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EAST AFRICAN STANDARD

Rabbit meat (carcass and cuts) — Specification

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

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East African Community
P.O. Box 1096,
Arusha
Tanzania
Tel: + 255 27 2162100
Fax: + 255 27 2162190
E-mail: eac@eachq.org
Web: www.eac-quality.net

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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 EAS/TC 004, *Meat, poultry, game, eggs and their products*.

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Rabbit meat (carcass and cuts) — Specification

1 Scope

This draft East African Standard specifies the requirements, sampling and test methods for rabbit meat (carcass and cuts) intended for human consumption.

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 971.21, *Mercury in food. Flameless atomic absorption Spectrophotometry method*

AOAC 999.10, *Lead, Cadmium, Zinc, Copper, and Iron in Foods. Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometry after Microwave Digestion*

CAC/GL 50, *General guidelines on sampling*

CAC/RCP 58, *Code of hygienic practice for meat*

CODEX STAN 192, *General standard for food additives*

CX/MRL 2, *Maximum residue limits for veterinary drugs in food*

EAS 38; *Labelling of pre-packaged foods — Specification*

EAS 39, *Hygiene in the food and drink manufacturing industry — Code of practice*

ISO 4833-1, *Microbiology of the food chain — Horizontal method for the enumeration of microorganisms — Part 1: Colony count at 30 degrees C by the pour plate technique*

ISO 5961, *Water quality — Determination of cadmium by atomic absorption spectrometry*

ISO 6579, *Microbiology of food and animal feeding stuffs — Horizontal method for the detection of Salmonella spp.*

ISO 6888-1, *Microbiology of food and animal feeding stuffs — Horizontal method for the enumeration of coagulase-positive staphylococci (Staphylococcus aureus and other species) — Part 1: Technique using Baird-Parker agar medium*

ISO 7937, *Microbiology of food and animal feeding stuffs — Horizontal method for the enumeration of Clostridium perfringens — Colony count technique*

ISO 10272-1, *Microbiology of the food chain — Horizontal method for detection and enumeration of Campylobacter spp. — Part 1: Detection method*

ISO 11290-1, *Microbiology of the food chain — Horizontal method for the detection and enumeration of Listeria monocytogenes and of Listeria spp. — Part 1: Detection method*

ISO 13720, *Meat and meat products — Enumeration of presumptive Pseudomonas spp.*

ISO 16654, *Microbiology of food and animal feeding stuffs — Horizontal method for the detection of Escherichia coli O157*

ISO 16649-1, *Microbiology of the food chain — Horizontal method for the enumeration of beta-glucuronidase-positive Escherichia coli — Part 1: Colony-count technique at 44 degrees C using membranes and 5-bromo-4-chloro-3-indolyl beta-D-glucuronide*

ISO 17294-2, *Water quality — Application of inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (ICP-MS) — Part 2: Determination of 62 elements*

ISO 17604, *Microbiology of the food chain — Carcass sampling for microbiological analysis*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions shall 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>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

meat

all parts of an animal that are intended for, and have been passed as fit for human consumption

3.2

rabbit meat

all parts of a rabbit that are intended for, or have been passed as fit for human consumption

U

3.3

boning

removal of meat from bones of a carcass or a portion of carcass

4 Categories of rabbit carcass

Rabbit carcass shall be categorized according to rabbit ages as given in Table 1.

Table 1 — Categories of rabbit carcass

S/No.	Category	Description
i)	Very young rabbit	Weaned rabbits four to five weeks old
ii)	Young rabbit	Less than 12 weeks of age
iii)	Young mature rabbit	12 weeks to 6 months of age
iv)	Mature rabbit	More than 6 months of age
v)	Open doe	More than 6 months of age, unfertilized mature rabbit

5 Requirements

5.1 Rabbits shall be slaughtered in a hygienically managed slaughterhouse in accordance with CXC 58. The slaughtering process shall be supervised by a competent authority and shall be prepared in licensed premises.

5.2 Carcass and cuts shall be free:

- a) from visible blood clots or bone dust

- b) from any visible foreign matter (e.g. dirt, wood, plastic, metal particles);
- c) of offensive odours;
- d) of unspecified protruding or broken bones;
- e) of bruises;
- f) of freezer-burn;
- g) of spinal cord (except for whole un-split carcasses); and
- h) from fur; and
- i) intact, taking into account the presentation;

5.3 Rabbit carcass shall be properly dressed, washed, butchered, trimmed, weighed, marked and may be presented in accordance with Annex A.

