

<b>METRIC</b>
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**A-A-20276A****January 8, 2001****SUPERSEDING****A-A-20276****March 17, 1999****COMMERCIAL ITEM DESCRIPTION****CHICKEN NUGGETS, FINGERS, STRIPS, FRITTERS, AND PATTIES,  
FULLY COOKED, INDIVIDUALLY FROZEN**

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

**1. SCOPE.** This Commercial Item Description (CID) covers individually frozen (IF), fully cooked, solid muscle, chunked and formed or ground/chopped and formed, breaded or un-breaded, seasoned or unseasoned, chicken nuggets, fingers, strips, fritters, and patties (chicken products) 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), cooked weight(s), style(s), meat type(s), skin type(s), form(s), fat range(s) required (Sec. 3).
- When vegetable protein product (VPP) may be used as an alternate protein product (APP) or when egg may be used as a protein source (Sec. 3).
- Shape(s) desired (Sec. 3).
- When individually frozen, fully cooked, chicken products need to meet child nutrition labeling (CN labeling) (Sec. 3).
- When the storage time requirement is different than specified (Sec. 5.8).
- When analytical requirements are different than specified (Sec. 6.1).
- When analytical requirements need to be verified (Sec. 6.2).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 9.1) or USDA certification (Sec 9.2).

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

- Breeding seasoning for Form 1 (Sec. 3.)
- Type of cook for Form 2 (Sec. 3).

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- Topical seasoning for Form 2 (Sec. 3)
- Packaging requirements other than commercial (Sec 10).

**3. CLASSIFICATION.**

**3.1** The frozen, fully cooked chicken products shall conform to the classifications in the following list and shall comply with USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Meat and Poultry Inspection Regulations, (9 CFR Part 381) and applicable State regulations. When applicable, the frozen, fully cooked chicken products shall comply with the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Child Nutrition Programs, National School Lunch Program (7 CFR Part 210, Appendices A and C), which shall be specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

**Types, cooked weights, styles, meat types, alternate protein products (APP), skin types, forms, types of cook, seasonings, fat ranges, shapes, and CN labeling.**

