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**24 November 2015**  
**W/Change 01 15 Aug 18 ES18-031 (DSCP-SS-18-84862)**  
**SUPERSEDING**  
**PCR-C-039**  
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## **SECTION C**

This document covers fortified cheddar cheese spread packaged in a flexible pouch for use by the Department of Defense as a component of operational rations.

### **C-1 ITEM DESCRIPTION**

#### **PCR-C-039A, CHEESE SPREAD, CHEDDAR, FORTIFIED, PACKAGED IN A FLEXIBLE POUCH, SHELF STABLE**

##### Types.

Type I -	Plain
Type II -	With Jalapeno Peppers
Type III -	With Bacon

### **C-2 PRODUCT 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 Product 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 thermally processed until commercially sterile in accordance with 21 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 113, Thermally Processed, Low Acid Food's Packaged in Hermetically Sealed Containers.

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

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D. Appearance.

(1) General. The finished product shall show no evidence of excessive heating (materially darkened or scorched), mottling, curdling, or oiling off. The cheddar cheese spreads shall be smooth, homogenous, slightly plastic, light yellow-orange color (between No. 6 and No. 10 of the National Cheese Institute Color Standard), and shall have a uniform surface sheen. The finished product shall be free from foreign materials.

(2) Type II. The cheddar cheese spread with jalapeno peppers shall have small specks of green jalapeno pepper uniformly dispersed throughout.

(3) Type III. The cheddar cheese spread with bacon shall have small pieces of brown to reddish-brown bacon uniformly dispersed throughout.

E. Odor and flavor.

(1) General. The packaged food may have a slight bitterness from the medium cured cheese. The packaged food shall be free from foreign odors and flavors.

(2) Type I. The plain cheddar cheese spread shall have a medium cured cheddar and cooked milk odor and a medium cheddar, salty, slightly buttery flavor.

(3) Type II. The cheddar cheese spread with jalapeno peppers shall have a medium cured cheddar, slightly buttery, and jalapeno odor and shall have a medium cheddar, salty, slightly buttery, and a moderate jalapeno flavor. The product shall impart a moderate heat or mouth burning sensation.

(4) Type III. The cheddar cheese spread with bacon shall have a medium cured cheddar, slightly buttery, slightly meaty, and slightly smoky odor and shall have a medium cheddar, slightly buttery, salty, slightly meaty, and slightly smoky flavor.

F. Texture.

(1) General. The cheddar cheese spread, after the pouch has been kneaded, shall have a smooth, homogenous, and easily spreadable texture. The cheddar cheese spread shall not have a grainy texture.

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(2) Type II. The cheddar cheese spread with jalapeno peppers may have small soft specks of jalapeno pepper.

(3) Type III. The cheddar cheese spread with bacon shall have bacon pieces that are soft to slightly firm and may be chewy.

G. Emulsion stability. The product shall show no evidence of emulsion separation.

H. Net weight. The net weight of an individual pouch shall be not less than 28 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) Fat. The fat content shall be not less than 38.0 percent and not greater than 43.0 percent.

(2) Salt. The salt content shall be not less than 1.6 percent and not greater than 2.2 percent for Types I and II. The salt content shall be not less than 1.8 percent nor greater than 3.5 percent for Type III.

(3) Moisture. The moisture content shall be not less than 38.0 percent and not greater than 42.0 percent.

(4) pH. The pH shall be not less than 5.5 and not greater than 5.9.

(5) Vitamin A. The vitamin A content shall be not less than 2350 International Units (IU) and not greater than 2850 IU per 100 grams.

(6) Vitamin D3. The vitamin D3 content shall be not less than 4.6 ug and not greater than 5.6 ug per 100 grams.

(7) Calcium. The calcium content shall be not less than 350 mg and not greater than 425 mg per 100 grams.

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K. Ingredients. Ingredients shall be as follows:

(1) Cheddar cheese. The quantity of milled/shredded medium cured cheddar cheese used shall be in accordance with the Definitions and Standards of Identity under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act for pasteurized process cheddar cheese spread (21 CFR Part 133.176) or pasteurized cheese spread with fruits, vegetables or meats (21 CFR Part 133.176).

