

**METRIC**

A-A-20143A  
January 5, 2000  
SUPERSEDING  
A-A-20143  
April 30, 1987

**COMMERCIAL ITEM DESCRIPTION**

**TORTILLAS, TORTILLA CHIPS, TACO SHELLS, AND TOSTADA SHELLS**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has authorized the use of this Commercial Item Description.

1. **SCOPE.** This Commercial Item Description (CID) covers tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells, packed in commercially acceptable containers, suitable for use by Federal, State, local governments, and other interested parties.

**2. PURCHASER NOTES.**

**2.1 Purchasers *shall specify* the following:**

- Type(s), style(s) (types of raw materials), size(s), enrichment type(s), product state(s), cook state(s) desired (Sec. 3).
- When analytical requirements are different than specified (Sec. 6.1).
- When analytical requirements need to be verified (Sec. 6.3).
- Manufacturers'/distributors' certification (Sec. 9.2) or USDA certification (Sec. 9.3).

**2.2 Purchasers *may specify* the following:**

- Manufacturers' quality assurance (Sec. 9.1 with 9.1.1) or (Sec. 9.1 with 9.1.2).

3. **CLASSIFICATION.** The tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall conform to the types, styles (types of raw materials), sizes, shapes, enrichment types, product states, and cook states in the following list which shall be specified, in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

- Type I - Tortillas
- Type II - Tortilla chips
- Type III - Taco shells
- Type IV - Tostada shells

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**Style A** - Corn  
**Style B** - Wheat  
**Style C** - Wheat with spices and/or herbs(specified by purchaser)  
**Style D** - Other

**Size 1** - 5.1 cm (2 inches) diameter 1/  
**Size 2** - 7.6 cm (3 inches) diameter 1/  
**Size 3** - 11.4 cm (4½ inches) diameter 1/  
**Size 4** - 12.7 to 15.2 cm (5 to 6 inches) diameter 2/  
**Size 5** - 14 cm x 8.9 cm (5½ x 3½ inches) 1/  
**Size 6** - 15.9 cm (6¼ inches) diameter 1/  
**Size 7** - 17.8 to 20.3 cm (7 to 8 inches) diameter 2/  
**Size 8** - 19.1 cm (7½ inches) diameter 1/  
**Size 9** - 25.4 cm (10 inches) diameter 2/  
**Size 10** - 30.5 cm (12 inches) diameter 2/  
**Size 11** - Other

1/ Tostada shells

2/ Tortillas only

**Shape a** - Round 3/ 5/  
**Shape b** - U-shaped 4/  
**Shape c** - Triangular 5/  
**Shape d** - Bowl/boat 3/ 6/  
**Shape e** - Oval 3/ 6/  
**Shape f** - Rectangle 3/ 6/  
**Shape g** - Other

3/ Tortillas

4/ Taco Shells

5/ Tortilla Chips

6/ Tostada Shells

**Enrichment type (i)** - Enriched 7/

**Enrichment type (ii)** - Unenriched 7/

7/ Wheat flour tortillas and tostada shells only.

**Product state (a)** - Fresh (shelf stable)

**Product state (b)** - Refrigerated

**Product state (c)** - Frozen

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- Cook state (I) - Table-ready 8/  
 Cook state (II) - Partially cooked 8/

8/ Tortillas only.

**4. MANUFACTURERS'/DISTRIBUTORS' NOTES.** Manufacturers'/distributors' products *shall meet* the requirements of the:

- Salient characteristics (Sec 5).
- Analytical requirements: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 6).
- Manufacturers'/distributors' assurance (Sec. 7).
- Regulatory requirements (Sec. 8).
- Quality assurance provisions: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 9).

**5. SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS.**

**5.1 Processing:** The tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall be prepared in accordance with good manufacturing practices (21 CFR Part 110).

**5.2 Ingredients:** The corn tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall consist of ground corn which has been treated with lime, water, or corn masa flour and/or preservatives. The corn tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells may contain optional ingredients. The wheat flour tortillas and tostada shells shall contain wheat flour, water, leavening agents, salt, preservatives, and dough conditioners. The wheat flour tortillas and tostada shells may contain optional ingredients. Mold inhibitors of proper level as allowed by the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and regulations promulgated thereunder shall be included.

