

# **BELIZE NATIONAL STANDARD**

**BZS 4: 1999**

## **BELIZE NATIONAL STANDARD SPECIFICATION FOR WHOLE CHICKEN (EVisCERATED) AND CHICKEN PARTS**

**BBS**  
**BELIZE BUREAU OF STANDARDS**

#53 Regent Street  
P.O. Box 1647  
Belize City, Belize  
Central America

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**BELIZE NATIONAL STANDARD  
SPECIFICATION FOR WHOLE CHICKEN  
(EVISCERATED) AND CHICKEN PARTS**

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**Committee Representation**

The preparation of this standard for the Standards Advisory council established under the Standards Act 1992, was carried out under the supervision of the Bureau's Technical Committee for Food and Food Related Products, which at the time comprised the following members.

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## **0 FOREWORD**

- 0.1 The purpose of this standard is to define the commercial quality requirements of whole chicken (eviscerated) and chicken parts being produced in Belize.
- 0.2 This standard has been prepared in an effort to ensure the production and sale of chicken (whole and in parts) which is wholesome.
- 0.3 BZS CP 1: Part 1: 1998 – Code of Practice for General Principles of Food Hygiene, Food Production and Processing is a necessary adjunct to this standard.
- 0.4 In preparing this standard, considerable assistance has been derived from GS 22: 1994 – Specification for Whole Chicken (Eviscerated) and Chicken Parts, Grenada Bureau of Standards.

## **1 SCOPE**

- 1.1 This standard prescribes the requirements and method of sampling and testing for whole chicken (eviscerated) and chicken parts.

## **2. TERMINOLOGY**

For the purpose of this standard, the following definitions shall apply:

- 2.1 **Broiler or Fryer** – means a young chicken (usually 6 to 9 weeks of age) of either sex, that is tender-meated with soft, pliable, smooth-textured skin and flexible bone, cartilage and usually 0.75 – 2 kg (2 – 5 lbs.).
- 2.2 **Capon** – means a castrated male chicken (usually under 8 months of age), that is tender-meated with soft, pliable, smooth-textured skin.
- 2.3 **Carcase** – means the whole body of slaughtered chicken with head and feet removed after bleeding, plucking and evisceration.
- 2.4 **Chicken Parts** – means those parts of the carcase described in 4.5 presented with the skin intact, taking into account the nature of the cut.
- 2.5 **Cock or Rooster** – means a mature male chicken (usually more than 10 months of age), with coarse skin, toughened and darkened meat and hardened breastbone tip.
- 2.6 **Giblets** – means the heart, gizzard and liver, and all other material considered as being edible. Livers shall be without gall bladders. The gizzard shall be without the horned membrane, and the contents of the gizzard shall have been removed. The heart may be with or without the pericardial sac.

- 2.7 **Hen or Stewing Chicken or Fowl** – means a mature female chicken (usually more than 10 months of age) with meat less tender than that of a roaster and non-flexible breastbone tip.
- 2.8 **Roaster** – means a young chicken (usually 10 – 15 weeks of age) of either sex that is tender-meated with soft, pliable, smooth-textured skin and breastbone cartilage that may be somewhat less flexible than that of broiler or fryer.
- 2.5 **Rock Cornish Chicken** – means a young immature chicken (3-5 weeks of age) weighing 0.45 – 0.75 kg.
- 2.10 **Stag** – means a male chicken (usually under 10 months of age) with coarse skin, somewhat toughened and darkened flesh, and considerable hardening of the breastbone cartilage. Stags show a condition for fleshing and a degree of maturity intermediate between that of the roaster and cock or rooster.
- 2.11 **Whole Chicken (eviscerated) or Dressed Chicken** – means the whole body of the slaughtered chicken with head and feet removed after bleeding, plucking and evisceration.

### **3 CLASSIFICATION**

- 3.1 Whole chickens (eviscerated) and chicken parts to this standard shall be supplied in the following types, grades and classes as specified.

#### **3.1.1 Types**

Type 1 – Fresh Chicken

Type 2 – Chilled Chicken

Type 3 – Frozen Chicken

#### **3.2 Grades**

- 3.2.1 Whole chicken (eviscerated) and chicken parts, shall be graded, and be of three grades, namely Grade A, Grade B, and Grade C (see Table 1). However, Grade C chicken will be chicken that does not meet the requirements for Grade A & Grade B

**TABLE 1**  
**GRADING CHARACTERISTICS**

| <b><u>CHARACTERISTIC</u></b> | <b><u>GRADE A</u></b>   | <b><u>GRADE B</u></b>  | <b><u>GRADE C</u></b>   |
|------------------------------|---|--|---|
| (a) Conformation             | Free of deformities that detract from its appearance or that affect the normal distribution of flesh. Slight deformities, such as slightly curved or dented breastbone and slightly curved backs may be present. Legs and wings shall be normal | Slight abnormalities such as dented, curved or crooked back, or moderately misshapen legs or wings, which do not affect the distribution of the appearance of the carcass in part. | Excessive abnormalities such as dented, curved, or crooked breastbone, crooked back, broken bones or moderately misshapen legs or wings which do not affect the distribution of the appearance of the carcass in part |
| (b) Fleshing                 | The breast is moderately long and deep and has sufficient flesh to give it a rounded appearance with the flesh carrying well up to the crest of breastbone along its entire length. Legs shall be fleshy.                                       | The breast has substantial covering of flesh with the flesh carrying up to the breastbone sufficiently to prevent a thin appearance  | The breast has a substantial covering of flesh with the flesh carrying up to the crest of the breastbone sufficiently to prevent a thin appearance.   |
| (c) Fat Covering             | The fat is well distributed so that there is a noticeable amount of fat in the skin in the areas between the heavy feather tracts. A thin, regular layer on breast, back and thighs.  | The fat under the skin is sufficient to prevent a distinct appearance of the flesh through the skin, especially on the breast and legs.  | The fat under the skin is sufficient to prevent a distinct appearance of the flesh through the skin especially on the breast and legs.  |
| (d) Defeathering             | Free of pinfeathers, diminutive feathers and hairs, which are visible to the inspector or grader. Non allowed on breast or leg. Chicken may still be Grade A with a few on rump, foot joints and wing tips.                                     | Not more than an occasional pinfeather shall be in evidence under careful examination.   | Some pin feathering or diminutive feathers shall be in evidence under careful examination.  |

