



DEAS 1360: 2026

ICS 67.100.30

EAST AFRICAN STANDARD

Paneer cheese — Specification

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

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Contents	Page
Foreword	iv
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms and definitions	2
4 Categories	2
5 Requirements	3
5.1 Raw material	3
5.2 Essential ingredients	3
5.3 Optional Ingredients	3
5.4 General requirements	3
5.5 Specific requirements	3
6 Food additives	3
7 Contaminants	3
7.1 Pesticide residues	3
7.2 Veterinary drugs residues	3
7.3 Aflatoxin	4
7.4 Heavy metals	4
8 Hygiene	4
9 Packaging	4
10 Labelling	4
11 Sampling	5

Foreword

Development of the East African Standards has been necessitated by the need for harmonizing requirements governing quality of products and services in the East African Community. It is envisaged that through harmonized standardization, trade barriers that are encountered when goods and services are exchanged within the Community will be removed.

The Community has established an East African Standards Committee (EASC) mandated to develop and issue East African Standards (EAS). The Committee is composed of representatives of the National Standards Bodies in Partner States, together with the representatives from the public and private sector organizations in the community.

East African Standards are developed through Technical Committees that are representative of key stakeholders including government, academia, consumer groups, private sector and other interested parties. Draft East African Standards are circulated to stakeholders through the National Standards Bodies in the Partner States. The comments received are discussed and incorporated before finalization of standards, in accordance with the Principles and procedures for development of East African Standards.

East African Standards are subject to review, to keep pace with technological advances. Users of the East African Standards are therefore expected to ensure that they always have the latest versions of the standards they are implementing.

The committee responsible for this document is Technical Committee EASC/TC 17, *Milk and milk product*.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be subject of patent rights. EAC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

Paneer cheese — Specification

1 Scope

This Draft East African Standard specifies requirements, sampling and test methods for paneer cheese intended for direct human consumption or further processing

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

AOAC 926.08, *Loss on drying (moisture) in cheese. Method I*

AOAC 942.17, *Arsenic in food. Molybdenum blue method*

AOAC 962.14, *Beta-lactam Antibiotics in milk. Bacillus subtilis qualitative field disk assay*

AOAC 999.10, *Determination of Lead, Cadmium, Copper, Iron, and Zinc in foods, Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometry after dry ashing*

CXC 1, *Code of practice — General Principles for food hygiene*

CXC 57, *Code of hygienic practice for milk and milk products*

CXS 192 *General standard for food additives*

EAS 35, *Fortified edible salt — Specification*

EAS 38, *Labelling of pre-packaged foods — General requirements*

ISO 707, *Milk and milk products — Guidance on sampling*

ISO 1735, *Cheese and processed cheese products — Determination of fat content — Gravimetric method (Reference method)*

ISO 4832, *Microbiology of food and animal feeding stuffs — Horizontal method for the enumeration of coliforms — Colony-count technique*

ISO 5534, *Cheese and processed cheese — Determination of the total solids content (Reference method)*

ISO 5538, *Milk and milk products — Sampling inspection by attributes*

ISO 5546, *Caseins and caseinates — Determination of pH (Reference method)*

ISO 5738, *Milk and milk products — Determination of copper content — Photometric method (Reference method)*

ISO 5943, *Cheese and processed cheese products — Determination of chloride content — Potentiometric titration method*

ISO 6579-1, *Microbiology of the food chain — Horizontal method for the detection, enumeration and serotyping of Salmonella — Part 1: Detection of Salmonella spp*

ISO 6732, *Milk and milk products — Determination of iron content — Spectrometric method (Reference method)*

ISO 6733, *Milk and milk products — Determination of lead content — Graphite furnace atomic absorption spectrometric method*

ISO 8197, *Milk and milk products — Sampling inspection by variables*

ISO 11290-2, *Microbiology of the food chain — Horizontal method for the detection and enumeration of Listeria monocytogenes and of Listeria spp. — Part 2: Enumeration method*

ISO 14501, *Milk and milk powder — Determination of aflatoxin M1 content — Clean-up by immunoaffinity chromatography and determination by high-performance liquid chromatography*

ISO 16649-2, *Microbiology of food and animal feeding stuffs — Horizontal method for the enumeration of -glucuronidase-positive Escherichia coli — Part 2: Colony-count technique at 44 °C using 5-bromo-4-chloro-3-indolyl -D-glucuronide*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at <http://www.iso.org/obp>

3.1

paneer cheese

soft, unaged product obtained from any variant of milk, with or without added milk solids, by heating and coagulating milk with permitted acidulants.

