PCR-H-012A
8 May 2014
SUPERSEDING
PCR-H-012
16 June 2004

SECTION C

This document covers thermostabilized hash brown potatoes with bacon, peppers and onions packaged in a flexible pouch for use by the Department of Defense as a component of operational rations.

C-1 ITEM DESCRIPTION

PCR-H-012A, HASH BROWN POTATOES WITH BACON, PEPPERS AND ONIONS, 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^{o}F.

D. Appearance.

(1) General. The finished product shall be a mixture of cooked hash brown potatoes with bacon pieces, diced green bell pepper and minced onion distributed throughout. The finished product shall be free from foreign materials.

(2) Hash brown potatoes. The cooked hash brown potatoes shall be discernible, loosely formed potato shreds and shall be an off-white color.

(3) Bacon. The cooked bacon shall be pieces and shall be a reddish-brown color.

(4) Vegetables. The cooked green bell pepper shall be dices and shall be a green color. The cooked onion shall be minced and shall be an off-white color.

E. Odor and flavor. The packaged food shall have a cooked hash brown potato with cooked, smoked bacon and green pepper odor and a cooked hash brown potato with cooked, smoked bacon and mild green bell pepper and onion flavor. The packaged food shall be free from foreign odors and flavors.

F. Texture.

(1) Hash brown potatoes. The hash brown potatoes shall be moist and tender but not mushy.

(2) Bacon. The bacon pieces shall be firm yet tender.

(3) Vegetables. The green bell peppers and onions shall be soft and tender.

G. Net weight. The average net weight shall be not less than 8.0 ounces (227 grams). No individual pouch shall have a net weight of less than 7.5 ounces (213 grams).

H. Percent by weight of bacon. The formula shall contain not less than 13.0 percent by weight of bacon on a precooked basis weight.

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 greater than 7.5 percent.

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

SECTION D

D-1 PACKAGING

Product shall be filled into pouches and processed in accordance with MIL-PRF-44073, Packaging of Food in Flexible Pouches, Type I, Style 1, Design A.

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
Official establishment number (optional)
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 2015 would be coded as 5045). 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.

(3) USDA official inspection legend for the packer's plant 1/

1/ May be placed on the paperboard sleeve if labeled under USDA/FSIS supervision as an identification service.

B. Paperboard sleeves.

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

Product name (7/32 to 9/32 inch block letters)
Ingredients
Net weight
Name and address of packer
"Nutrition Facts" label in accordance with the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act (NLEA) and all applicable USDA regulations

1/ With contracting officer approval, this information may be printed on the pouch in lieu of the paperboard sleeve.

(2) Military nutrition information entitled "Military Rations Are Good Performance Meals" shall be printed on the entrée sleeve's panel opposite to the panel printed with the data in D-2,B(1) above, as applicable. The information, provided by the contracting officer, shall be clearly printed with permanent black ink in an area no smaller than 4 inches by 5-1/4 inches.

(3) The product shall be formulated and labeled in accordance with all USDA labeling regulations and policies. The sleeves (or pouches, as applicable) shall be labeled with the following product name.

HASH BROWN POTATOES WITH BACON, PEPPERS AND ONIONS

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-SEC-F
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. 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.

TABLE I. Product defects 1/ 2/ 3/

Category		Defect
Major	Minor	
		Appearance
101		Product not a mixture of cooked hash brown potatoes with bacon pieces, diced green bell pepper and minced onion distributed throughout.
	201	Cooked hash brown potatoes not discernible or not loosely formed potato shreds or not an off-white color.
	202	Cooked bacon not pieces or not a reddish-brown color.
	203	Cooked green bell pepper not dices or not a green color.
	204	Cooked onion not minced or not an off-white color.
		Odor and flavor
102		Product does not have a cooked hash brown potato, cooked, smoked bacon and green pepper odor or not a cooked hash brown potato with cooked, smoked bacon and mild green bell pepper and onion flavor.
		Texture
	205	Hash brown potatoes not moist or not tender.
	206	Hash brown potatoes are mushy.
	207	Bacon not firm or not tender.
	208	Green bell peppers and onions not soft or not tender.
		Net weight
	209	Net weight of an individual pouch less than 7.5 ounces (213 grams). 4/

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/ Percent by weight of bacon in the formula (not less than 13.0 percent) shall be verified by Certificate of Conformance (CoC).

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

B. Methods of inspection.

(1) Commercial sterility. Commercial sterility shall be verified in accordance with USDA/FSIS 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) 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:

Test	Method Number
Fat	991.36 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 requirements 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 1/
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) Sleeve examination. The sleeves 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 sleeves. The sample unit shall be one sleeve. 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.

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
Major	Minor	
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

MILITARY SPECIFICATION

MIL-PRF-44073	Packaging of Food in Flexible Pouches

NON-GOVERNMENTAL STANDARDS

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

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

ASTM INTERNATIONAL www.astm.org

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

AOAC INTERNATIONAL www.aoac.org

Official Methods of Analysis (OMA) of the AOAC International