch code, see pouches) 1/ 2/ 3/
“Nutrition Facts” label in accordance with the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act (NLEA) and all applicable FDA regulations

1/ Code may be ink printed on any outside carton panel. Code may be embossed on any outside carton panel except the largest panels of the carton.

2/ Company code not required in carton code.

3/ Cartons shall be time stamped with the hour and minute that the pouch is sealed into the carton. (Cartons are not expected to bear same time stamp as pouch). Alternatively, the Retort identification and Retort cook number shall be used.

(2) Military nutrition information entitled “Military Rations Are Good Performance Meals” shall be printed on the entrée carton’s large panel opposite to the panel printed with the data in D-2,B(1) above. The information, provided by the contracting officer, shall be clearly printed with permanent black ink in an area no smaller than 4-1/4 inches by 6-3/4 inches.

(3) The product shall be formulated and labeled in accordance with all FDA labeling regulations and policies. The cartons shall be labeled with the following product name.

VEGETARIAN TACO PASTA (VEGETABLE CRUMBLES WITH PASTA
IN TACO STYLE SAUCE)

D-3 PACKING

A. Packing. Not more than 40 pounds of product shall be packed in a fiberboard shipping box constructed in accordance with style RSC of ASTM D5118/D5118M, Standard Practice for Fabrication of Fiberboard Shipping Boxes. The fiberboard shall conform to type CF, class D, variety SW, burst grade 200 or ECT grade 32 of ASTM D4727/D4727M, Standard Specification for Corrugated and Solid Fiberboard Sheet Stock (Container Grade) and Cut Shapes. Each box shall be closed in accordance with ASTM D1974/D1974M, Standard Practice for Methods of Closing, Sealing, and Reinforcing Fiberboard Boxes.

D-5 MARKING

A. Shipping containers. Shipping containers shall be marked in accordance with DLA Troop Support Form 3556, Marking Instructions for Boxes, Sacks, and Unit Loads of Perishable and Semiperishable Subsistence.

SECTION E INSPECTION AND ACCEPTANCE

The following quality assurance criteria, utilizing ANSI/ASQ Z1.4, Sampling Procedures and Tables for Inspection by Attributes, are required. Unless otherwise specified, single sampling plans indicated in ANSI/ASQ Z1.4 will be utilized. When required, the manufacturer shall provide the Certificate(s) of Conformance to the appropriate inspection activity. Certificate(s) of Conformance not provided shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

A. Definitions.

(1) Critical defect. A critical defect is a defect that judgment and experience indicate would result in hazardous or unsafe conditions for individuals using, maintaining, or depending on the item; or a defect that judgment and experience indicate is likely to prevent the performance of the major end item, i.e., the consumption of the ration.

(2) Major defect. A major defect is a defect, other than critical, that is likely to result in failure, or to reduce materially the usability of the unit of product for its intended purpose.

(3) Minor defect. A minor defect is a defect that is not likely to reduce materially the usability of the unit of product for its intended purpose, or is a departure from established standards having little bearing on the effective use or operation of the unit.

B. Classification of inspections. The inspection requirements specified herein are classified as follows:

(1) Product standard inspection. The first article or product demonstration model shall be inspected in accordance with the provisions of this document and evaluated for appearance, odor, flavor, and texture. Any failure to conform to the performance requirements or any appearance or palatability failure shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

(2) Periodic review evaluation. The approved first article or product demonstration model shall be used as the product standard for periodic review evaluations. All food components that are inspected by the USDA shall be subject to periodic review sampling and evaluation. The USDA shall select sample units during production of contracts and submit them to the following address for evaluation:

US Army Research, Development and Engineering Command
Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center
RDNS-CFF
15 Kansas Street
Natick, MA 01760-5056

One lot shall be randomly selected during each calendar month of production or as otherwise specified in the contract. Three (3) sample units shall be randomly selected from that one production lot. The three (3) sample units shall be shipped to Natick within five (5) working days from the end of the production month from which they are randomly selected and upon completion of all USDA inspection requirements. The sample units will be evaluated for overall quality against the current first article or product demonstration model.

(3) Conformance inspection. Conformance inspection shall include the examinations/tests and methods of inspection cited in this section and in Section 4 of MIL-PRF-44073.

E-5 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS (PRODUCT)

A. Product examination. The finished product shall be examined for compliance with the performance requirements specified in Section C of this Performance-based Contract Requirements document utilizing the double sampling plans indicated in ANSI/ASQ Z1.4. The lot size shall be expressed in pouches. The sample unit shall be the contents of one pouch. The inspection level shall be S-3 and the acceptable quality level (AQL), expressed in terms of defects per hundred units, shall be 1.5 for major defects and 4.0 for minor defects. Defects and defect classifications are listed in table I. For drained weight inspection, a separate set of pouches shall be selected from the lot using the same sampling criteria as above. The pouches shall be immersed in not less than 140°F and not greater than 190°F water for 10 minutes prior to conducting the product examination and the drained weight inspection.