(2) Butter or plastic cream. Butter or plastic cream, or a combination of both, shall be used as a fat standardizing ingredient. Milled cheese and butter or plastic cream, or a combination of both, shall be blended together in a steam jacketed vat, kettle, or laydown cooker. The mixture shall be heated to a temperature not to exceed 180°F while constantly stirring until the cheese and butter have completely melted. Scorching of the mixture shall be avoided.

(3) Water. The amount of water used is dependent on the moisture content of the cheddar cheese, butter, and jalapeno peppers (type II only) and the amount of moisture lost during processing. The water may be added in several aliquots during the blending process. The water shall be used to dissolve the stabilizers, emulsifying agents, salts, and other powdered ingredients.

(4) Stabilizer. Not more than 0.30 percent by weight of the finished product.

(5) Emulsifying agents. Not less than 1.90 percent nor more than 3 percent by weight (anhydrous salts) of the finished product.

(6) Mono and diglycerides. Not more than 0.50 percent by weight of the finished product.

(7) Salt. The amount of salt in the formula is dependent upon the salt content in the cheese and butter and jalapeno peppers (type II only). The total salt shall comply with the product requirements.

(8) Cheese coloring. Cheese coloring compounds shall be specifically designed for coloring butter and cheese. Cheese coloring shall be added as necessary so that the finished

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product will conform to the color requirement.

(9) Vitamins and mineral fortification. Vitamin A, vitamin D3, and calcium shall be added to the cheddar cheese spread in such quantity to comply with the product requirements.

(10) Acidifying agent. The acidifying agent shall be added after all ingredients have been blended and in a quantity to achieve a pH that complies with the finished product requirements.

(11) Jalapeno peppers. The amount of jalapeno peppers (pepper solids and liquid brine) used in type II product shall be of sufficient quantity to achieve a finished product odor and flavor.

(12) Bacon bits. The amount of bacon bits used in type III product shall be of sufficient quantity to achieve a finished product odor and flavor. 1/

1/ Bacon bits EDP #34743 manufactured by Hormel Foods, Corp., Austin, Minnesota 55912 performs satisfactorily in this product.

L. Formulation. Formulations are as follows:

(1) Type I. Cheddar cheese, butter or plastic cream, water, stabilizer, emulsifying agents, mono and diglycerides, salt, cheese color, vitamins, acidifying agent.

(2) Type II. In addition to the ingredients listed for type I product, jalapeno peppers are included.

(3) Type III. In addition to the ingredients listed for type I product, bacon pieces cured with water, salt, sodium erythorbate, and sodium nitrite are included. The bacon pieces may also contain sugar, dextrose, brown sugar, sodium phosphates, potassium chloride, and flavoring.

M. Preparation and processing. Processing shall be on a continuous basis.

(1) Preparation of the cheddar cheese. The cheddar cheese spread shall be produced

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from cheddar cheese (except for finish and appearance) U.S. Grade A medium cured or better. The finish and appearance shall be U.S. Grade B medium cured or better. The cheddar cheese shall be at least 90 days old at time of use and may be colored or uncolored. The medium cured cheddar cheese shall be trimmed and cleaned, as necessary, to remove all rind, wax, mold, or any other objectionable materials from the surface. The trimmed and cleaned cheddar cheese shall be milled or shredded. The milling or shredding of the cheese may be accomplished up to 24 hours prior to the preparation of the cheese spread. The milled/shredded cheese shall be protected from contamination in the clean covered containers and shall be held under refrigeration until time of use.

(2) Preparation of the cheese spread. The cheddar cheese spread shall be prepared using the quantities of ingredients indicated based on the weight of the finished cheddar cheese spread and by blending the ingredients in accordance with an established process schedule or a method which results in the cheddar cheese spread complying with the product requirements.

(3) Thermal processing. The cheddar cheese spread after blending shall be thermally processed in accordance with 21 CFR Part 113, Thermally Processed, Low-Acid Foods Packaged in Hermetically Sealed Containers.

a. Records of processing temperatures. Recording charts of all heating and cooling times and temperatures, regardless of type of system used, shall be maintained. The charts shall be taken from recorders, which have been accurately calibrated in the applicable temperature range and time recording function. The recording clock time and actual time shall be synchronized during all processing operations. The charts shall also include the date, plant identification, operator, contract number, lot number, and product being run (for example, startup water, product, and post rinses). The charts shall be maintained for three years and shall be made available for review by the government inspector.

b. Continuity of preparation, processing, and packaging. The cheddar cheese spread shall be prepared, processed, and filled into a pouch in a continuous manner with minimum delay between the various stages.

