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Canada

**FOOD QUALITY SPECIFICATIONS -
FOOD PURCHASED BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
DEPARTMENTS**

Cereals

April 1, 2018

The following specifications are used by federal government departments purchasing the items listed below for their departmental food requirements

FQS-36 – Cereal

Any items listed in all Food Quality Specification that are **bolded and in brown** are part of the current National Standard Cycle Menu (NSCM) Standing Offer. Other items that are not on the NSCM but are on the Standing Offer may not be listed in **brown**.

[Applicable Regulations and Resources for Cereal](#)

Description

1. Cereal is a food made from processed grains such as wheat, oats, or corn. Any of several other plants or their edible seed of fruit, such as buckwheat or grain amaranth can also be used to extract the starch. Breakfast cereals can be classified as ready-to-serve, instant and cooked. The ready-to-eat cereals have many brands that provide users with different options. Most ready-to-eat cereals are enhanced with sweeteners, fruits, nuts, fibre, vitamins, protein, minerals and other ingredients. Instant cereals are those cooked cereals that have been cooked in processing and then finely divided so that they only need to be rehydrated with hot water to be ready to eat. Cooked cereals are either long-cooking or old-fashioned type such as cracked wheat or oatmeal, or quick-cooking such as quick-cooking oats, farina or cornmeal.

FQS-36-01-01 - Table 1: Type of Cereal

Type of Cereal	Description
Ready-to-eat Cereals	Cereals that do not require any preparation. Annex A to this FQS contains a partial listing of healthier choice* ready-to-eat cereals that meet the required criteria.
Instant Hot Cereals	
Instant Rolled Oats	Instant Rolled Oats are the most heavily processed. They consist of very thin flakes produced by rolling or pressing cut oat groats. The groats have been chopped fine, flattened, precooked and dehydrated. The product is prepared for consumption with the addition of boiling water.
Instant Rolled Oats, Flavoured	Instant Rolled Oats to which flavourings, seasonings, sweetening ingredients or dried fruit have been added. The product is prepared for consumption with the addition of boiling water.
Instant Cream of Wheat	Cream of Wheat sold in single-serving instant packets. These are prepared by mixing with hot water and allowing to set about two minutes.
Cooked Cereal	
Annex A to this FQS contains a partial listing of healthier choice* cooked cereals that meet the required criteria.	
Oats: All types of oat cereals start out as groats, which are hulled, toasted oat grains. Steel cut, stone-ground, old-fashioned, and quick-cooking rolled oats are all made from whole grains and they all have approximately the same amount of fibre, protein, calories and other nutrients	
Instant Cooking Rolled Oats	Very thin flakes produced by rolling or pressing cut oat groats (whole minimally processed oats). The product can be cooked in 3 minutes or less.
Quick Cooking Rolled Oats	Quick Cooking Rolled Oats consists of small to medium, very thin flakes of uniform size. They are produced by rolling or pressing cut oat groats. The products can be cooked in 15 minutes or less.
Regular Rolled Oats	Consists of large thin flakes of reasonably uniform size, produced by

Type of Cereal	Description
(Old Fashion Rolled Oats)	steaming the toasted groats and then rolling or pressing them between rollers to create flakes. Regular Rolled Oats can be eaten as is or cooked for about 10 minutes (to make oatmeal).
Steel-cut (Irish) oats	Steel cut oats are the least processed type of oat cereal. The toasted oat groats are simply chopped into chunks about the size of a sesame seed. Steel cut oats require cooking for about 45 minutes.
Stone-ground (Scottish) oats	These are the same as Irish oats but they are ground into smaller pieces, closer to the size of a poppy seed. Both Irish and Scottish oats have to be cooked before you eat them. Scottish oats require cooking for about 20-25 minutes.
Cream of Wheat	Cream of Wheat is a porridge-type breakfast food. It is similar in texture to grits, but made with ground wheat kernels instead of ground corn. Cream of Wheat is made by boiling water, then pouring in the farina while stirring. As it is stirred, the farina starts to thicken, creating a mixture that thickens depending on the ratio of liquid to farina. There are three available original mixes: 10-minutes, 2 ½-minutes and 1-minute.

* The criteria used to determine the healthier choice cereals are a minimum of 3 gms of fibre; a maximum of 12 gm sugar (may exceed 12 gm of sugar if a high fibre cereal containing dried fruit); contains 10% or more of the DV (daily Value) of one of Vitamins A, C, E, calcium, magnesium, potassium, or iron; and no more than 30 % of the calories from total fat.

2. All cereals supplied in Canada:
 - a. must be of the type and pack size specified;
 - b. must meet the description as indicated in [Table 1](#), when appropriate;
 - c. must comply with relevant sections of Acts and Regulations listed under the [Food and Drugs Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. F-27\)](#), [Food and Drug Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 870\)](#), [Canada Agricultural Products Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. 20 \(4th Supp.\)\)](#), [Canadian Food Inspection Agency Act \(S.C. 1997, c. 6\)](#), [Canada Grain Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. G-10\)](#) and [Canada Grain Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 889\)](#);
 - d. must comply with the [Food and Drug Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 870\)](#), Division 13, [Grain and Bakery Products](#);
 - e. must comply with the relevant sections listed under the [Canadian Food Inspection Agency - Food Safety](#);
 - f. must comply with food additive regulations listed under the [Food and Drug Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 870\)](#), Division 16, [Food Additives](#);
 - g. must comply with food packaging and labelling requirements listed under the [Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. C-38\)](#) and [Consumer Packaging and Labelling Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 417\)](#);
 - h. must comply with the relevant sections listed under the [Industry Labelling Tool \(replaces the Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising\)](#);
 - i. must be prepared and handled in accordance with essential principles of food hygiene applicable throughout the food chain (including primary production through to the final consumer), ensuring that food is safe and suitable for human consumption listed under the [Codex Alimentarius - General Principles of Food Hygiene](#), including Annex on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system and guidelines;