TABLE I. Product defects 1/ 2/ 3/ 4/

Category		Defect
<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	
		<u>Appearance</u>
101		Product not a uniform mixture of vegetable sausage crumbles, mafalda noodles, black beans, and vegetables in a taco style sauce.
	201	Cooked mafalda noodles not broad or not flat or without ruffled edges.
	202	Cooked mafalda noodles not 1-1/4 inches in length or not 3/4 inch in width.
	203	Mafalda noodles not a cooked pasta color.
	204	Vegetable sausage crumble pieces not of random size.
	205	Largest vegetable sausage crumble piece exceeds 1/2 inch.
	206	Vegetable sausage crumbles do not have a cooked ground meat appearance.
	207	Sauce not glossy or not opaque or not an orange-brown color.
	208	Sauce does not contain whole black beans.

TABLE I. Product defects 1/ 2/ 3/ 4/ - Continued

Category		Defect
<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	
	209	Sauce does not have discernible pieces of tomato, diced green and red bell peppers, or onions.
		<u>Odor and flavor</u>
102		Mafalda noodles do not have a cooked pasta odor or flavor.
103		Vegetable sausage crumbles do not have the odor or flavor typical of cooked ground meat.
104		Sauce does not have a moderately intense taco seasoning odor or flavor or does not elicit a sensation of mild heat.
105		Sauce does not have a flavor of tomatoes or green and red bell peppers or onions or black beans.
		<u>Texture</u>
	210	Mafalda noodles not slightly soft to slightly firm.
	211	Mafalda noodles pasty.
	212	Vegetable sausage crumbles do not have a texture similar to cooked ground meat.
	213	Sauce not smooth or not moderately thick.
	214	Tomatoes or green and red bell peppers or onions not tender.
	215	Black beans not slightly firm.
		<u>Net weight</u>
	216	Net weight of an individual pouch less than 7.5 ounces (213 grams). <u>5/</u>

TABLE I. Product defects 1/ 2/ 3/ 4/ - Continued

Category		Defect
<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	
		<u>Drained weight</u>
	217	Drained weight of vegetable sausage crumbles, pasta, and black beans (combined) in an individual pouch less than 5.2 ounces (148 grams). <u>6/</u>

1/ Presence of any foreign materials such as, but not limited to dirt, insect parts, hair, glass, wood, or metal, or any foreign odors or flavors such as, but not limited to burnt, scorched, rancid, sour, stale, musty or moldy shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

2/ Finished product not equal to or better than the approved product standard in palatability and overall appearance shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

3/ Verification of pasta as enriched shall be with the statement of ingredients on the label or verified by the producer's Certificate of Conformance (CoC).

4/ Product shall be verified as meeting vegetarian requirement by a CoC.

5/ Sample average net weight less than 8.0 ounces (227 grams) shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

6/ Sample average drained weight less than 5.6 ounces (159 grams) shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

B. Methods of inspection.

(1) Commercial sterility. Commercial sterility shall be verified in accordance with FDA regulations.

(2) Shelf life. The contractor shall provide a Certificate of Conformance that the product has a 36 month shelf life when stored at 80°F. Government verification may include storage for 6 months at 100°F or 36 months at 80°F. Upon completion of either storage period, the product will be subjected to a sensory evaluation panel for appearance and palatability and must receive an overall score of 5 or higher based on a 9 point quality scale to be considered acceptable.

(3) Net weight. The net weight of the filled and sealed pouches shall be determined by weighing each sample on a suitable scale tared with a representative empty pouch. Results shall be reported to the nearest 0.1 ounce or to the nearest 1 gram.

(4) Drained weight. The pouch contents shall be poured into a flat-bottom container. A minimum of three times the volume of the pouch of not less than 140°F and not greater than 190°F water shall be added to the container so as to cover the contents. The contents and water shall be gently agitated so as to remove the sauce without breaking the pasta, vegetable sausage crumbles or black beans. The contents shall then be poured into a U.S. Standard No. 14 sieve in a manner that will distribute the product over the sieve without breaking the pasta, vegetable sausage crumbles or black beans. The sieve area shall be such that the distributed product does not completely cover all the openings of the sieve. The sieve shall be tilted at such an angle to assure complete drainage of liquid from the product. Drain product for two minutes before determining the combined drained weight by subtracting the sieve tare weight from the gross weight. The drained weight shall be reported to the nearest 0.1 ounce or to the nearest 1 gram.