3.2

milk

normal mammary secretion of milking animals obtained from one or more milkings without either addition to it or extraction from it, intended for consumption as liquid milk or for further processing

3.4

food grade packaging material

packaging material, made of substances which are safe and suitable for their intended use and which will not impart any toxic substance or undesirable odour or flavour to the product

4 Categories

Paneer cheese shall be categorized as follow:

- a) High fat cheese
- b) Full fat cheese
- c) Reduced fat/Medium fat cheese
- d) Low fat/semi skimmed cheese
- e) Fat free/Skim cheese

5 Requirements

5.1 Raw material

Milk from cow, buffalo, goat, sheep and camel or their combination complying with Relevant standards

5.2 Essential ingredients

acidulants such as lactic acid, citric acid, malic acid, vinegar, lemon juice glucono delta lactone, sour whey

5.3 Optional Ingredients

Optional ingredients shall be food grade and shall comply with relevant standards, and include but are not limited to the following

- spices (for flavoured paneer cheese only); and
- salt complying with EAS 35

5.4 General requirements

Paneer cheese shall:

- free from foreign matter and surface discolouration'
- have a pleasant odour and characteristic mild acidic flavour; and
- have a smooth texture, firm, cohesive and spongy body

5.5 Specific requirements

Paneer cheese shall comply with specific requirements given in the table 1 when tested in accordance with test methods specified therein.

Table 1 —Specific requirements for paneer cheese

S/N	Characteristic	Requirements					Test method
		High fat cheese	Full fat cheese	Medium fat cheese	low fat cheese	fat free cheese	
i.	Moisture, %, (max) by mass	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	AOAC 926.08
ii.	Milk fat, %, (m/m), dry matter basis,	> 60	>45-60	>25-45	>10-25	10	ISO 23319
iii.	Titrateable acidity as lactic acid %, (m/m), max	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	ISO/TS 22113

6 Food additives

Food additives may be added in paneer cheese in accordance with CXS 192.

7 Contaminants

7.1 Pesticide residues

Goat cheese shall comply with maximum residue limits residues set by Codex Alimentarius Commission.

7.2 Veterinary drugs residues

Goat cheese shall comply with maximum tolerable residue limits for antibiotics and other veterinary drugs set by Codex Alimentarius Commission.

7.3 Aflatoxin

The level of Aflatoxin M1, shall not exceed 0.5 µg/kg, when tested in accordance with ISO 14501

7.4 Heavy metals

The level of Lead shall not exceed 0.02 mg/kg when tested in accordance with AOAC 999.10

8 Hygiene

8.1 Paneer cheese shall be processed, packaged, stored and distributed under hygienic conditions complying with CXC 1 and CXC 57.

8.2 Paneer cheese shall not exceed microbiological limits in Table 3 when tested in accordance with test methods specified therein.

Table 3 — Microbiological limits for paneer cheese

S/N	Microorganism	Sampling plan		Limits		Test method
		n*	c*	m*	M*	
i.	<i>Salmonella spp</i> per 25g	5	0	0	0	ISO 6579-1
ii.	<i>E. coli</i> , CFU/g	5	2	10 ²	10 ³	ISO 16649-2
iii.	<i>Coagulase-positive Staphylococcus aureus</i> cfu/g	5	2	10 ²	10 ³	ISO 6888-1
iv.	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> in 25g	5	0	0	0	ISO 11290-2

Assessment of the conformity of food to the microbiological requirements shall be based on the following criteria:

n; number of units making up the sample (Sampling frequency);

m: is the number of micro-organism colonies per gram or millilitre, and food is deemed to conform to the microbiological requirements if the number of colonies in all sample units is equal to or less than m;

M: is the maximum value for the number of micro-organism colonies permitted in food per gram or millilitre. Food is deemed not to conform to the microbiological requirements and to be unfit for human consumption if the number of micro-organism colonies is equal to or greater than the value of M in more sample units than permitted by c.

c: is the number of units in the sample in which the number of micro-organism colonies per gram or millilitre determined in the course of the study may be between m and M. Food is deemed to conform to the microbiological requirements if the number of microorganism colonies in the remaining samples is equal to or less than the value of m.

9 Packaging

Paneer cheese shall be packaged in food grade packaging materials made of suitable material and shall be well sealed in order to prevent contamination of the contents during storage and transportation.

10 Labelling

In additional to any other requirements given in EAS 38, the following specific labelling requirements shall be legibly and indelibly marked:

- a) name and category of product as per clause 4
- b) milk fat content - The milk fat content shall be declared in either (i) as percentage by mass (ii) as a percentage of fat in dry matter, or (iii) in grams per serving as quantified in the label, provided that the number of servings is stated'
- c) name and address of manufacturer;
- d) date of manufacture;
- e) list of ingredients;
- f) coagulating enzyme used;
- g) date of expiry;
- h) batch number
- i) storage conditions;
- j) source of milk used and
- k) country of origin.

11 Sampling

The Test samples shall be taken in accordance with ISO 707. In addition to the provision in ISO 707, sampling shall comply with ISO 8197 or ISO 5538 when the sampling is purposely for inspection.

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