**Type I - Nugget**

**Cooked weight (a)** - 14.17 g (1/2 oz.) to 28.35 g (1 oz.)

**Cooked weight (b)** - 31.18 g (1.1 oz.) to 56.7 g (2 oz.)

**Cooked weight (c)** - Other

**Type II - Finger**

**Cooked weight (a)** - 14.17 g (1/2 oz.) to 28.35 g (1 oz.)

**Cooked weight (b)** - 31.18 g (1.1 oz.) to 56.7 g (2 oz.)

**Cooked weight (c)** - 59.53 g (2.1 oz.) to 85.05 g (3 oz.)

**Cooked weight (d)** - Other

**Type III - Strip**

**Cooked weight (a)** - 14.17 g (1/2 oz.) to 28.35 g (1 oz.)

**Cooked weight (b)** - 31.18 g (1.1 oz.) to 56.7 g (2 oz.)

**Cooked weight (c)** - 59.53 g (2.1 oz.) to 85.05 g (3 oz.)

**Cooked weight (d)** - Other

**Type IV - Fritter**

**Cooked weight (a)** - 14.17 g (1/2 oz.) to 28.35 g (1 oz.)

**Cooked weight (b)** - 31.18 g (1.1 oz.) to 56.7 g (2 oz.)

**Cooked weight (c)** - 59.53 g (2.1 oz.) to 85.05 g (3 oz.)

**Cooked weight (d)** - Other

**A-A-20276A****Type V - Patty****Cooked weight (a)** - 28.35 g (1 oz.) to 56.7 g (2 oz.)**Cooked weight (b)** - 59.53 g (2.1 oz.) to 85.05 g (3 oz.)**Cooked weight (c)** - 87.88 g (3.1 oz.) to 113.4 g (4 oz.)**Cooked weight (d)** - 116.23 g (4.1 oz.) to 141.75 g (5 oz.)**Cooked weight (e)** - Other**Type VI - Other****Style A** - Whole muscle**Style B** - Chunked and formed, 1/2 inch cube or greater (9 CFR § 381.171(f))**Style C** - Ground/chopped and formed, 1/2 inch cube or smaller (9 CFR § 381.171(f))**Meat type a** - Natural proportion (50-65 percent white, 50-35 percent dark) 1/  
(9 CFR § 381.117)**Meat type b** - 100 percent white meat**Meat type c** - Mostly white meat (not less than 66 percent white, not more than 34 percent dark)**Meat type d** - 100 percent dark meat**Meat type e** - Mostly dark meat (not less than 66 percent dark, not more than 34 percent white)**Meat type f** - Other1/ Not available with Style A, Whole muscle**APP (a)** - with vegetable protein products (VPP), granular or textured concentrate**APP (b)** - with vegetable protein products (VPP), textured isolate**APP (c)** - with vegetable protein products (VPP), textured flour**APP (d)** - with vegetable protein products (VPP), powdered concentrate**APP (e)** - with combinations of vegetable protein products (VPP) (specified by the purchaser)**Egg (f)** - with dried whole eggs**Skin type (1)** - With skin (natural proportions) (9 CFR § 381.117)**Skin type (2)** - Without skin**Form 1 - Breaded**

Purchaser may specify breading seasoning with Form 1, Breaded

**Breading seasoning a** - Italian style**Breading seasoning b** - Other

**A-A-20276A****Form 2** - No breading (**NOTE: Not available with Type IV, Fritters.**)

Purchaser may specify type of cook and topical seasoning with Form 2, No breading

**Type of cook a** - Flamed**Type of cook b** - Broiled**Type of cook c** - Flamed broiled**Type of cook d** - Grilled with char marks**Type of cook e** - Grilled without char marks**Type of cook f** - Other**Topical seasoning i** - Barbeque**Topical seasoning ii** - Mesquite**Topical seasoning iii** - Other**Fat range i)** - Not more than 5.0 g (0.176 oz.) of fat per serving 2/**Fat range ii)** - 5.1 g (0.180 oz.) to 10.0 g (0.353 oz.) of fat per serving**Fat range iii)** - 10.1 g (0.356 oz.) to 15.0 g (0.529 oz.) of fat per serving**Fat range iv)** - 15.1 g (0.533 oz.) to 20.0 g (0.705 oz.) of fat per serving**Fat range v)** - Other2/ Not available with skin type (1).**Shape a)** - Irregular**Shape b)** - Shape specified by purchaser **Example:** rings, curls**CN labeling (a)** - With a CN label 3/ 4/**CN labeling (b)** - Without a CN label3/ When a CN label is specified for a breaded product, the breading must be made with enriched flour.4/ When a CN label is specified, the frozen, fully cooked chicken products shall comply with USDA, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Child Nutrition Programs, National School Lunch Program (7 CFR Part 210, Appendices A and C).**4. MANUFACTURER'S/ DISTRIBUTOR'S NOTES. Manufacturer's/distributor's products shall meet the requirements of the:**

- Salient characteristics (Sec. 5).
- Analytical requirements: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 6).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's product assurance (Sec. 7).

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- Regulatory requirements (Sec. 8).
- Quality assurance provisions: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec 9).

## 5. SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS.

### 5.1 Raw Ingredients.

**5.1.1 Preparation.** The IF, fully cooked chicken products shall be prepared in accordance with good commercial practice (21 CFR Part 110). Chicken used in the IF fully cooked chicken products must meet the requirements of FSIS regulations.

**5.1.2 Chicken.** The chicken meat shall be derived from fresh chilled and/or previously frozen (9 CFR § 381.65 and 9 CFR § 381.66) broilers/fryers.