(4) Pouch filling and sealing. The cheese spread shall be aseptically filled (hot-filled) at 170°F to 180°F into a pouch, fabricated and constructed as specified in D-1,A(1), nitrogen flushed and sealed immediately after filling. If the cheddar cheese spread is not filled using

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an aseptic filler, all filling operations shall be conducted in a filling room maintained in a “clean room” condition.

(5) Filled pouch cooling temperature requirements. The filled and sealed pouch of cheddar cheese spread shall be water cooled, air cooled or a combination of both, sufficiently to ensure that the product temperature in the center of the pouch shall be below 100°F prior to packing for shipment to ration assembler. If water cooling is utilized, the pouches shall be thoroughly dry before packing.

**SECTION D**

**D-1 PACKAGING**

A. Packaging. The product shall be packaged in a barrier pouch as described below.

(1) Pouch.

a. Pouch material. The pouch shall be fabricated from 0.002 inch thick polyolefin film laminated or extrusion coated to 0.00035 inch thick aluminum foil which is then laminated to 0.0005 inch thick polyester. The three plies shall be laminated with the polyester on the exterior of the pouch. Tolerances for thickness of plastic films shall be plus or minus 20 percent and tolerance for the foil layer shall be plus or minus 10 percent. The polyolefin layer of bag material shall be suitably formulated for hot fill or post-fill processing. The material shall show no evidence of delamination, degradation, or foreign odor when heat-sealed or fabricated into pouches. The material shall be suitably formulated for food packaging and shall not impart an odor or flavor to the product. The exterior surface of the pouch shall be uniformly colored and shall conform to number 20219, 30219, 30227, 30279, 30313, 30324, or 30450 of FED-STD-595, Colors Used in Government Procurement.

b. Pouch construction. The pouch shall be a flat style pouch having maximum inside dimensions of 2-7/8 inches wide by 5-3/8 inches long. The pouch shall be made by heat sealing three edges with 3/8 inch (-1/8 inch, +3/16 inch) wide seals. The side and bottom seals shall have an average seal strength of not less than 6 pounds per inch of width and no individual specimen shall have a seal strength of less than 5 pounds per inch of width when tested. Alternatively, the pouch shall exhibit no rupture or seal separation greater than 1/16 inch or seal separation that reduces the effective closure seal width to less than 1/16 inch when tested for internal pressure resistance. A tear nick, notch or serrations shall be provided

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to facilitate opening of the filled and sealed pouch. Excess pouch material at the edges of the pouch shall not exceed 3/16 inch. A 1/8 inch wide lip may be incorporated at the open end of the pouch.

c. Pouch filling and sealing. The product shall be filled into the pouch, nitrogen flushed and the pouch sealed. The closure seal shall be free of foldover wrinkles or entrapped matter that reduces the effective closure seal width to less than 1/16 inch. Seals shall be free of impression or design on the seal surface that would conceal or impair visual detection of seal defects. The average seal strength shall be not less than 6 pounds per inch of width and no individual specimen shall have a seal strength of less than 5 pounds per inch of width. Alternatively, the pouch shall exhibit no rupture or seal separation greater than 1/16 inch or seal separation that reduces the effective closure seal width to less than 1/16 inch when tested for internal pressure resistance. The pouch shall show no aberration in the pouch material or heat seals. Filled and sealed pouches showing aberrations shall withstand a minimum internal pressure of 17 pounds per square inch gauge (psig) for 30 seconds to verify package integrity. Not less than 24 hours after hot-filling, the pouches shall withstand an internal pressure of 17 psig for 30 seconds without rupture or seal separation greater than 1/16 inch or seal separation that reduces the effective closure seal width to less than 1/16 inch when tested for internal pressure resistance.

