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August 18, 2005

FSIS Docket Clerk
Docket #95-051P
US Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection Service
Room 102, Cotton Annex
300 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20250

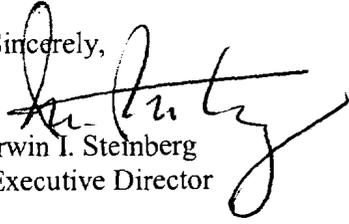
95-051P
95-051P-7
Irwin I. Steinberg

Dear Sir:

The Tortilla Industry Association herewith submits a proposal to establish Standards of Identity for tortillas and the related by-products of tortillas (tortilla chips, tacos & tostada shells). Our association represents all of the major tortilla producing companies and many smaller producers in the U.S. as well.

The production and consumption of tortillas and related products has risen so dramatically in the past two decades that it is now essential to clearly identify the products, their names and the ingredients that must be and may be used in their manufacture so that the consumer will understand clearly the products in these categories. It is estimated that the sale of tortillas in the U.S. has now become close to equal to that of white bread and far surpasses other ethnic bread sales and therefore consumption.

Sincerely,


Irwin I. Steinberg
Executive Director

Tortilla Industry Association

4287 Beltline Road, #369 Addison, Texas 75001 – Phone: (972) 418-0838 – Fax: (972) 418-0839
email: tortilla-info@verizon.net url: www.tortilla-info.com



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**PROPOSED STANDARDS OF IDENTITY
FOR
TORTILLAS, TORTILLA CHIPS, TACOS & TOSTADA SHELLS**

Submitted by:
Tortilla Industry Association
4287 Beltline Road, #369
Addison, Texas 75001

I. TORTILLAS

- A. Tortillas are the flat breads produced by preparing and/or baking a dough prepared from one or more of the following farinaceous ingredients listed in paragraph (c)(I), and/or one of the following whole grain materials listed in paragraph (c)(2),(3),(4) & (5) of this section; and one or more of the moistening ingredients listed in paragraph (c)(6),(8), & (9). The food may contain additional ingredients as provided for by paragraph (c) of this section however, the majority of the cereal ingredient content must be from those listed in (C.1, 2, 3, 4, or 5). Each of the finished foods (whether raw, partially cooked or fully cooked) contains not less than 48 percent total solids as determined by the method prescribed in paragraph (d) of this section. Tortillas shall be identified or standardized by the basic raw material utilized as defined in paragraph (c), item (1), (2), (3), (4), or (5).
- B. All Ingredients from which the food is fabricated shall be safe and suitable.
- C. The following optional ingredients are provided for:
1. Wheat flour, phosphated flour, or a combination. All ingredients many flour, or phosphated flour" used are deemed to be optional ingredients of the tortillas prepared therefrom.
 2. Corn masa produced from food grade corn derived from controlled varieties which in turn has been cleaned, is sound, essentially free from other grains, weed seed, and other foreign material. The corn shall be processed into corn masa utilizing the traditional Nixtamal process by cooking whole kernel corn in lime water (calcium hydroxide, P.C.C. grade). The cooking process is further defined by the requirement of the utilization of a corn to water ratio. The cooking cycle will require a minimal temperature and cook time to eliminate related enzyme activity and off flavors. The corn may or may not be steeped after cooking, washed with clean water and ground into a dough-like texture.
 3. Corn masa flour, produced from food grade corn, derived from controlled varieties. which in turn has been cleaned, is sound, essentially free from other grains, weed seed, and other foreign material. The corn shall be processed into corn masa utilizing similar parameters to the traditional process. The cooking cycle will require an adequate temperature and cooking time to eliminate related enzyme activity and off-flavors. The flour may be ground after drying for sizing if necessary. The moisture content of the flour shall be no more than 15%.
 4. Food grade corn, derived from controlled varieties which in turn has been cleaned, is sound, essentially free from other grains, weed seed, and other foreign material.
 5. Other dry or wet-milled corn products.

6. Water.
 7. Salt.
 8. Shortening, in which or in conjunction with which may be used one or any combination of two or more of the following:
 9. Lecithin, hydroxylated lecithin complying with the provision of Part 172, from Article 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations, either of which may include related phosphatides derived from the corn oil or soybean oil from which such ingredients were obtained.
 10. Mono- and diglycerides of fat-forming fatty acids, diacetyl tartaric acid esters of mono- and diglycerides of fat-forming fatty acids and other ingredients that perform a similar function.
 11. Nutritive carbohydrates sweeteners.
 12. Enzyme active preparations.
 13. Lactic-acid-producing bacteria.
 14. Leavening agents.
 15. Oxidizing agents.
 16. Dough strengtheners, stabilizers, and other dough conditioners not listed or referred to this paragraph.
 17. Flavoring ingredients.
 18. Color additives.
 19. Acidifiers.
 20. Safe and suitable preservatives.
 21. Other ingredients that do not change the basic identity or adversely affect the physical and nutritional characteristics of the food.
- D. Total solids are determined by the method prescribed in "Official Methods of Analysis of the Association of Official Analytical Chemists", 13th Ed. (1980), section 14.091(a), which is incorporated by reference, except that if the baked unit weighs 454 grams (1 pound) or more, one entire unit is used for the determination; if the baked unit weighs less than 454 grams, enough units to weight 454 grams or more are used. Copies of the material incorporated by reference may be obtained from the association of:

Official Analytical Chemists
2200 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 400
Arlington, V A 22201-3301
or at:
Office of The Federal Register
1100 L Street, NW