**5.1.2.1 Unacceptable chicken meat.** No mechanically separated (comminuted) or previously cooked chicken meat may be used in these products.

**5.1.2.2 Chicken skin.** The skin may be attached to the meat for Style A (if Skin Type 1-With skin is specified). Chicken skin may be used in Style B and C chicken products. Chicken skin used in Style B and C must be emulsified and thoroughly mixed with the meat and other ingredients.

**5.1.2.3 Raw chicken defects.** The chicken meat shall be free of: bone or hard bone-like material greater than 1.91 cm (0.75 inch); cartilage, tendon or tendinous material that is soft-like in texture and extends more than 1.27 cm (0.50 inch) beyond the meat tissue; dark colored (due to blood) artery or vein more than 2.54 cm (1 inch) in length; bruises or blood clots which exceed an area equivalent to a circle with a diameter of 0.64 cm (0.25 inch); an aggregate area of all discolorations with moderate intensity that exceeds an area equivalent to a circle with a diameter of 2.54 cm (1 inch).

**5.1.2.4 Skin defects.** The skin shall be free from the presence of feathers, hair; the presence of layers of fat, fatty tissue; the presence of membranes on the neck skin; and the presence of skin covering the crop area. An aggregate area of all skin discolorations with moderate intensity shall not exceed an area equivalent to a circle with a diameter of 2.54 cm (1 inch).

**5.1.3 Monosodium glutamate (MSG).** No MSG may be added to the meat or to any other ingredient.

**5.1.4 Phosphates.** Use of restricted phosphates must be in accordance with 9 CFR § 381.147.

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**5.1.5 Alternate protein products (APP).** The APP used shall be identified by its common and usual name in the ingredient statement. The APP shall be in accordance with the requirements of the USDA, FNS Regulations (7 CFR Part 210, APPENDIX A).

**5.1.6 Oils.** When frying is used in the cooking process, vegetable oil shall be used as the frying medium and continuously filtered. Only corn oil, cottonseed oil, soybean oil, or a mixture of these oils shall be used. No coconut, palm kernel, or other tropical oils shall be allowed in the cooking process. The kind and amount of additives in oil must be in accordance with 9 CFR § 381.147.

**5.1.7 Batter/breading.** Commercially prepared batter/breading must be the type used to produce frozen precooked chicken products that will be reheated in ovens by institutional users. The primary ingredient by weight shall be: enriched wheat flour, corn flour, or whole wheat flour or combination of two or three of these flours. Other ingredients may be used to provide the needed adhesion and functional properties and to produce the desired appearance, color, texture, crispness, and flavor. The kind and amount of restricted food additives and ingredients in the batter/breading must be those permitted in 9 CFR § 381.147 or 9 CFR § 424.21.

**5.1.8 Batter/breading combinations.** Combined batter and breading for chicken nuggets, fingers, strips, and patties shall not exceed 30 percent by weight. The chicken fritters may contain up to 65 percent batter and breading and must contain at least 35 percent meat. The chicken products shall be uniformly coated with batter and breading.

**5.2 Reprocessing (rework).**

**5.2.1 Uncooked, un-battered/un-breaded product.** Uncooked, un-battered/un-breaded chicken products are eligible for reprocessing in like-product.

**5.2.2 Cooked, breaded product.** The use of breaded cooked product for reprocessing in like-product is limited to 2 percent without a label change. If amounts greater than 2 percent are used in like-product, a composite formula for the entire product is required to show that the product complies with any applicable product standard and the label must show a composite ingredient statement.

**5.2.3 Cooked, un-breaded product.** The use of un-breaded cooked product for reprocessing in like-product shall be limited to 6 percent.