**D-2 LABELING**

A. Pouches. Each pouch shall be correctly and legibly labeled. Printing ink shall be permanent black ink or other dark contrasting color which is free of carcinogenic elements. The label shall contain the following information.

- (1) Name and type of product (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 FDA regulations
- (7) KNEAD PACKAGE BEFORE OPENING

1/ Each 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 day code. For example,



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14 February 2017 would be coded as 7045. The Julian day code shall represent the day the product was packaged into the pouch.

**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-L 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.

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(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 product 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:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
RDNS-SEC-EMR  
NATICK SOLDIER SYSTEMS CENTER  
10 GENERAL GREENE AVENUE  
NATICK, MA 01760

One lot shall be randomly selected during each calendar month of production or as otherwise specified in the contract. Six (6) sample units shall be randomly selected from that one production lot. The six (6) 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.

**E-5 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS (PRODUCT)**

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A. Product examination. The finished product shall be examined for compliance with the product requirements specified in Section C of this Product 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. The pouches shall be kneaded prior to conducting any portion of the product examination.

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TABLE I. Product defects 1/ 2/ 3/

Category		Defect
<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	
		<u>Appearance</u>
101		Product not fortified cheddar cheese spread or not type specified.
102		Evidence of excessive heating (materially darkened or scorched), mottling, curdling, or oiling off.
	201	Cheddar cheese spreads not smooth or not homogenous or not a slightly plastic appearance.
	202	Cheddar cheese spreads, not a light yellow-orange color (between No. 6 and No. 10 of the National Cheese Institute Color Standard) or do not have a uniform surface sheen.
	203	Type II cheddar cheese spread with jalapeno peppers does not have small specks of green jalapeno pepper uniformly dispersed throughout.
	204	Type III cheddar cheese spread with bacon does not have small pieces of brown to reddish-brown bacon uniformly dispersed throughout.
		<u>Odor and flavor</u>
103		Type I plain cheddar cheese spread not a medium cured cheddar or not a cooked milk odor.
104		Type I plain cheddar cheese spread not a medium cheddar or not salty or not a slightly buttery flavor.

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

Category		Defect
<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	
105		Type II cheddar cheese spread with jalapeno peppers not a medium cured cheddar or not slightly buttery or not a jalapeno odor.
106		Type II cheddar cheese spread with jalapeno peppers not a medium cheddar or not salty or not slightly buttery or not a moderate jalapeno flavor.
107		Type II cheddar cheese spread with jalapeno peppers does not impart a moderate heat or mouth burning sensation.
108		Type III cheddar cheese spread with bacon not a medium cured cheddar or not slightly buttery or not slightly meaty or not a slightly smoky odor.
109		Type III cheddar cheese spread with bacon not a medium cheddar or not slightly buttery or not salty or not slightly meaty or not a slightly smoky flavor.
		<u>Texture</u>
	205	Cheddar cheese spread not smooth or not homogenous or not an easily spreadable texture after kneading.
	206	Cheddar cheese spread has a grainy texture.
	207	Type III cheddar cheese spread with bacon does not have soft to slightly firm bacon pieces.
		<u>Net weight</u>
	208	Net weight of an individual pouch less than 28 grams.

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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/ Grade and age requirements of cheddar cheese shall be verified by USDA Grade certificate.

**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 unit on a suitable scale tared with a representative empty pouch. Results shall be reported to the nearest 1 gram.

(4) 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>
Fat	933.05, 2007.04, 2008.06
Salt	935.47
Moisture	925.45D, 2007.04, 2008.06
pH	981.12

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Test results shall be reported to the nearest 0.1 percent for fat, salt, and moisture. Test results for pH shall be reported to the nearest 0.1. 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.

Using the same composite sample, vitamin and mineral testing is listed below:

<u>Test</u>	<u>Method Number</u>
Vitamin A	2001.13, 2011.07, or 992.06 <u>1/</u>
Vitamin D3	979.24, or 2002.05 <u>1/</u>
Calcium	985.35, or 2011.14 <u>1/</u>

Test results shall be reported to the nearest milligram, microgram, or IU, as applicable. Any result not conforming to the vitamin and mineral requirement shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

1/ Tests will be conducted by the contractor for vitamins A, D3, and calcium on the first production lot and USDA will perform verification testing and verify the formula. A Certificate of Conformance (CoC) will be provided on all future lots. If the formula is changed or a new contract starts, then another set of tests shall be conducted, a Certificate of Analysis (CoA) will be provided and USDA will verify the formula.