**5.3 Finished product:** Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the tortillas shall be baked or fried in non-animal fat cooking oils or FDA approved fat replacers. The tortilla chips shall be baked or fried, and the taco and tostada shells shall be deep fried in non-animal fat cooking oil or FDA approved fat replaces.

**5.3.1 Appearance and color:** When prepared in accordance with label directions for use, the tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall have the appearance and color typical of the products specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order. There shall be no foreign color to the products specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order. The delivered tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall not be crushed or damaged. There shall not be an excessive amount (*more than 20 percent*) of breakage.

**5.3.2 Odor and flavor:** The tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells when prepared in accordance with label directions for use shall have a characteristic odor and flavor

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typical of the appropriate product. There shall be no foreign odors or flavors such as, but not limited to, oxidized, stale, rancid, burnt, tallowy, or other objectionable odors or flavors.

**5.3.3 Texture:** The tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall have a characteristic texture of the type specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

**5.3.4 Partially cooked tortillas:** The partially cooked corn and wheat tortillas shall be table-ready after no more than 15 minutes additional cooking.

**5.3.5 Enrichment:** When enriched, the wheat flour tortillas shall have the enrichment ingredients evenly distributed in the finished product.

**5.3.6 Foreign material:** All ingredients shall be clean, sound, wholesome, and free from evidence of rodent or insect infestation.

**5.4 Shelf life:** Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shell, and tostada shells shall meet the following requirements:

**5.4.1 Fresh:** The fresh tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall have at least one-third of the shelf life left when accepted by the purchaser.

**5.4.2 Refrigerated:** The fresh tortillas, taco shells, and tostada shells shall be in the cooler within six hours after baking and refrigerated to a maximum of 7.2°C (45°F). Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the tortillas, taco shells, and tostada shells shall have at least one-third of the shelf life left when accepted by the purchaser and shall not have exceeded 7.2°C (45°F) at any time during storage and delivery.

**5.4.3 Frozen:** The fresh tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall be in the freezer within 6 hours after baking and frozen to a maximum of -17.8°C (0°F). The frozen tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall not exceed 90 days at time of delivery or exceed -12.2°C (10°F) during storage and delivery at destination. The tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall show no evidence of freezer burn, discoloration, and thawing or refreezing.

## **6. ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS.**

**6.1 Chemical tolerance.** Unless otherwise specified, analytical requirements for the tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall not exceed the following moisture content:

Corn tortillas	50.0 percent
Wheat tortillas	50.0 percent

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Tortilla chips	7.0 percent
Taco shells	7.0 percent
Tostada shells	7.0 percent

**6.2 Product verification.** When USDA verification is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the following procedures will be followed.

**6.2.1 Sampling procedures.** USDA inspection service will select the number of product containers based on USDA inspection service sampling procedures.

**6.2.2 Composite sample.** Selected samples shall be used to make a 0.45 kg (1-pound) composite sample.

**6.3 Analytical testing:** When specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, analyses shall be made in accordance with the following Official Methods of Analysis of the AOAC International:

<u>Test</u>	<u>Method</u>
Sample preparation	925.09
Moisture	925.09

**6.4 Test results:** The test results for moisture content shall be reported to the nearest 0.1 percent. Any result not conforming to the analytical requirements shall be cause for rejection the lot.

**7. MANUFACTURERS' PRODUCT ASSURANCE.** The manufacturer shall certify that the prepared tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells provided shall meet the salient characteristics of this CID, conform to the their own specifications, standards, and quality assurance practices, and be the same prepared tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells offered for sale in the commercial market. The purchaser reserves the right to require proof of conformance.

**8. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS.** The delivered tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local mandatory requirements and regulations relating to the preparation, packaging, labeling, storage, distribution, and sale of the tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells within the commercial marketplace. Delivered tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and regulations promulgated thereunder.

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**9. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS.** *Purchaser may specify 9.1 with 9.1.1 or 9.1 with 9.1.2, and shall specify either 9.2 or 9.2 with 9.3.*

**9.1 Manufacturers' quality assurance.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the product manufacturer shall be required to provide evidence, by certificate, that the manufacturing plant has undertaken one of the following quality assurance measures within 12 months prior to providing a bid, or no later than 10 business days from the date of awarding of the bid. Failure to provide this documentation within the proper time frame will result in the contract being terminated for cause.

