

SECTION C

This document covers shelf stable homestyle chicken noodle casserole, cooked, dehydrated, packaged in a stand up pouch for use by the Department of Defense as a component of operational rations.

C-1 ITEM DESCRIPTION

PCR-H-016, HOMESTYLE CHICKEN NOODLE CASSEROLE, COOKED, DEHYDRATED, PACKAGED IN A STAND UP 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. Shelf life. The packaged product shall meet the minimum shelf life requirement of 36 months at 80°F.

C. Dehydrated product.

(1) Appearance.

a. General. The finished product shall be a cooked, dehydrated mixture of egg noodles, chicken, mushrooms, pimentos, green bell peppers and celery covered in a chicken broth based sauce powder. The product shall be fully dehydrated. The finished product shall be free from foreign materials.

b. Egg noodles. The cooked, dehydrated egg noodles shall be fine and shall be an off-white to pale yellow color.

c. Chicken. The cooked, dehydrated, chicken meat pieces shall be in natural proportions and shall be produced by equipment settings that result in finished product dimensions no less than 1/2 inch in width and of random lengths. The chicken shall be an off-white to tan color and shall be fibrous.

d. Vegetables. The cooked, dehydrated mushroom pieces shall be a grayish-brown color. The cooked, dehydrated pimento pieces shall be a red color. The cooked, dehydrated green bell pepper and celery pieces shall be a green color.

e. Sauce. The cooked, dehydrated chicken broth based sauce shall be an off-white to light tan color with flecks of herbs and spices and shall be a free-flowing powder.

(2) Odor. The dehydrated packaged food shall have a savory chicken broth odor. The dehydrated packaged food shall be free from foreign odors.

(3) Texture. The product shall not have wet or soft spots indicating incomplete dehydration.

(4) Net weight. The net weight of an individual pouch shall be not less than 5.3 ounces (149 grams).

D. Rehydrated product.

(1) Appearance.

a. General. The finished product shall be a rehydrated mixture of egg noodles, chicken, mushrooms, pimentos, green bell peppers and celery in a chicken broth based sauce. The rehydrated finished product shall be free from foreign materials.

b. Egg noodles. The rehydrated egg noodles shall be an off-white to pale yellow color and shall be distinct strips that readily separate.

c. Chicken. The rehydrated chicken shall be an off-white to tan color and shall be distinct pieces. The packaged food shall be practically free of skin, bone or bone fragments, cartilage, coarse connective tissue, tendons or ligaments, glandular material, and discolored meat.

d. Vegetables. The rehydrated mushroom pieces shall be a grayish-brown color. The rehydrated pimento pieces shall be a red color. The rehydrated green bell pepper and celery pieces shall be a green color.

e. Sauce. The rehydrated chicken broth based sauce shall be smooth, glossy, semi-translucent and an off-white to light yellow color with flecks of herbs and spices.

(2) Odor and flavor. The rehydrated packaged food shall have a savory chicken broth odor. The rehydrated packaged food shall have a cooked egg noodle, chicken, mushroom,

mild pimento, green bell pepper, celery and mild savory chicken broth with slight dairy and slight white pepper flavor. The rehydrated packaged food shall be free from foreign odors and flavors.

(3) Texture.

- a. General. The product shall fully rehydrate within twelve minutes.
- b. Egg noodles. The rehydrated egg noodles shall be slightly soft to slightly firm.
- c. Chicken. The rehydrated chicken meat pieces shall be moist and tender with a cooked chicken meat texture.
- d. Vegetables. The rehydrated vegetable pieces shall be soft and tender.
- e. Sauce. The rehydrated sauce shall be smooth and moderately thick.

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

F. Analytical requirements.

- (1) Protein. The protein content shall be not less than 24.0 percent.
- (2) Fat. The fat content shall be not greater than 17.0 percent.
- (3) Sodium. The sodium content shall be not greater than 1200 mg per 100 grams.
- (4) Moisture. The moisture content of the dehydrated product shall be not greater than 6.0 percent.
- (5) Oxygen. The oxygen content in the filled and sealed pouch shall not exceed 0.50 percent.

G. Microbiological requirements.

- (1) Aerobic plate count. The aerobic plate count shall be not greater than 75,000 Colony Forming Units (CFU) per gram in four of five samples and not greater than 150,000 CFU per gram in any individual sample.

(2) *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) count. *E. coli* shall have less than 10 CFU per gram or less than 3 Most Probable Number (MPN) per gram, where findings indicate zero colonies CFU per plate or zero tubes producing gas for MPN.

(3) *Salmonella*. The *Salmonella* test shall be negative for each of five pouches tested per production lot.