- j. must comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the [Principles and Guidelines for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria Related to Foods \[CAC/GL 21-1997\]](#);
 - k. must be of good characteristic taste and odour and shall be free from rancid, musty, sour and other undesirable tastes and odours;
 - l. may contain added nutrients that are acceptable under the [Food and Drugs Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. F-27\)](#), and [Food and Drug Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 870\)](#); and
 - m. must come from a facility that meets HACCP criteria as outlined in the Annex to [Codex Alimentarius - General Principles of Food Hygiene](#).
3. All cereal procured outside of Canada:
- a. must only be procured from countries that meet federal acts and regulations that govern the importation of food under the [Canadian Food Inspection Agency - Guide to Importing Food Products Commercially](#);
 - b. must be of the type and pack size specified;
 - c. must meet the description as indicated in [Table 1](#), when appropriate;
 - d. must comply with relevant sections of Acts and Regulations (or the equivalent in the country where procured) listed under the [Food and Drugs Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. F-27\)](#), [Food and Drug Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 870\)](#), [Canada Agricultural Products Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. 20 \(4th Supp.\)\)](#), [Canadian Food Inspection Agency Act \(S.C. 1997, c. 6\)](#), [Canada Grain Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. G-10\)](#) and [Canada Grain Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 889\)](#);
 - e. must comply with the [Food and Drug Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 870\)](#), Division 13, [Grain and Bakery Products](#);
 - f. must comply with the relevant sections listed under the [Canadian Food Inspection Agency - Food Safety](#);
 - g. must comply with food additive regulations listed under the [Food and Drug Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 870\)](#), Division 16, [Food Additives](#); and/or
 - h. must comply with food additive classes listed under the [Codex Alimentarius - General Standard for Food Additives](#);
 - i. must comply with food packaging and labelling requirements listed under the [Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. C-38\)](#) and [Consumer Packaging and Labelling Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 417\)](#);
 - j. must comply with the relevant sections listed under the [Industry Labelling Tool \(replaces the Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising\)](#); and/or
 - k. must comply with all the requirements listed under the [Codex Alimentarius - General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods](#);
 - l. must be prepared and handled in accordance with essential principles of food hygiene applicable throughout the food chain (including primary production through to the final consumer), ensuring that food is safe and suitable for human consumption listed under the [Codex Alimentarius - General Principles of Food Hygiene](#), including Annex on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system and guidelines;
 - m. must comply with any microbiological criteria established in accordance with the [Principles and Guidelines for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria Related to Foods \[CAC/GL 21-1997\]](#);

- n. must be of good characteristic taste and odour and shall be free from rancid, musty, sour and other undesirable tastes and odours;
- o. may contain added nutrients that are acceptable under the [Food and Drugs Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. F-27\)](#), and [Food and Drug Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 870\)](#);
- p. must come from a facility that meets HACCP criteria as outlined in the Annex to [Codex Alimentarius - General Principles of Food Hygiene](#);
- q. must comply with other relevant Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice recommended by the Codex Alimentarius Commission relevant to cereal;
- r. must comply with all the requirements listed under the [Codex Alimentarius – Guidelines for the Use of Flavourings](#); and
- s. must meet all requirements of applicable local food legislation whenever those requirements are stricter. All cereal must be obtained by sources approved by the applicable local and international laws, regulations, procedures and requirements.

Size

- 4. The usual retail and commercial standard size available in the market for the applicable cereal unless otherwise specified.

Packaging

- 5. All cereal shall be packaged in normal retail and commercial packaging, packing, labelling and marking which safeguard the hygienic, nutritional, technological and organoleptic qualities of the food. Packaging material must be made of substances which are safe and suitable for their intended use and does not impart any toxic substance or undesirable odour or flavour to the product.

Storage and Distribution

- 6. All products must be delivered in clean, sanitary vehicles and in cartons or, packages that protect the product from dust and contamination in transit.

Applicable Regulations and Resources for Cereal

[Food and Drug Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 870\)](#)

[Food and Drug Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 870\), Division 13, Grain and Bakery Products](#)

[Food and Drug Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 870\), Division 16, Food Additives](#)

[Canadian Food Inspection Agency Act \(S.C. 1997, c. 6\)](#)

[Food and Drugs Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. F-27\)](#)

[Canada Grain Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. G-10\)](#)

[Canada Grain Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 889\)](#)

[Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. C-38\)](#)

[Consumer Packaging and Labelling Regulations \(C.R.C., c. 417\)](#)

[Codex Alimentarius - General Principles of Food Hygiene](#)

[Codex Alimentarius – Guidelines for the Use of Flavourings](#)

[Codex Alimentarius - General Standard for Food Additives](#)

[Codex Alimentarius - General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods](#)

[Canadian Food Inspection Agency - Food Safety](#)

[Industry Labelling Tool \(replaces the Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising\)](#)

[Canada Agricultural Products Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. 20 \(4th Supp.\)\)](#)

[Canadian Food Inspection Agency - Guide to Importing Food Products Commercially](#)

[Principles and Guidelines for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria Related to Foods \[CAC/GL 21-1997\]](#)