**9.1.1 Plant system audit.** A plant system audit (PSA) conducted by USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), or other third party auditing service, within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. *(An FGIS or AMS PSA verifies the manufacturer's capability to produce products in a clean, sanitary environment [21 CFR 110 - Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food Regulations] adhere to food safety requirements, and have in place an internal quality assurance program. The AMS PSA determines the manufacturer's ability to produce to the CID, if the products of interest are identified at the time of the PSA.)*

**9.1.2 Plant survey.** A plant survey conducted by USDA, FGIS, AMS, or other third party auditing service, within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. *(An FGIS or AMS plant survey audit verifies that, at the time of the survey, the manufacturer produces products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with 21 CFR 110 - Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food Regulations.)*

**9.2 Manufacturers/distributors certification.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the manufacturer/distributor will certify that the finished tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells distributed meets or exceeds the requirements of this CID.

**9.3 USDA certification.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order that product quality and acceptability or both be determined, the FGIS, USDA, shall be the certifying program. FGIS inspectors shall certify the quality and acceptability of the tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells in accordance with FGIS procedures which include selecting random samples of the packaged tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells, evaluating the samples for conformance with the salient characteristics of this CID and other contractual requirements, and documenting the findings on official FGIS score sheets and/or certificates. In addition, when required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, FGIS inspectors will examine the tortillas, tortilla chips, taco shells, and tostada shells for conformance to the United States Standards for condition of Food Containers in effect on the date of the solicitation.

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**10. PACKAGING.** Preservation, packaging, packing, labeling, and case marking shall be commercial unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

**11. USDA INSPECTION NOTES.** When Section 9.3 is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA inspection personnel shall check for the following:

- Salient characteristics (Sec. 5.2, 5.3, and 5.3.6 ).
- Analytical requirements when specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order (Sec. 6.2). When USDA analytical testing is specified, FGIS inspection personnel shall select samples and submit them to the USDA, FGIS laboratory for analysis.
- Packaging requirements (Sec. 10 or as specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order).

**12. REFERENCE NOTES.**

**12.1 USDA certification contact.** For USDA certification, contact the Branch Chief, Standards and Procedures Branch, Field Management Division, FGIS, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, USDA, STOP 3632, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3632, telephone (202) 720-02529939, or FAX (202) 720-1015, via E-mail: [jgiler@gipsadc.usda.gov](mailto:jgiler@gipsadc.usda.gov).

**12.2 Sources of documents.**

**12.2.1 Source of information for nongovernmental document is as follows:**

Copies of the Official Methods of Analysis of the AOAC International may be obtained from: AOAC International, 481 North Frederick Avenue, Suite 500, Gaithersburg, MD 20877.

**12.3.2 Sources of information for governmental documents are as follows:**

Applicable provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act is contained in 21 CFR Parts 1 to 199. This document may be purchased from: Superintendent of Documents, New Orders, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. Credit card (MasterCard or Visa) purchases may be made by calling the Superintendent of Documents on (202) 512-1803 or on the Internet at: <http://www.nara.gov/fedreg>.

Copies of the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers are available from: Chairperson, Condition of Container Committee, USDA, STOP 0243, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0243.

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Requests for copies, beneficial comments, recommendations, additions, deletions, clarifications, etc., and any data which may improve this document should be sent to: **Program Head, FQAS, FVP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0243, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0243, telephone (202) 720-9939, Fax (202) 690-0102, via E-mail: [john.lund@usda.gov](mailto:john.lund@usda.gov) or on the Internet at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/fvqual.htm>.**

Military activities should submit requests for copies of this CID to: **Standardization Documents Order Desk, Defense Automation Printing Service, 700 Robbins Avenue, Building 4D, Philadelphia, PA 19111-5094.**

**MILITARY INTERESTS:****Custodians**

Army - GL  
Navy - SA  
Air Force - 35

**CIVIL AGENCY COORDINATING ACTIVITIES:**

DOJ - BOP  
HHS - NIH, IHS  
USDA - FV  
VA - OSS

**PREPARING ACTIVITY:****Review Activities**

Army - MD, QM  
Navy - MC

USDA - FV

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