(5) Emulsion stability. Eight filled and sealed pouches shall be randomly selected by USDA from each lot and individually tested for emulsion stability. The samples shall not be kneaded at any time during the temperature cycle test. The contractor will subject the pouches to the temperature cycles and present the pouches to USDA. USDA will evaluate the samples and record the results. Any nonconforming result shall be cause for rejection of the lot. The filled and sealed pouches shall be tested as follows:

- a. Hold for 2 days at a temperature of  $-20^{\circ}\text{F} \pm 5^{\circ}\text{F}$ .
- b. Remove from  $-20^{\circ}\text{F}$  and hold for 2 days at  $70^{\circ}\text{F} \pm 5^{\circ}\text{F}$ .
- c. Remove from  $70^{\circ}\text{F}$  and hold for 2 days at  $100^{\circ}\text{F} \pm 5^{\circ}\text{F}$ .
- d. Cool to  $70^{\circ}\text{F} \pm 5^{\circ}\text{F}$  and examine for emulsion separation. Examination for emulsion separation shall be performed on samples which have not been kneaded.

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(6) Pouch filling and sealing. The nitrogen flush process shall be verified by USDA on the first production lot. A CoC will be provided on all future lots. If a new contract starts, then USDA will verify the nitrogen flush process again.

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

A. Packaging.

(1) Pouch material certification. The pouch material shall be tested for these characteristics. A CoC may be accepted as evidence that the characteristics conform to the specified requirements.

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Requirement paragraph</u>	<u>Test procedure</u>
Thickness of films for laminated material	D-1,A(1)a	ASTM D2103 <u>1/</u>
Aluminum foil thickness	D-1,A(1)a	ASTM B479 <u>2/</u>
Laminated material identification and construction	D-1,A(1)a	Laboratory evaluation
Color of laminated material	D-1,A(1)a	FED-STD-595 <u>3/</u>

1/ Standard Specification for Polyethylene Film and Sheeting

2/ Standard Specification for Annealed Aluminum and Aluminum-Alloy Foil for Flexible Barrier, Food Contact, and Other Applications

3/ Colors Used in Government Procurement

(2) Unfilled pouch certification. A CoC may be accepted as evidence that unfilled pouches conform to the requirements specified in D-1,A(1)a and b. When deemed necessary by the USDA, testing of the unfilled pouches for seal strength shall be as specified in E-6,B(1)a.



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(3) Filled and sealed pouch examination. The filled and sealed pouches shall be examined for the defects listed in table II. The lot size shall be expressed in pouches. The sample unit shall be one pouch. The inspection level shall be I and the acceptable quality level (AQL), expressed in terms of defects per hundred units, shall be 0.65 for major defects and 2.5 for minor defects. The finding of any critical defect shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

TABLE II. Filled and sealed pouch defects 1/

<u>Critical</u>	<u>Category</u>		<u>Defect</u>
	<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	
1			Swollen pouch.
2			Aberrations in pouch material or heat seals resulting from heat sealing, pouch fabrication, hot filling or heat processing that reduce the effective closure seal width to less than 1/16 inch. <u>2/</u>
3			Tear or hole or open seal.
	101		Seal width less than 1/16 inch. <u>3/</u>
	102		Presence of delamination. <u>4/</u>
	103		Unclean pouch. <u>5/</u>
	104		Pouch has foreign odor.
	105		Any impression or design on the heat seal surfaces which conceals or impairs visual detection of seal defects. <u>6/</u>
	106		Not packaged as specified.
		201	Label missing or incorrect or illegible.
		202	Tear nick or notch or serrations missing or does not facilitate opening.

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203            Seal width less than 1/8 inch but greater than or equal to 1/16 inch. 3/

TABLE II. Filled and sealed pouch defects 1/ - Continued

<u>Critical</u>	<u>Category</u>		<u>Defect</u>
	<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	
		204	Presence of delamination. <u>4/</u>
		205	Excess pouch material at edges exceeds 3/16 inch.

