

METRIC

A-A-20264B

September 28, 2021

SUPERSEDING

A-A-20264A

December 12, 2001

COMMERCIAL ITEM DESCRIPTION

MACARONI AND CHEESE, FROZEN

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

1. SCOPE. This CID covers frozen macaroni and cheese (macaroni and cheese), packed in commercially acceptable containers, suitable for use by Federal, State, local governments, and other interested parties. **Please note: This document does not guarantee purchase of this item by USDA.**¹

2. PURCHASER NOTES.

2.1 Purchasers *must* specify the following:

- Cheese type(s), fat content(s), macaroni product(s), sodium content(s), container size(s), packaging material(s), and agricultural practice(s) of macaroni and cheese required (Sec. 3).
- The processed cheese ratio or the cheese substitute ratio, when applicable (Sec. 3).
- When analytical requirements are different than specified (Sec. 7.1).
- When compliance with analytical requirements must be verified (Sec. 7.2).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 10.5) or USDA certification (Sec. 10.6).

2.2 Purchasers *may* specify the following:

- When the cheeses used for the macaroni and cheese are to be graded or inspected by the USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Dairy Program (DP), Dairy Grading and Standards Division (DGSD) (Sec. 10).
- Food Defense (Sec. 10.3) and Manufacturer's Quality Assurance (Sec. 10.4). *Purchaser may specify one of the following combinations: 10.3.1 with 10.4.1, or 10.3.2 with 10.4.2.*
- Packaging requirements other than commercial (Sec. 11).

3. CLASSIFICATION. The macaroni and cheese must conform to the following list which must be specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

¹ USDA purchase specifications are available at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food/product-specs>.

A-A-20264B

Cheese types, processed cheese ratios, cheese substitute ratios, fat contents, macaroni products, sodium contents, container sizes, packaging materials and agricultural practices.²

Cheese type I - Natural cheese³

Cheese type II - Natural cheese and processed cheese⁴

Processed cheese ratio A - 80 percent natural cheese, 20 percent processed cheese

Processed cheese ratio B - 50 percent natural cheese, 50 percent processed cheese

Processed cheese ratio C - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

Cheese type III - Natural cheese and cheese substitute⁵

Cheese substitute ratio A - 80 percent natural cheese, 20 percent cheese substitute

Cheese substitute ratio B - 50 percent natural cheese, 50 percent cheese substitute

Cheese substitute ratio C - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

Fat content 1 - Low fat

Fat content 2 - Reduced fat

Fat content 3 - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

Macaroni product a - Enriched macaroni products (21 CFR §139.115)

Macaroni product b - Enriched macaroni products with fortified protein (21 CFR §139.117)

Macaroni product c - Macaroni products (21 CFR §139.110)

Sodium content (1) - Low sodium

Sodium content (2) - Reduced sodium

Sodium content (3) - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

Container size (a) - 227 grams (g) (8 ounces (oz)) individual serving

Container size (b) - 298 g (10.5 oz) individual serving

Container size (c) - Multiple servings (check with manufacturer for the number of servings per container)

Container size (d) - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

Packaging material (i) - Aluminum tray

Packaging material (ii) - Polymeric tray

Packaging material (iii) - Pouch (boil in a bag)

Packaging material (iv) - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

² Not all options are available from all manufacturers. Contact the manufacturer/distributor for availability.

³ Natural cheese includes cheese that is made directly from milk and conforms to a Standard of Identity for Cheese (21 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 133, except 21 CFR §133.123-125 and 21 CFR §133.167-180).

⁴ Processed cheese includes cheese that is made from a blend of natural cheeses with an emulsifying agent and conforms to a Standard of Identity for Cheeses and Related Cheese Products (21 CFR §133.123-125 and 21 CFR §133.167-180).

⁵ The cheese substitute must comply with the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) requirements for "substitute" foods (21 CFR §101.13(d)).

Agricultural practice (aa) - Conventional

Agricultural practice (bb) - Organic

4. MANUFACTURER'S/DISTRIBUTOR'S NOTES. Manufacturer's/distributor's products must meet the requirements of the:

- Processing guidelines (Sec. 5).
- Salient characteristics (Sec. 6).
- Analytical requirements: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 7).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's product assurance (Sec. 8).
- Regulatory requirements (Sec. 9).
- Quality assurance provisions: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 10).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 11).

5. PROCESSING GUIDELINES.

5.1 Processing. The macaroni and cheese must be processed in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis, and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food* (21 CFR Part 117).