SECTION D

D-1 PACKAGING

A. Packaging. Product shall be filled and sealed into a pouch with an oxygen scavenger in accordance with the PACKAGING REQUIREMENTS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS FOR PRODUCT PACKAGED IN A STAND UP POUCH.

D-2 LABELING

The product shall be formulated and labeled in accordance with all USDA labeling regulations and policies. Each pouch shall be correctly and legibly labeled. Printing ink shall be permanent ink in a contrasting color which is free of carcinogenic elements. The label shall contain the following information:

- (1) Product name (letters not less than 1/8 inch high)
- (2) Ingredients
- (3) Date ^{1/}
- (4) Net weight
- (5) Name and address of packer
- (6) "Nutrition Facts" label in accordance with the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act (NLEA) and all applicable USDA regulations
- (7) Directions for preparation: Label shall include package opening instructions, instructions for removal and discard of oxygen scavenger, and amount of boiling water and time required to fully rehydrate the product.

^{1/} Each stand up pouch shall have the date of pack noted by using a four-digit code beginning with the final digit of the current year followed by the three-digit Julian code. For example, 14 February 2050 would be coded as 0045. The Julian code shall represent the day the product was packaged into the stand up pouch.

D-3 PACKING

Packing for shipment to ration assembler shall be in accordance with the PACKAGING REQUIREMENTS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS FOR PRODUCT PACKAGED IN A STAND UP POUCH.

D-5 MARKING

Marking of shipping containers shall be in accordance with the PACKAGING REQUIREMENTS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS FOR PRODUCT PACKAGED IN A STAND UP POUCH.

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:

COMBAT CAPABILITIES DEVELOPMENT COMMAND (DEVCOM) SOLDIER CENTER
FCDD-SCD-SCR
10 GENERAL GREENE AVENUE
NATICK, MA 01760-5000

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 DEVCOM Soldier Center 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 the methods of inspection cited in this section and in the PACKAGING REQUIREMENTS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS FOR PRODUCT PACKAGED IN A STAND UP POUCH.

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.

TABLE I. Product defects 1/ 2/

Category		Defect
<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	
		<u>Dehydrated product</u>
		<u>Appearance</u>
101		Product not a cooked or not a dehydrated mixture of egg noodles or not chicken or not mushrooms or not pimentos or not green bell peppers or not celery or not covered in a chicken broth based sauce powder.
102		Pouch does not contain intact oxygen scavenger(s). <u>3/</u>
103		Tear or hole or open seal in oxygen scavenger.
104		Product not fully dehydrated. <u>4/</u>
	201	Cooked, dehydrated egg noodles not fine or not an off-white to pale yellow color.
	202	Cooked, dehydrated chicken meat not pieces or not in natural proportions. <u>5/</u>
	203	Cooked, dehydrated chicken not an off-white to tan color or not fibrous.
	204	Cooked, dehydrated mushrooms not pieces or not a grayish-brown color.
	205	Cooked, dehydrated pimentos not pieces or not a red color.
	206	Cooked, dehydrated green bell pepper or celery not pieces or not a green color.
	207	Cooked, dehydrated chicken broth based sauce not an off-white to light tan color or not with flecks of herbs or spices or not a free-flowing powder.

TABLE I. Product defects 1/ 2/ - Continued

Category		Defect
<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	
		<u>Odor</u>
105		Dehydrated packaged food does not have a savory chicken broth odor.
		<u>Texture</u>
106		Product has wet or soft spots indicating incomplete dehydration.
		<u>Net weight</u>
	208	Net weight of an individual pouch less than 5.3 ounces (149 grams).
<u>Rehydrated product 6/</u>		
		<u>Appearance</u>
107		Product not a rehydrated mixture of egg noodles or not chicken or not mushrooms or not pimentos or not green bell peppers or not celery or not in a chicken broth based sauce.
	209	Rehydrated egg noodles not an off-white to pale yellow color or not distinct strips or do not readily separate.
	210	Rehydrated chicken not an off-white to tan color or not distinct pieces.
108		Bone or bone fragment measuring more than 0.3 inch in any dimension.
	211	Total weight of skin, cartilage, coarse connective tissue, tendons or ligaments, and discolored meat more than 0.20 ounce (5.7 grams).