1/ Any evidence of rodent or insect infestation shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

2/ Aberrations in pouch material or heat seals include:

a. Major fold-over wrinkles or severe wrinkles, that extend into heat seal area and reduce effective seal width to less than 1/16 inch; or

b. Severe wrinkles in the body of the pouch along the inside edges of the heat seals.

Pouches exhibiting one or more of these aberrations shall be tested in accordance with E-6,B,(1),c.

3/ The effective closure seal is defined as any uncontaminated, fusion bonded, continuous path, minimum 1/16 inch wide, from side seal to side seal that produces a hermetically sealed pouch.

4/ Delamination defect classification:

Major - Delamination of the outer ply in the pouch seal area that can be propagated to expose aluminum foil at the food product edge of the pouch after manual flexing of the delaminated area. To flex, the delaminated area shall be held between the thumb and forefinger of each hand with both thumbs and forefingers touching each other. The delaminated area shall then be rapidly flexed 10 times by rotating both hands in alternating clockwise- counterclockwise directions. Care shall be exercised when flexing delaminated areas near the tear notches to avoid tearing the pouch material. After flexing, the separated outer ply shall be grasped between thumb and forefinger and gently lifted toward the food product edge of the seal or if the separated area is too small to be held between thumb and

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forefinger, a number two stylus shall be inserted into the delaminated area and a gentle lifting force applied against the outer ply. If separation of the outer ply can be made to extend to the product edge of the seal with no discernible resistance to the gentle lifting, the delamination shall be classified as a major defect. Additionally, spot delamination of the outer ply in the body of the pouch that is able to be propagated beyond its initial borders is also a major defect. To determine if the laminated area is a defect, use the following procedure: Mark the outside edges of the delaminated area using a bold permanent marking pen. Open the pouch and remove the contents. Cut the pouch transversely not closer than 1/4 inch ( $\pm 1/16$  inch) from the delaminated area. The pouch shall be flexed in the area in question using the procedure described above. Any propagation of the delaminated area, as evidenced by the delaminated area exceeding the limits of the outlined borders, shall be classified as a major defect.

Minor - Minor delamination of the outer ply in the pouch seal area is acceptable and shall not be classified as a minor defect unless it extends to within 1/16 inch of the food product edge of the seal. All other minor outer ply delamination in the pouch seal area or isolated spots of delamination in the body of the pouch that do not propagate when flexed as described above shall be classified as minor defects.

5/ Outer packaging shall be free from foreign matter which is unwholesome, has the potential to cause pouch damage (for example, glass, metal filings) or generally detracts from the clean appearance of the pouch. The following examples shall not be classified as defects for unclean:

a. Foreign matter which presents no health hazard or potential pouch damage and which can be readily removed by gently shaking the package or by gently brushing the pouch with a clean dry cloth.

b. Dried product which affects less than 1/8 of the total surface area of one pouch face (localized and aggregate).

6/ If doubt exists as to whether or not the sealing equipment leaves an impression or design on the closure seal surface that could conceal or impair visual detection of seal defects, samples shall be furnished to the contracting officer for a determination as to acceptability.

B. Methods of inspection.

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(1) Seal testing. The pouch seals shall be tested for seal strength as required in a, b, or c, as applicable.

a. Unfilled pouch seal testing. The seals of the unfilled pouch shall be tested for seal strength in accordance with ASTM F88/F88M, Standard Test Method for Seal Strength of Flexible Barrier Materials. The lot size shall be expressed in pouches. The sample unit shall be one pouch. The sample size shall be the number of pouches indicated by inspection level S-1. Three adjacent specimens shall be cut from each of the three sealed sides of each pouch in the sample. The average seal strength of any side shall be calculated by averaging the three specimens cut from that side. Any average seal strength of less than 6 pounds per inch of width or any test specimen with a seal strength of less than 5 pounds per inch of width shall be classified as a major defect and shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