5.2 Food defense. The macaroni and cheese must be processed and transported in accordance with *Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration* (21 CFR Part 121). This regulation identifies the kinds of preventive measures food manufacturers, processors, or handlers may take to minimize the risk that food under their control will be subject to tampering or other malicious, criminal, or terrorist actions. The implementation of enhanced food defense preventive measures provides for the security of a plant's production processes and includes the storage and transportation of pre-production raw materials, other ingredients, and post-production finished product.

5.3 Organic ingredients. When organic macaroni and cheese is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the macaroni and cheese must be produced, handled, and labeled in accordance with the USDA organic regulations by an operation that is certified organic in accordance with the requirements of the National Organic Program (7 CFR Part 205). A Certificate of Organic Production or Handling must be provided to verify that the product was processed and handled in accordance with the USDA organic regulations.

5.4 Temperature. The macaroni and cheese must be maintained at a temperature of -18 °C (0 °F) or lower.

A-A-20264B

5.5 Shelf life. Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the macaroni and cheese must have a shelf life of at least 365 days from the date of manufacturing when stored at -18 °C (0 °F) or lower.

6. SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS.

6.1 Definitions.

6.1.1 Low fat. The product contains 3 g or less of total fat per 100 g and not more than 30 percent of calories from fat (21 CFR §101.62(b)(3)).

6.1.2 Reduced fat. The product contains at least 25 percent less fat per 100 g of food than an appropriate reference food as described in 21 CFR §101.13(j)(1) and as required in 21 CFR §101.13(j)(2) for relative claims (21 CFR §101.62(b)(5)).

6.1.3 Low sodium. The product contains 140 mg or less sodium per 100 g (21 CFR §101.61(b)(5)).

6.1.4 Reduced sodium. The product contains at least 25 percent less sodium per 100 g of food than an appropriate reference food as described in 21 CFR §101.13(j)(1) and as required in 21 CFR §101.13(j)(2) for relative claims (21 CFR §101.61(b)(7)).

6.2 Labeling. All ingredients must be declared by their common or usual name in descending order of predominance by weight (21 CFR §101.4) unless exempted by 21 CFR §101.100.

6.3 Ingredients. The macaroni and cheese must consist of macaroni products and cheese sauce, and may contain spices, and safe and suitable thickeners.

6.3.1 Macaroni products. The macaroni products must comply with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Standard of Identity for Macaroni Products (21 CFR §139.110), or Enriched Macaroni Products (21 CFR §139.115), or Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein (21 CFR §139.117). When specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order the macaroni must be prepared from wheat semolina.

6.3.2 Cheese sauce. The cheeses used in the cheese sauce must comply with the FDA Standard of Identity for Cheeses and Related Cheese Products (21 CFR Part 133) or as specified in CID A-A-20208C⁶, Cheese, Cheddar. The cheese sauce must contain cheddar cheese (21 CFR §133.113), or reduced fat cheddar cheese.⁷ Other cheeses such as, but not limited to: American

⁶ If CID A-A-20208C has been superseded, the cheese, Cheddar must meet the requirements of the superseding document currently in effect on the date of the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

⁷ Reduced fat Cheddar cheese should contain between 25 to 33.3 percent less fat than that of Cheddar cheese and must comply with all applicable Federal regulations including those contained in 21 CFR §133.113 for Cheddar cheese, 21 CFR §101.62 for nutrient content claims for fat, and 21 CFR §130.10 for foods named by use of a nutrient content claim and standardized term.

(pasteurized process cheese) (21 CFR §133.169), blue (21 CFR §133.106), granular (21 CFR §133.144), Romano (21 CFR §133.183), Swiss (21 CFR §133.195), and club (21 CFR §133.123) may be used. The cheese sauce may contain thickeners, flavorings (natural and/or artificial), beta carotene, Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic (FD&C) colors, and appropriate spices, including salt, annatto, and paprika.

6.3.3 Processed cheese. When specified by the purchaser, processed cheese may be combined with natural cheese in a ratio designated by the purchaser. The processed cheese must consist of a blend of natural cheeses and must have no off odors or flavors.

6.3.4 Cheese substitute. When specified by the purchaser, cheese substitute may be combined with the cheese in a ratio designated by the purchaser. The cheese substitute must comply with the FDA requirements for “substitute” foods (21 CFR §101.13(d)) and have the same nutritional value and quality requirements as the natural cheese being substituted. The cheese substitute must have no off odors or flavors.

