

**§ 58.712**

should possess finish and appearance characteristics which will permit removal of all packaging material and surface defects. The cheese should at least meet the requirements equivalent to U.S. Standard Grade for Bulk American Cheese for Manufacturing provided the quantity of the cheese with any one defect as listed for U.S. Standard Grade is limited to assure a satisfactory finished product.

**§ 58.712 Swiss.**

Swiss cheese used in the manufacture of pasteurized process cheese and related products should be equivalent to U.S. Grade B or better, except that the cheese may be blind or possess finish characteristics which do not impair the interior quality.

**§ 58.713 Gruyere.**

Gruyere cheese used in the manufacture of process cheese and related products should be of good wholesome quality and except for smaller eyes and sharper flavor shall meet the same requirements as for Swiss cheese.

**§ 58.714 Cream cheese, Neufchatel cheese.**

These cheeses when mixed with other foods, or used for spreads and dips should possess a fresh, pleasing and desirable flavor.

**§ 58.715 Cream, plastic cream and anhydrous milkfat.**

These food products shall be pasteurized, sweet, have a pleasing and desirable flavor and be free from objectionable flavors, and shall be obtained from milk which complies with the quality requirements as specified in §§ 58.132 through 58.138 of this subpart.

**§ 58.716 Nonfat dry milk.**

Nonfat dry milk used in cheese products should meet the requirements equivalent to U.S. Extra Grade except that the moisture content may be in excess of that specified for the particular grade.

**§ 58.717 Whey.**

Whey used in cheese products should meet the requirements equivalent to USDA Extra Grade except that the

**7 CFR Ch. I (1-1-11 Edition)**

moisture requirement for dry whey may be waived.

**§ 58.718 Flavor ingredients.**

Flavor ingredients used in process cheese and related products shall be those permitted by the Food and Drug Standards of Identity, and in no way deleterious to the quality or flavor of the finished product. In the case of bulky flavoring ingredients such as pimento, the particles should be, to at least a reasonable degree, uniform in size, shape and consistency. The individual types of flavoring materials should be uniform in color and should impart the characteristic flavor desired in the finished product.

**§ 58.719 Coloring.**

Coloring shall be Annatto or any other cheese or butter color which is approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

**§ 58.720 Acidifying agents.**

Acidifying agents if used shall be those permitted by the Food and Drug Administration for the specific pasteurized process cheese product.

**§ 58.721 Salt.**

Salt shall be free flowing, white refined sodium chloride and shall meet the requirements of The Food Chemical Codex.

**§ 58.722 Emulsifying agents.**

Emulsifying agents shall be those permitted by the Food and Drug Administration for the specific pasteurized process cheese product, and shall be free from extraneous material.

**OPERATIONS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES**

**§ 58.723 Basis for selecting cheese for processing.**

A representative sample shall have been examined to determine fat and moisture content. One sample unit from each vat of cheese shall have been examined to determine the suitability of the vat for use in process cheese products in accordance with the flavor,

body and texture characteristics permitted in §§ 58.711 through 58.714 as applicable, and to determine the characteristics it will contribute to the finished product when blended with other cheese. The cheese included in each blend shall be selected on the basis of the desirable qualities which will result in the desired finished product. Recook from equivalent blends may be used in an amount that will not adversely affect the finished product. Hot cheese from the filler may be added to the cooker in amounts which will not adversely affect the finished product.

**§ 58.724 Blending.**

To as great an extent as is practical, each vat of cheese should be divided and distributed throughout numerous cooker batches. The purpose being to minimize the preponderance and consequent influence of any one vat on the characteristics of the finished product, and to promote as much uniformity as is practical. In blending also consider the final composition requirements for fat and moisture. Quantities of salt, color, emulsifier and other allowable ingredients to be added shall be calculated and predetermined for each cooker batch.

**§ 58.725 Trimming and cleaning.**

The natural cheese shall be cleaned free of all non-edible portions. Paraffin and bandages as well as rind surface, mold or unclean areas or any other part which is unwholesome or unappetizing shall be removed.

**§ 58.726 Cutting and grinding.**

The trimmed and cleaned cheese should be cut into sections of convenient size to be handled by the grinder or shredder. The grinding and mixing of the blended lots of cheese should be done in such a manner as to insure a homogeneous mixture throughout the batch.

**§ 58.727 Adding optional ingredients.**

As each batch is added to the cooker, the predetermined amounts of salt, emulsifiers, color, or other allowable optional ingredients shall be added. However, a special blending vat may be used to mix the ground cheese and

other ingredients before they enter the cooker to provide composition control.

**§ 58.728 Cooking the batch.**

Each batch of cheese within the cooker, including the optional ingredients, shall be thoroughly commingled and the contents pasteurized at a temperature of at least 158 °F. and held at that temperature for not less than 30 seconds or any other equally effective combination of time and temperature approved by the Administrator. Care shall be taken to prevent the entrance of cheese particles or ingredients after the cooker batch of cheese has reached the final heating temperature. After holding for the required period of time, the hot cheese shall be emptied from the cooker as quickly as possible.

**§ 58.729 Forming containers.**

Containers either lined or unlined shall be assembled and stored in a sanitary manner to prevent contamination. The handling of containers by filler crews should be done with extreme care and observance of personal cleanliness. Performing and assembling of pouch liners and containers shall be kept to a minimum and the supply rotated to limit the length of time exposed to possible contamination prior to filling.

**§ 58.730 Filling containers.**

Hot fluid cheese from the cookers may be held in hotwells or hoppers to assure a constant and even supply of processed cheese to the filler or slice former. Filler valves shall effectively measure the desired amount of product into the pouch or container in a sanitary manner and shall cut off sharply without drip or drag of cheese across the opening. An effective system shall be used to maintain accurate and precise weight control. Damaged or unsatisfactory packages shall be removed from production, and the cheese may be salvaged into sanitary containers, and added back to cookers.

**§ 58.731 Closing and sealing containers.**

Pouches, liners, or containers having product contact surfaces, after filling shall be folded or closed and sealed in a sanitary manner, preferably by mechanical means, so as to assure against