b. Pouch closure seal testing. The closure seals of the pouches shall be tested for seal strength in accordance with ASTM F88/F88M. The lot size shall be expressed in pouches. The sample unit shall be one pouch. The sample size shall be the number of pouches indicated by inspection level S-1. Three adjacent specimens shall be cut from the closure seal of each pouch in the sample. The average seal strength of the closure shall be calculated by averaging the three specimens cut from that closure. Any average seal strength of less than 6 pounds per inch of width or any test specimen with a seal strength of less than 5 pounds per inch of width shall be classified as a major defect and shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

c. Internal pressure test. The internal pressure resistance shall be determined by pressurizing the pouches while they are restrained between two rigid plates. The lot size shall be expressed in pouches. The sample unit shall be one pouch. The sample size shall be the number of pouches indicated by inspection level S-1. If a three-seal tester (one that pressurizes the pouch through an open end) is used, the closure seal shall be cut off for testing the side and end of the pouch. For testing the closure seal, the bottom seal shall be cut off. The pouches shall be emptied prior to testing. If a four-seal tester (designed to pressurize filled pouches by use of a hypodermic needle through the pouch wall) is used, all four seals can be tested simultaneously. The distance between rigid restraining plates on the four-seal tester shall be equal to the thickness of the product +1/16 inch. Pressure shall be applied at the approximate uniform rate of 1 pound per square inch gage (psig) per second until 14 psig pressure is reached. The 14 psig pressure shall be held constant for 30 seconds and then released. The pouches shall then be examined for separation or yield of the heat seals. Any rupture of the pouch or evidence of seal separation greater than 1/16 inch in the pouch

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manufacturer's seal shall be considered a test failure. Any seal separation that reduces the effective closure seal width to less than 1/16 inch (see table II, footnote 2/) shall be considered a test failure. Any test failure shall be classified as a major defect and shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

C. Packing.

(1) Shipping container and marking examination. The filled and sealed shipping containers shall be examined for the defects listed in table III. 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 III. Shipping container and marking defects

Category		Defect
<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	
101		Marking missing or incorrect or illegible.
102		Inadequate workmanship. 1/
	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

FEDERAL STANDARD

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FED-STD-595                      Colors Used in Government Procurement

#### GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and regulations promulgated thereunder (21 CFR Parts 1-199)

U.S. Standards for Grades of Cheddar Cheese

#### NON-GOVERNMENTAL STANDARDS

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR QUALITY (ASQ) [www.asq.org](http://www.asq.org)

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

ASTM INTERNATIONAL [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org)

B479	Standard Specification for Annealed Aluminum and Aluminum-Alloy Foil For Flexible Barrier, Food Contact, and Other Applications
D1238	Standard Test Method for Melt Flow Rates of Thermoplastics by Extrusion Plastometer
D1505	Standard Test Method for Density of Plastics by the Density-Gradient Technique
D1974/D1974M	Standard Practice for Methods of Closing, Sealing, and Reinforcing Fiberboard Boxes
D2103	Standard Specification for Polyethylene Film and Sheeting
D4727/D4727M	Standard Specification for Corrugated Solid Fiberboard

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Sheet Stock (Container Grade) and Cut Shapes

D5118/D5118M

Standard Practice for Fabrication of Fiberboard  
Shipping Boxes

F88/F88M

Standard Test Method for Seal Strength of Flexible  
Barrier Materials

AOAC INTERNATIONAL [www.aoac.org](http://www.aoac.org)

Official Methods of Analysis (OMA) of AOAC International

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## For DLA Troop Support Website Posting

RDNS-SEC-EM

15 August 2018

TO: Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) - Troop Support – Subsistence DSCP-FTRE

SUBJECT: ES18-031 (DSCP-SS-18-84862); Value Engineering Change Proposal (VECP); PCR-C-039A, Cheese Spread, Cheddar, Fortified, Packaged in a Flexible Pouch, Shelf Stable; Types I, II, and III, Plain, With Jalapeno Peppers, and With Bacon; for use in Menus 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, and 24; ACR-M-038, Meal, Ready-To-Eat (MRE), Assembly Requirements; Contract SPE3S1-17-D-Z121; Vendor.