6.3.5 Additional processing ingredients. The macaroni and cheese may contain spices and food ingredients permitted by the FDA for thickening, emulsifying, stabilizing, preserving, or enhancing flavor. When used, all additional ingredients must meet the standards specified in the Food Chemicals Codex (FCC) or, in the absence of FCC specification at a minimum, meet the specifications for quality set by the U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP)-National Formulary. The additional ingredients must be approved food additives (21 CFR Part 170) or meet Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) requirements (21 CFR Parts 182 and 184) for those uses by FDA.

6.4 Finished product.

6.4.1 Flavor and aroma. When reheated, the macaroni and cheese must have an odor and flavor characteristic of prepared macaroni and cheese. There must be no foreign odors or flavors such as, but not limited to, burnt, scorched, stale, rancid, or moldy.

6.4.2 Color. The macaroni and cheese must possess good exterior characteristic color of its variety. There must be no foreign color to the product. The finished macaroni and cheese must show no evidence of excessive heating (materially scorched).

6.4.3 Texture. When reheated, the macaroni and cheese must be well blended. The overall texture must not be rubbery, mushy, pasty, or have excessive oil separation from the product. The cheese sauce consistency must not be excessively thin, thick, or pasty.

6.5 Foreign material. All ingredients must be clean, sound, wholesome, and free from foreign material including but not limited to plastic pieces, evidence of rodent or insect infestation, and metal contaminants.

7. ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS.

7.1 Analytical and microbiological requirements. Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract or purchase order, the following analytical and microbiological requirements for the macaroni and cheese must conform to those in Table I:

TABLE I. Analytical and microbiological requirements

Test	Requirement
Fat	Must not exceed the limit specified by the purchaser in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.
Sodium	Must not exceed the limit specified by the purchaser in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.
<i>Salmonella</i>	Must be negative
<i>Escherichia coli (E. coli)</i>	Less than 10 Colony Forming Units (CFU) per g or less than 3 per g using Most Probable Number (MPN) technique ⁸
<i>Listeria monocytogenes (L. monocytogenes)</i>	Must be negative

7.2 Analytical verification. Purchaser must specify manufacturer’s/distributor’s certification (Sec. 10.5) or USDA certification (Sec. 10.6).

7.3 USDA verification procedures. When USDA certification (Sec. 10.6) is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, analytical testing must be performed as follows.

7.3.1 Product verification sampling. When USDA verification of analytical requirements is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, analytical testing must be performed on subsamples of packages randomly selected from the lot. The number of subsamples must be based on USDA inspection service sampling procedures and plans (7 CFR §52.38). The contents of each will be used to create a composite sample that will be used in the analytical testing.

7.3.2 Analytical testing and reporting. When specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the analyses must be made in accordance with the following methods from the

⁸ Findings indicate zero colonies (CFU) per plate or zero tubes producing gas for MPN.

Association of Official Analytical Collaboration (AOAC) International Official Methods of Analysis (OMA) or as specified in Table II. Any result not conforming to the analytical requirements may be cause for rejection of the lot.

TABLE II. Analytical and microbiological testing and reporting

Test	Method	Reported as
Fat	AOAC 933.05, 2007.04, 2008.06	Nearest 0.1 percent
Sodium	AOAC 985.35, 984.27, 2011.14	Nearest 0.1 percent
<i>Salmonella</i>	AOAC 967.26, 967.28, 996.08, 2003.09, 2004.03, 2011.03, 2011.17, 2013.09, or BAM Ch 5 ⁹	Must be reported as positive or negative
<i>E. coli</i>	AOAC 991.14, 2011.17, or BAM Ch 4 ⁹	Nearest 10 CFU or MPN per g
<i>L. monocytogenes</i>	AOAC 2003.12, 2004.02, 2016.08 or BAM Ch 10 ⁹	Must be reported as positive or negative

8. MANUFACTURER'S/DISTRIBUTOR'S PRODUCT ASSURANCE. The manufacturer/distributor must certify that the macaroni and cheese provided meets the salient characteristics of this CID, conform to their own specifications, standards, and quality assurance practices, and be the same macaroni and cheese offered for sale in the commercial market. The purchaser reserves the right to require proof of conformance.

9. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS. The delivered macaroni and cheese must comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local mandatory requirements and regulations relating to the preparation, packaging, labeling, storage, distribution, and sale of the macaroni and cheese in the commercial marketplace. Delivered macaroni and cheese must comply with all applicable provisions of the Federal FD&C Act, the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act, Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA), and regulations promulgated thereunder. The allergen statement must be provided in a format which complies with FALCPA for any product which contains wheat, fish, milk, soy, tree nuts, eggs, peanuts, and Crustacean shellfish or those in effect on the date of the solicitation, contract, or purchase order. When the macaroni and cheese is used for the Child Nutrition (CN) Programs, the macaroni and cheese must comply with all applicable provisions of those Programs. When a CN label is specified, the label must be approved in its final format by the AMS.

⁹ 8th Edition, FDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM) or the FDA BAM Online. <https://www.fda.gov/food/laboratory-methods-food/bacteriological-analytical-manual-bam>

10. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS. *Purchaser must specify 10.1 or 10.2, and 10.5 or 10.6. Purchaser may specify one of the following combinations: 10.3.1 with 10.4.1, or 10.3.2 with 10.4.2.*

10.1 Manufacturer's quality assurance for dairy components. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchaser order, the dairy component manufacturer will be required to have their facilities inspected by USDA, AMS, DP, DGSD, and be eligible for listing in Section I of the AMS publication *Dairy Plants Surveyed and Approved for USDA Grading Service*.¹⁰ An AMS, DP plant survey verifies that at the time of the survey, the manufacturer produces products in a clean sanitary environment and satisfactorily meet the requirements contained in 7 CFR Part 58 *Grading and Inspection, General Specifications for Approved Plants and Standards for Grades of Dairy Products*.

10.2 USDA certification for dairy components. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the USDA, AMS, DP, DGSD, must certify that the dairy components used for the manufacturing of macaroni and cheese meet or exceed the requirements of the U.S. Standards for Grades. The DGSD inspectors must certify the dairy components in accordance with DGSD procedures which include: random sampling of the dairy components, evaluating the samples for conformance with the appropriate U.S. Standards for Grades, USDA Specifications, and/or CID, and documenting the requirements on official DGSD certificates.

10.3 Food defense. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a Food Defense Systems Survey (FDSS) or audit must be conducted by USDA, AMS, Specialty Crops Program (SCP), Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division. Food defense requirements include a documented and operational food defense plan that provides for the security of a plant's production processes and includes the storage and transportation of pre-production raw materials and other ingredients and post-production finished product. The plan must address the following areas: (1) food security plan management; (2) outside and inside security of the production and storage facilities; (3) processing, including all raw material sources; (4) shipping and receiving; (5) storage; (6) water and ice supply; (7) mail handling; (8) personnel security; and (9) transportation, shipping, and receiving.

10.3.1 FDSS. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a FDSS must be conducted by USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division. The FDSS verifies that operators of food establishments have implemented measures to minimize the risk of tampering or other criminal actions against the food under their control. An AMS FDSS verifies the participating company's adherence to *Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration* (21 CFR Part 121).

10.3.2 Food defense section of the Plant Systems Audit (PSA). When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a food defense audit will be conducted as part of the

¹⁰ The Dairy Plants Surveyed and Approved for USDA Grading Service is available at: <https://apps.ams.usda.gov/dairy/ApprovedPlantList/>

PSA. The audit will be conducted by USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division auditors. This verifies that operators of food establishments have implemented measures to minimize the risk of tampering or other criminal actions against the food under their control. The food defense section of the PSA verifies the participating company's adherence to *Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration* (21 CFR Part 121).

10.4 Manufacturer's quality assurance. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the product manufacturer will 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 the awarding of the contract. Failure to provide this documentation within the proper time frame may result in the contract being terminated for cause.

10.4.1 Plant survey. A plant survey conducted by USDA, AMS is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. The plant survey audit verifies that, at the time of the survey, the manufacturer produces products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis, and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food* (21 CFR Part 117).

10.4.2 PSA. A PSA conducted by USDA, AMS is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. The PSA verifies the manufacturer's capability to produce products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis, and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food* (21 CFR Part 117) and verifies that the manufacturer has in place an internal quality assurance program that meets or exceeds USDA requirements.

10.5 Manufacturer's/distributor's certification. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the manufacturer/distributor must certify that the macaroni and cheese delivered meets or exceeds the requirements of this CID. The manufacturer/distributor must certify via a Certificate of Conformance or other adequate documentation (*as specified by the purchaser*) that the macaroni and cheese meets analytical requirements specified in Sec. 7 of this CID.