(5) Analytical. The sample to be analyzed shall be a composite of eight filled and sealed pouches which have been selected at random from the lot. The composite sample shall be prepared and analyzed in accordance with the following methods of the Official Methods of Analysis (OMA) of AOAC International:

<u>Test</u>	<u>Method Number</u>
Protein	988.05, 992.15
Fat	991.36, 2007.04 or 2008.06
Salt	935.47

Test results shall be reported to the nearest 0.1 percent. Government verification will be conducted through actual testing by a Government laboratory. Any result not conforming to the analytical requirement shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

E-6 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS (PACKAGING AND PACKING MATERIALS)

A. Packaging.

(1) Pouch material testing. The pouch material shall be examined for the characteristics listed in table I of MIL-PRF-44073 for Type I. The lot size, sample unit, and inspection level criteria for each of the test characteristics are listed below. Any test failure shall be classified as a major defect and shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

Characteristic	Lot size expressed in	Sample unit	Inspection level
Oxygen transmission rate	yards	1/2 yard	S-1
Water vapor transmission rate	yards	1/2 yard	S-1
Camouflage	yards	1/2 yard	S-1
Thermal processing	pouches	1 pouch	S-2
Low temperature	pouches	1 pouch	S-2
High temperature	pouches	1 pouch	S-2

(2) Filled and sealed pouch testing. The filled and sealed thermoprocessed or hot-fill processed pouches shall be examined for the characteristics listed in table I of MIL-PRF-44073 for Type I. The lot size, sample unit, and inspection level criteria for each of the test characteristics are listed below. Any test failure shall be classified as a major defect and shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

Characteristic	Lot size expressed in	Sample unit	Inspection level
Residual gas volume	pouches	1 pouch	S-2
Internal pressure	pouches	1 pouch	S-2 <u>1/</u>
Directional tear	pouches	1 pouch	S-2

1/ When a three-seal tester is used, a separate set of samples is required for testing of the closure seal.

(3) Pouch examination. The pouches shall be examined for the defects listed in table II of MIL-PRF-44073 for Type I. The lot size shall be expressed in pouches. The sample unit shall be one thermal processed pouch. The inspection level shall be I and the AQL, expressed in terms of defects per hundred units, shall be 0.65 for major A defects, 2.5 for major B defects, and 4.0 for minor defects. Two hundred sample units shall be examined for critical defects. The finding of any critical defect shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

(4) Examination of pouch and carton assembly. The completed pouch and carton assemblies shall be examined for the defects listed in table III of MIL-PRF-44073 for Type I.

The lot size shall be expressed in units of completed assemblies. The sample unit shall be one pouch and carton assembly. The inspection level shall be S-3 and the AQL, expressed in terms of defects per hundred units, shall be 0.65 for major defects and 2.5 for minor defects. Fifty sample pouch and carton assemblies shall be examined for critical defects. The finding of any critical defect shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

B. Packing.

(1) Shipping container and marking examination. The filled and sealed shipping containers shall be examined for the defects listed in table II. The lot size shall be expressed in shipping containers. The sample unit shall be one shipping container fully packed. The inspection level shall be S-3 and the AQL, expressed in terms of defects per hundred units, shall be 4.0 for major defects and 10.0 for total defects.

TABLE II. Shipping container and marking defects

Category		Defect
<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	
101		Marking missing or incorrect or illegible.
102		Inadequate workmanship. <u>1/</u>
	201	More than 40 pounds of product.

1/ Inadequate workmanship is defined as, but not limited to, incomplete closure of container flaps, loose strapping, inadequate stapling, improper taping, or bulged or distorted container.

SECTION J REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Unless otherwise specified, the applicable version of these documents is that which is active on the date of the solicitation or contract.

DLA Troop Support Form

Form 3556	Marking Instructions for Boxes, Sacks, and Unit Loads of Perishable and Semiperishable Subsistence
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MILITARY SPECIFICATION

MIL-PRF-44073	Packaging of Food in Flexible Pouches
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NON-GOVERNMENTAL STANDARDS

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR QUALITY (ASQ) www.asq.org

ANSI/ASQ Z1.4	Sampling Procedures and Tables for Inspection by Attributes
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ASTM INTERNATIONAL www.astm.org

D1974/D1974M	Standard Practice for Methods of Closing, Sealing, and Reinforcing Fiberboard Boxes
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D4727/D4727M	Standard Specification for Corrugated and Solid Fiberboard Sheet Stock (Container Grade) and Cut Shapes
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D5118/D5118M	Standard Practice for Fabrication of Fiberboard Shipping Boxes
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AOAC INTERNATIONAL www.aoac.org

Official Methods of Analysis (OMA) of the AOAC International