1. Natick received an Engineering Support Case from DLA - Troop Support for a Value Engineering Change Proposal (VECP) submitted by a Vendor.
2. Gamay Food Ingredients is requesting a change to PCR-C-039A to allow for the use of Extra Grade Cheddar Cheese in place of Grade A Cheddar Cheese.
3. Currently, PCR-C-039A states the following “The cheddar cheese spread shall be produced from cheddar cheese (except for finish and appearance) U.S. Grade A medium cured or better.” These US standards were written in the 1950s and are designed for grading smaller packages of cheese. In the early 1990s, the grading standards for packages larger than 100 pounds were written and are called “United States Standards for Grades of Bulk American Cheese”. Sizes of cheddar cheese over 100 pounds fall into this category.
4. Natick contacted the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for information on the impact of changing from the current requirement for US Grade A or better to US Extra Grade Bulk Cheddar Cheese. USDA indicated that the inclusion of U.S. Extra Grade cheese does not constitute a compromise to the end product at the time of production. The onus is still on the manufacturer to make sound decisions and choices in their formulation and batching.
5. USDA also provided information on the use of additional flavor enhancers to overcome potential quality challenges with the use of bulk cheddar cheese. It was noted that labeling of bulk cheese will vary, but both cheeses, cheddar cheese and cheddar cheese for manufacturing, are governed by a Standard of Identity, 21 CFR, parts 133.113 and 133.114.



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Additional flavor enhancers are not allowed for in the Standard of Identity for either cheddar cheese or cheddar cheese for manufacturing. Use of bulk cheese that contains additional flavor enhancers would also be excluded for use by PCR-C-039A.

6. Theoretically, it would appear that a manufacturer should be able to produce the desired end product utilizing bulk cheeses, by making sound choices. However, no history exists in terms of either sensory characteristics or extended shelf life capability with a similar product that is produced using Extra Grade Bulk Cheddar Cheese.

7. Natick recommends that prior to any changes being made to the PCR that samples be produced substituting Extra Grade Bulk Cheddar Cheese for the current requirement of US Grade A or better, while meeting all other requirements contained within PCR-C-039A. An accelerated and long term storage study would need to be conducted to insure that any quality changes can be properly addressed prior to implementing a change to the document and risking a lesser quality product being delivered to the Warfighter. After reviewing the results of the 6 months at 100°F storage study, Natick may be prepared to make a recommendation at that time.

8. The Vendor is also requesting to increase the upper limit of the pouch filling and sealing temperature from 180°F to 185°F in PCR-C-039A.

9. Currently PCR-C-039A states the following “Pouch filling and sealing. The cheese spread shall be aseptically filled (hot-filled) at 170°F to 180°F into a pouch, fabricated and constructed as specified in D-1,A(1), nitrogen flushed and sealed immediately after filling. If the cheddar cheese spread is not filled using an aseptic filler, all filling operations shall be conducted in a filling room maintained in a “clean room” condition.”

10. Natick contacted USDA for information on the current pouch filling and sealing procedures of the current cheese spread manufacturers. All cheese spread manufacturers have an FDA approved process schedule which requires specific fill temperatures, process times, and hold times for the production of cheese spread.

11. The temperature to aseptically fill the pouch was carried over from the previous military specification. Based upon the information above, Natick recommends the removal of the temperature requirement “at 170°F to 180°F”. The safety of the cheese spread will be the responsibility of the manufacturer with oversight from USDA as well as an approved FDA process schedule. The new requirement shall read “The cheese spread shall be aseptically

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filled (hot-filled) into a pouch, fabricated and constructed as specified in D-1,A(1), nitrogen flushed and sealed immediately after filling. If the cheddar cheese spread is not filled using an aseptic filler, all filling operations shall be conducted in a filling room maintained in a “clean room” condition.”

12. Natick submits the following change to subject document for all current, pending, and future procurements until the document is formally amended or revised:

(1) Page 6, Paragraph C-2,M(4), after “aseptically filled (hot-filled)” delete “at 170°F to 180°F”.

13. The Service Representatives were contacted and their replies were:

Army: Concurs with Natick  
Marine Corps: Concurs with Natick  
Navy: Concurs with Natick  
Air Force: Concurs with Natick

14. Attached is Change 01, PCR-C-039A, Cheese Spread, Cheddar, Fortified, Packaged in a Flexible Pouch, Shelf Stable dated 15 August 2018, with strikethroughs.