TABLE I. Product defects 1/ 2/ - Continued

Category	Defect
<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>
	212 Rehydrated mushrooms not pieces or not a grayish-brown color.
	213 Rehydrated pimentos not pieces or not a red color.
	214 Rehydrated green bell pepper or celery not pieces or not a green color.
	215 Rehydrated chicken broth based sauce not smooth or not glossy or not semi-translucent or not an off-white to light yellow color or not with flecks of herbs or spices.
	<u>Odor and flavor</u>
109	Rehydrated packaged food does not have a savory chicken broth odor.
110	Rehydrated packaged food does not have a cooked egg noodle or not chicken or not mushroom or not mild pimento or not green bell pepper or not celery or not mild savory chicken broth or not with slight dairy or not slight white pepper flavor.
	<u>Texture</u>
	216 Rehydrated egg noodles not slightly soft to slightly firm.
	217 Rehydrated chicken meat pieces not moist or not tender or not with a cooked chicken meat texture.
	218 Rehydrated vegetable pieces not soft or not tender.
	219 Rehydrated sauce not smooth or not moderately thick.

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. Foreign flavor is not applicable to dehydrated product.

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. Palatability not applicable to dehydrated product.

3/ Construction of the oxygen scavenger and compliance with FDA regulations shall be verified by Certificate of Conformance (CoC).

4/ Presence of dark colored cores or a glazed surface area more than 0.25 inch in any dimension.

5/ The requirement for equipment settings and chicken meat in natural proportions shall be verified by CoC.

6/ Prior to conducting the rehydrated product examination, the product shall be rehydrated per pouch instructions. Product that does not rehydrate within twelve minutes shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

B. Methods of inspection.

(1) 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.

(2) Net weight. The net weight of the filled and sealed pouches shall be determined by weighing each sample unit 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.

(3) Analytical. The sample to be analyzed shall be a composite of eight filled and sealed pouches which have been selected at random from one lot. The composite sample shall be blended to uniformity using a blender or a food processor. The blending must be rapid and conducted in such a way that minimum heat is transferred to the product and that the product has minimum exposure to atmospheric moisture. The composite sample shall be 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 or 992.15
Fat	991.36, 2007.04, or 2008.06
Sodium	984.27, 985.35, 2011.14 or 2011.19
Moisture <u>1/</u>	950.46A <u>2/</u> , 985.14 <u>3/</u> , or 2008.06

1/ Moisture determination may be performed on a calibrated Brookfield Ametek Computrac Moisture Analyzer using the manufacturer's recommended instructions for test method and sample preparation. Moisture analysis on this device shall be performed at 105°C.

2/ When AOAC method 950.46A is performed, the temperature-time cycle for moisture analysis shall be modified by using a temperature of 70°C for 16 hours at a pressure of not more than 100 mm of mercury.

3/ AOAC method 985.14 may also be performed after the method has been validated against method 950.46A 2/.

Test results for the protein, fat and moisture shall be reported to the nearest 0.1 percent. Test results for sodium shall be reported to the nearest 1 milligram per 100 grams. Government verification will be conducted through actual testing by a Government laboratory. Any result not conforming to the analytical requirements specified in Section C of this Performance-based Contract Requirements document shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

(4) Oxygen testing. Eight filled and sealed pouches shall be randomly selected from one production lot and individually tested for oxygen content. Testing shall be accomplished after the filled and sealed pouches have been allowed to equilibrate at room temperature for not less than 96 hours from the time of sealing. Test results shall be reported to the nearest 0.01 percent. Any individual result not conforming to the oxygen content requirement specified in Section C of this Performance-based Contract Requirements document shall be classified as a major defect and shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

(5) Microbiological testing. Five filled and sealed pouches shall be selected at random from one lot regardless of lot size. The product shall be individually tested for microbiological levels in accordance with the OMA of AOAC International or the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM). Government verification will be conducted through actual testing by a Government laboratory. Any result not conforming to the microbiological requirements specified in Section C of this Performance-based Contract Requirements document shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

<u>Test</u>	<u>Method Number</u>
Aerobic plate count	966.23, 990.12, or BAM Ch. 3
<i>E. coli</i>	991.14 or BAM Ch. 4
<i>Salmonella</i>	967.26, 967.28, 991.13, 2003.09, 2004.03, 2013.09, or BAM Ch. 5

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

Inspection for packaging, labeling, packing, and marking shall be in accordance with the PACKAGING REQUIREMENTS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS FOR PRODUCT PACKAGED IN A STAND UP POUCH.

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.

SPECIFICATION

PACKAGING REQUIREMENTS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS
FOR PRODUCT PACKAGED IN A STAND UP POUCH.

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATION

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM)
<http://www.fda.gov/food/foodscienceresearch/laboratorymethods/ucm2006949.htm>

NON-GOVERNMENTAL STANDARDS

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

ANSI/ASQ Z1.4 Sampling Procedures and Tables for Inspection by Attributes

AOAC INTERNATIONAL www.aoac.org

Official Methods of Analysis (OMA) of AOAC International