Washington, DC 20408

- E. For the purpose of this section, moisture, fat, protein, calcium, and total dietary fiber content will be determined by the following methods of analysis from "Official Methods of Analysis of the Association of Official Analytical Chemists", 13th Ed. (1980) which is incorporated by reference (copies of the material incorporated by reference may be obtained from the Association of Official Analytical Chemists, 2200 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 400, Arlington, VA 22201-3301, or at: 'Office Of The Federal Register, 1100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20408):
1. Moisture content-sections 14.062 and 14.063 (Official Final Action).
 2. Fat content-sections 14.062 and 14.067 (Official Final Action).
 3. Total Dietary Fiber (TDF) content (by summing Soluble Dietary Fiber (SDF), and Insoluble Dietary Fiber (DF) method 991.43 (First Action 1991), JAOSC 397(1992); or AACC 32-07.
 4. Protein content-sections 979.09, Kjeldahl Method, NX 6.25 for corn; NX5.7 for wheat products.
 5. Calcium content-sections 944.03 via dry ash method as in AOAC 923.03.
- F. All ingredients used in the food shall be declared on the label as required by the applicable sections of Part 101 of this chapter.

II. TORTILLA CHIPS, TACOS & TOSTADA SHELLS

- A. Tortilla chips, taco shells and tostada shells are the foods produced by baking, frying or a combination of both, a dough which is typically fried or directly frying a shaped dough, but can be processed by further baking a product to reduce moisture content, from one or more of the following farinaceous ingredients listed in paragraph (c) (1), and/or one of the following whole grain materials listed in paragraph (c)(2), (3), (4), & (5) or this section; and, one or more of the moistening ingredients listed in paragraph (c) (6), (8), & (9). The above mentioned products may be produced in a continuous process or manufactured from previously processed tortillas.

Tortilla Chips, Tacos, and Tostada shells are manufactured or processed with the utilization of a baking oven prior to the entry into the fryer or are extruded or roll-die-cut directly into- the fryer. The food may contain additional ingredients as provided for by paragraph (c) of this section. As indicated above, baked, but not fried products, also conform to this standard.

- B. All ingredients from which the food is fabricated shall be safe and suitable.

- C. The following optional ingredients are provided for:

1. Wheat flour, phosphated flour, or a combination. All ingredients in any flour, or phosphated flour used are deemed to be optional ingredients of the tortillas prepared therefrom.
2. Corn masa produced from food grade corn derived from controlled varieties which in turn has been cleaned, is sound, essentially free from other grains, weed seed, and other foreign material. The corn shall be processed into corn masa utilizing the traditional Nixtamal process by cooking whole kernel corn in lime water. (calcium hydroxide, P.C.C. grade). The cooking process is further defined by the requirement of the utilization of a corn to water ratio. The cooking cycle will require a minimal temperature and cook time to eliminate related enzyme activity and off-flavors. The corn may or may not be steeped after cooking, washed with clean water and ground into a dough-like texture.
3. Corn masa flour, produced from food grade corn, derived from controlled varieties which in turn has been cleaned, is sound, essentially free from other grains, weed seed, and other foreign material. The corn shall be processed into corn masa utilizing similar parameters to the traditional process. The cooking cycle will require an adequate temperature and cooking time to eliminate related enzyme activity and off -flavors. The flour may be ground after drying for sizing if necessary .The moisture content of the flour shall be no more than 15%.
4. Food grade corn, derived from controlled varieties which in turn has been cleaned, is sound, essentially free from other grains, weed seed, and other foreign material.
5. Other dry or wet-milled corn products.
6. Water
7. Salt.
8. Shortening, in which or in conjunction with which may be used one or any combination any combination of two or more of the following:
 - a) Lecithin, hydroxylated lecithin complying with the provision of Part 172, from Article 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations, either of which may include related phosphatides

derived from the corn oil or soybean oil from which such ingredients were obtained.

- b) Mono- and diglycerides of fat-forming fatty acids, diacetyl tartaric acid esters of mono- and diglycerides of fat-forming fatty acids and other ingredients that perform a similar function.
- 9. Nutritive carbohydrates sweeteners.
 - 10. Enzyme active preparations.
 - 11. Lactic-acid-producing bacteria.
 - 12. Leavening agents.
 - 13. Oxidizing agents.
 - 14. Dough strengtheners, stabilizers, and other dough conditioners not listed or referred to this paragraph.
 - 15. Flavoring ingredients.
 - 16. Color additives.
 - 17. Acidifiers.
 - 18. Safe and suitable preservatives.
 - 19. Other ingredients that do not change the basic identity or adversely affect the physical and nutritional characteristics of the food.
- D. Total solids are determined by the method prescribed in "Official Methods of Analysis of the Association of Official Analytical Chemists", 13th Ed. (1980), section 14.091(a), which is incorporated by reference, except that if the baked unit weighs 454 grams (1 pound) or more, one entire unit is used for the determination; if the baked unit weighs less than 454 grams, enough units to weight 454 grams or more are used. Copies of the material incorporated by reference may be obtained from the association of:
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 - Washington, DC 20408
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 4. Protein content-sections 979.09, Kjeldahl Method, -NX 6.25 for corn; NX5.7 for wheat products.
 5. Calcium content-sections 944.03 via dry ash method as in AOAC 923.03.
- F. All ingredients used in the food shall be declared on the label as required the applicable sections of Part 101 of this chapter.