**5.3 Chilling/Freezing.** The cooked chicken products shall be chilled in accordance with FSIS Regulations Directive 7110.3, Rev. 1, TIME/TEMPERATURE GUIDELINES FOR COOLING HEATED PRODUCTS and Appendix B -- Compliance Guidelines for Cooling Heat-Treated Meat

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and Poultry Products (Stabilization). The cooked chilled chicken products shall be individually frozen in a manner that will prevent the chicken products from sticking together after freezing. Immediately after individual freezing, the product shall be packaged and placed in a freezer held at -17.8EC (0EF) or below. The internal product temperature shall be lowered to -17.8EC (0EF) or lower within 72 hours from the time the product enters the freezer. The internal product temperature shall not exceed: (a) -17.8EC (0EF) at the time of shipment, and (b) -12.2EC (10EF) at time of delivery.

**5.4 Metal detection.** All product must be examined by a metal detection device capable of detecting metals that may be present in the product.

**5.5 Cooked product.**

**5.5.1 Cooking.** The product shall be cooked by any method or combination of methods allowed by the Poultry Products Inspection Regulations. A minimum internal product temperature of 71.1EC (160EF) shall be obtained during cooking (9 CFR § 381.150 and Appendix A -- Compliance Guidelines for Meeting Lethality Performance Standards for Certain Meat and Poultry Products).

**5.5.2 Color and appearance.** The cooked chicken products shall have a uniform color characteristic of cooked chicken; and the meat shall have no discoloration. The cooked breaded product shall have a golden brown color that is no lighter than the “light tolerance” or darker than the “dark tolerance” shown within the tolerances of the current edition of the USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Poultry Programs color control guidelines. The chicken product shall not be fractured (separated into two or more separate pieces).

**5.5.3 Odor and flavor.** There shall be no foreign odors or flavors such as, but not limited to burnt, scorched, stale, sour, rancid, musty, or moldy.

**5.5.4 Texture.** The chicken portion shall be moist and tender. The breading shall not be soggy, excessively oily or greasy, or sticky, be brittle or have a shell-like texture.

**5.5.5 Cooked breaded products.** The cooked, breaded chicken nuggets, fingers, strips, and fritters shall not have more than one area not coated with breading larger than 0.64 cm (0.25 inch). The cooked, breaded chicken patties shall not have more than one area not coated with breading larger than 1.30 cm (0.50 inch). The cooked, breaded nuggets, fingers, strips, and patties shall contain no lumps (outcropping of breading on the surface of the product) or ridges (excess breading which projects at the surface of the product).

**5.6 Foreign material.** The chicken products shall be wholesome and not adulterated, which covers all forms of foreign materials and contamination.

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**5.7 Individual freezing.** The chicken products must be frozen so the individual pieces do not stick together after they are packaged and packed. The internal product temperature of the chicken products must be lowered continuously at a rate of cooling which complies with the temperature requirements of FSIS Directive 7110.3.

**5.8 Storage time.** Unless otherwise specified, the maximum storage time for frozen cooked chicken products, at -17.8EC (0EF) or below, is 180 calendar days.

**6. ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS**

**6.1 Chemical and microbiological tolerances.** Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the IF, fully cooked chicken products comply with the following tolerances:

Standard Plate count	Less than 50,000 colony forming units (CFU) per gram
<i>Salmonella</i>	Negative
Fat	As specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order

**6.2 Product verification.** When USDA verification of analytical requirements 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 and plans.

**6.2.2 Composite sample.** Analytical and microbiological testing shall be performed on a composite sample. The composite sample shall be 454 grams (1 pound) and prepared from subsamples drawn from randomly selected containers. The number of subsamples used to create the composite shall be based on USDA procedures.

**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:

<b><u>Test</u></b>	<b><u>Method</u></b>
Standard Plate Count	966.23, 990.12
<i>Salmonella</i>	986.35 or Section C-15 <u>5</u> /
Fat	985.15 <u>6</u> /

5/ Chapter 5 , 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM).



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**6/** AOAC International Method 983.18 shall be used for sample preparation on fat analysis.