10.6 USDA certification. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order that product quality and acceptability or both be determined, the USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division inspectors, must be the certifying program. SCI Division inspectors must certify the quality and acceptability of the macaroni and cheese in accordance with SCI Division procedures, which include selecting random samples of the macaroni and cheese, evaluating the samples for conformance with the salient characteristics and analytical requirements of this CID and other contractual requirements, and documenting the findings on official SCI Division score sheets and/or certificates. In addition, when required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, SCI Division inspectors will examine the macaroni and cheese for conformance to the Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 CFR Part 42) in effect on the date of the solicitation.

A-A-20264B

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

12. USDA INSPECTION NOTES. When Sec. 10.6 is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA certification must include evaluation of the quality and condition of samples of macaroni and cheese and compliance with requirements in the following areas:

- Processing guidelines (Sec. 5).
- Salient characteristics (Sec. 6).
- Analytical requirements *when specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order* (Sec. 7). When USDA analytical testing is specified, SCI Division inspection personnel must select samples and submit them to the USDA, AMS, Science and Technology Program (S&TP) laboratory for analysis.
- Packaging requirements (Sec. 11).

13. REFERENCE NOTES.

13.1 USDA services.

13.1.1 USDA certification. For USDA certification information contact: **National Program Mission Support, SCI Division, SCP, AMS, USDA, via E-mail: SCIinspectionoperations@usda.gov.**

13.1.2 USDA FDSS, plant survey, and PSA. For a USDA FDSS, plant survey, and PSA contact the **Chief, Auditing Services Branch, SCI Division, SCP, AMS, USDA, Room 1566 South Building, STOP 0247, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0247, telephone (202) 720-5021, fax (866) 230-9168, or via E-mail: SCAudits@usda.gov.**

13.1.3 Analytical testing and technical information. For USDA technical information on analytical testing, contact the **Laboratory Approval and Testing Division, S&TP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0272, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0272, telephone (202) 690-4089 or via E-mail: LATD@usda.gov.** Samples for specified USDA analytical testing should be sent to the USDA, AMS, S&TP laboratory for analysis at: **USDA, AMS, S&T, National Science Laboratory, 801 Summit Crossing Place, Suite B, Gastonia, NC 28054.**

13.2 Sources of documents.

13.2.1 Sources of information for nongovernmental documents are as follows:

Copies of the AOAC International OMA may be obtained from: **AOAC International, 2275 Research Boulevard, Suite 300, Rockville, MD 20850-3250, telephone (301) 924-7077.** Internet address: <http://www.aoac.org> for nonmembers and <http://www.eoma.aoac.org> for members and AOAC OMA subscribers.

Copies of the Food Chemicals Codex and U.S. Pharmacopeia may be purchased from: **United States Pharmacopeia Convention, 12601 Twinbrook Parkway, Rockville, MD 20877, telephone (800) 227-8772 or (301) 881-0666, fax (301) 816-8148 or on the Internet at: <http://www.usp.org>.**

Copies of the Standard Methods for the Examination of Dairy Products may be purchased from: **American Public Health Association, 800 I Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001, telephone (202) 777-2742 or on the Internet at: <http://apha.org>.**

13.2.2 Sources of information for governmental documents are as follows:

Applicable provisions of the Standards for Condition of Food Containers are contained in 7 CFR Part 42, the National Organic Program are contained in 7 CFR Part 205, the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act are contained in 16 CFR Parts 500 to 503, and 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, New Orders, P.O. Box 979050, St. Louis, MO 63197-9000. Credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover/NOVUS, and American Express) purchases may be made by calling the Superintendent of Documents at (866) 512-1800, (202) 512-1800. These documents may also be obtained free of charge on the Internet at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?collectionCode=CFR>.**

Copies of the FDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM) are available online from: **FDA, Center of Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) on the Internet at: <https://www.fda.gov/food/laboratory-methods-food/bacteriological-analytical-manual-bam>.**

Copies of this CID and the Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 CFR Part 42) are available from: **Director, SCI Division, SCP, AMS, USDA, Room 1536 South Building, STOP 0240, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0240, via E-mail: CIDS@usda.gov or on the Internet at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/cids> and <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2019-title7-vol2/pdf/CFR-2019-title7-vol2-part42.pdf>.**

A-A-20264B

CIVIL AGENCY COORDINATING ACTIVITY:

DOJ - BOP
HHS - FDA
USDA - SCP
VA - OSS

PREPARING ACTIVITY:

USDA - SCP

Non-Discrimination Policy: In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.