5.4 Cutting, trimming and boning of cuts shall be accomplished with sufficient care to maintain cut integrity and identity and to avoid scores in the lean. Ragged edges shall be removed close to the lean surfaces. Except for cuts that are separated through natural seams, all cross-sectional surfaces shall form approximate right angles with the skin surface. Minimal amounts of lean, fat, or bone may be included on a cut from an adjacent cut. For boneless cuts, all bones, cartilage, and visible surface lymph glands shall be removed.

5.5 The carcass shall be certified as sound and free from contagious and infectious diseases and fit for human consumption by a competent person.

5.6 The certified carcass and cuts shall bear suitable marks of such inspection, the symbol or number or name of the establishment where they were prepared, and the legend 'PASSED' denoting wholesomeness of the carcass. The marking fluid used shall be of food grade ink.

6 Food additives

Food additives, if used in rabbit meat shall comply with CXS 192.

7 Contaminants

7.1 Heavy metals

Rabbit meat shall comply with maximum limits for heavy metals as given in CXS 193

7.2 Veterinary drug residues

Rabbit meat shall comply with the maximum residue limits specified in CXM 2.

7.3 Pesticide residues

Rabbit meat shall comply with the maximum residue limits for pesticides as established by the Codex Alimentarius online database.

8 Hygiene requirements

8.1 Rabbit carcass and cuts shall be produced and handled in accordance with CXC 58 and EAS 39.

8.2 Rabbit carcass and cuts shall comply with the microbiological limits given in Table 2, when tested in accordance with the test methods specified therein.

Table 2 — Microbiological limits for rabbit carcass and cuts

S/No.	Microorganism	Limit	Test method
i.	<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> , CFU/g, max.	10 ³	ISO 6888-1

ii.	<i>Escherichia Coli</i> , O157:H7 per 25 g	Absent	ISO 16654
iii.	<i>Salmonella spp.</i> , per 25 g	Absent	ISO 6579
iv.	<i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> , cfu/g, max.	10 ²	ISO 13720

9 Packaging

9.1 Packaging of fresh, chilled and frozen rabbit meat shall be done in food grade packaging material that protects the meat product from any physical, microbiological, chemical contamination during storage, distribution and handling. The packaged rabbit meat carcass and cuts shall be delivered intact and not damaged

10 Transportation

10.1 Transportation of rabbit carcass and cuts shall be in accordance with CXC 58

10.2 Chilled rabbit meat shall be handled and transported at temperature between 0 °C and 4 °C.

10.3 Frozen rabbit meat shall be transported below -18 °C and the packages shall be handled with care to preserve quality and safety of the product.

11 Labelling

11.2 In addition to the requirements given in EAS 38, the rabbit meat carcass and cuts shall be legibly and indelibly labelled by the following information

- a) name of the product as "Rabbit meat";
- b) name of the cut as appropriate;
- c) ; manufacturer's name and physical address net weight in metric unit;
- d) declaration of preservatives used;
- e) date of manufacturer
- f) expiry date;
- g) batch number;
- h) storage conditions;
- i) country of origin;

12 Sampling

Sampling shall be done in accordance with CXG 50 for general sampling and ISO 17604 for microbiological analysis.

Annex A **(normative)**

Presentation of rabbit carcass and cuts

A.1 Temperature treatment

Rabbit carcass and cuts shall be subjected to the following temperature treatment.

a) Chilling

Fresh rabbit carcass sides or cuts shall be brought to a temperature of between 1 °C and 3 °C within 24 h. Carcass and cuts meant for chilling shall be further chilled to temperatures of -2 °C to 4 °C and should be consumed within a period of 4 weeks.

b) Freezing and storage

Rabbit carcass sides or cuts shall be pre-chilled before freezing. Freezing shall be at minus (-) 18 °C and (-) 12 °C at the highest. The rabbit carcass and cuts shall be stored at (-) 12 °C at the highest. The frozen product should be consumed within 12 months.

A.2 Presentation

A.2.1 Fresh carcass

The deepest part of the carcass near the bone shall be cooled to the atmospheric temperature when delivered and shall show no evidence of deterioration.

A.2.2 Fresh chilled carcass

The carcass shall be chilled so that the temperature at the deepest portion of the flesh near the bone shall be 1 °C and shall show no evidence of deterioration.

A.2.3 Fresh frozen carcass

The rabbit meat shall be quick frozen preferably at a temperature of not higher than -12 °C for frozen and -18 °C for deep frozen in the minimum possible time and shall show no evidence of deterioration, such as dehydration and advanced changes in texture.

A.2.4 Fresh rabbit meat cuts

These shall be prepared from carcasses which conform to A.2.1.

Bibliography

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