**6.4 Test results.** The test results for standard plate count shall be reported to the nearest 100 per gram. Salmonella results should be reported as positive or negative. The fat shall be reported to the nearest 0.1 percent. Any result not conforming to the analytical testing shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

**7. MANUFACTURER'S PRODUCT ASSURANCE.** The manufacturer shall certify that the chicken products 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 chicken products offered for sale in the commercial market. The purchaser reserves the right to require proof of conformance.

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

**9. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS.** Purchaser shall specify 9.1 or 9.2.

**9.1 Manufacturer's/distributor's certification.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the manufacturer/distributor will certify that the finished chicken products distributed meets or exceeds the requirements of this CID.

**9.2 USDA certification.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order that product quality and acceptability or both be determined, the USDA, AMS, Poultry Programs, Grading Branch, shall be the certifying program. AMS poultry graders shall certify the quality and acceptability of the chicken products in accordance with Poultry Program procedures which include selecting random samples of the packaged chicken products, evaluating the samples for conformance with the salient characteristics of this CID and other contractual requirements, and documenting the findings on official Poultry Program work sheets and/or certificates. In addition, when required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, poultry graders will examine the chicken products for conformance to the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers in effect on the date of the solicitation.

**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 9.2 is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA certification shall include evaluation of the quality and

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**condition of samples of packaged chicken products, and compliance with requirements in the following areas:**

- Salient characteristics (Sec. 5).
- Analytical requirements *when specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order* (Sec. 6.2). When USDA analytical testing is specified, Poultry Program inspection personnel shall select samples and submit them to the USDA, S&TP 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 **Grading Branch, Poultry Programs, USDA, STOP 0258, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0258, telephone (202) 720-4411, or FAX (202) 690-3165.**

**12.2 Analytical testing and technical information.** For USDA technical information on analytical testing, contact the **Branch Chief, Technical Service Branch, S&TP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0272, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0272, telephone (202) 690-0621, or via E-mail: [anita.okrend@usda.gov](mailto:anita.okrend@usda.gov).**

**12.3 CN labeling contact.** For CN labeling information, contact the **Head, Technical Assistance Section, Child Nutrition Division, Food and Nutrition Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302, telephone (703) 305-2609 or on the Internet at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/>.**

**12.4 Sources of documents.****12.4.1 Source of information for nongovernmental document is as follows:**

Copies of the Official Methods of Analysis and the FDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM) of the AOAC International may be obtained from: **AOAC International, 481 North Frederick Avenue, Suite 500, Gaithersburg, MD 20877, telephone (301) 924-7077. Internet address: <http://www.aoac.org>.**

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

Applicable provisions of the Meat and Poultry Inspection Regulations are contained in 9 CFR Parts 301 to end and 7 CFR Parts 53 to 209. The Food and Nutrition Service Regulations are contained in 7 CFR Part 210. Applicable provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act are contained in 21 CFR Parts 1 to 199. These documents may be purchased from: **Superintendent of Documents, ATTN: 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 Color Control Guidelines for Chicken Products are available from: **USDA, Poultry Programs, STOP 0258, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-0258, telephone (202) 720-4411, or FAX (202) 690-3165.**

Copies of this CID, the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers, and beneficial comments, recommendations, additions, deletions, clarifications, etc. and any data which may improve this CID are available from and/or provided to: **Head, Food Quality Assurance Staff, FVP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0243, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-0243, telephone (202) 720-9939, Fax (202) 690-0102, via E-mail: [FQASTaff@usda.gov](mailto:FQASTaff@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.**

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### **MILITARY INTERESTS:**

#### **Military Coordinating Activity**

Army - GL

#### **Custodians**

Army - GL

Navy - SA

Air Force - 35

### **CIVIL AGENCY COORDINATING ACTIVITIES:**

DOJ - BOP

HHS - FDA, NIH, IHS

USDA - FV

VA - OSS

### **PREPARING ACTIVITY:**

USDA - FV

#### **Review Activities**

Army - MD, QM

Navy - MC

DLA - SS

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