|                    |   |   |   |
|--------------------|---|---|---|
| (e) Cuts and Tears | Very little flesh shall be exposed. Free of the cuts and tears on the breast and legs. Wing Tip may be missing.   | The carcase may have very few cuts and tears.   | The carcase may have several cuts and tears.  |
| (f) Discoloration  | Discoloration due to bruising shall be free of clots. Few areas of discoloration due to flesh bruises are permitted in the skin only. Slight redness is allowed in wing tips and follicles. | Discoloration due to bruising shall be free of clots. Moderate areas of discoloration due to bruises in the skin or flesh are permitted.          | Discoloration due to bruising shall be free of clots. Moderate areas of discoloration due to bruises in the skin or flesh are permitted.                  |
| (g) Freezer Burn   | May have no more than two pockmarks due to drying of the inner layer of skin (dermis provided that none exceeds the area of a circle 1 cm (0.5 in) in diameter.                             | May have less than four pockmarks due to drying of the skin (dermis) provided that no single area exceeds that of circle 2 cm (1 in) in diameter. | May have a few pockmarks due to drying of the inner layer of skin (dermis) provided that no single area exceeds that of a circle 2 cm (1 in) in diameter. |



**3.3 CLASES**

- 3.3.1 **Class 1** – Whole Chicken eviscerated shall be the whole body of the slaughtered chicken with head and feet removed after bleeding, plucking and evisceration.
- 3.3.1.1 Whole chicken shall be presented with giblets.
- 3.3.1.2 The feet shall be cut at or near the joint. In the case of presentation with giblets, the giblets shall be washed and trimmed, and wrapped before incorporation in the final package; they can be placed inside or outside the carcass. If one of the giblets is not regularly included this shall be stated on the package.
- 3.3.2 **Class 2** – Half chickens shall be obtained by a longitudinal cut in a plane through the sternum and the backbone.
- 3.3.3 **Class 3** – Quarter chickens shall be half chicken divided by a transversal cut by which the leg and breast quarters are obtained.
- 3.3.4 **Class 4** – Chicken breasts shall consist of the sternum and the ribs distributed on both sides of it, together with the surrounding musculature.
- 3.3.5 **Class 5** – Half chicken breast shall consist of two approximately equal halves of the breast of the chicken; the breast shall be separated from the back at the junction of the vertebral ribs and back. Neck skin shall be excluded.
- 3.3.6 **Class 6** – Chicken drumsticks shall be obtained by separating the legs from the thighs by means of a cut through the knee joints; feet shall be severed from the drumsticks at the middle of the hock joints.
- 3.3.7 **Class 7** – Chicken thighs shall be obtained by cutting around and disjuncting the thighs at the hip joints. Pelvic meat may be included but pelvic bones and back skin shall be excluded.
- 3.3.8 **Class 8** – Chicken legs shall consist of classes 6 and 7 with drumsticks and thighs all in one piece.
- 3.3.9 **Class 9** - Chicken wings shall include the entire wing with all muscle and skin tissue intact
- 3.3.10 **Class 10** – Chicken livers shall be whole, showing few signs of breaking or tearing as a result of evisceration. Fat, gall bladder and other entrails or internal organs,
- 3.3.11 **Class 11** – Neck and back shall include the back portion and/or neck.

3.3.12 **Class 12** – Chicken feet shall consist of the part of the chicken severed from the middle of the hock joint down to the toes (excluding the nails).

3.3.12.1 Chicken parts, which do not correspond to the descriptions laid down in this standard, shall be designated by terms acceptable to the Belize Bureau of Standards.

## **4 REQUIREMENTS**

### **4.1 Hygienic Requirements for Chicken Processing Plant**

4.1.1 Whole chickens (eviscerated) and chicken parts shall be prepared and handled under strict hygienic conditions by persons free from contagious and infectious diseases and only in premises maintained in a thoroughly clean and hygienic condition. The premises should have adequate and safe water supply (see **BZ CP Part 1: 1998 – Code of Practice for General Principles of Food Hygiene, Food Production and Processing**) and duly approved and licensed by the Veterinary Public Health Authority. Necessary precaution shall be taken to prevent contamination of the product from solid equipment, from persons suffering from injuries, or from other source.

4.1.2 All equipment coming into contact with raw material or product in the course of processing shall be kept clean and sanitary. An adequate supply of hot and cold water, hose, brushes and other equipment necessary for proper cleaning and sanitisation or machinery and equipment shall be readily available at all times.

### **4.2 Requirement for Live Chicken**

4.2.1 The poultry shall be subjected to ante-mortem inspection.

4.2.2 The chicken shall be healthy and well nourished. The breast bone shall be well covered with flesh, the eyes and nostrils free from discharge, the comb and the wattles firm and bright in colour and feathers glossy. The movements of the chicken shall be active and there shall be no evidence of diarrhoea or other diseased. No moribund or dead chicken shall be placed on the slaughtering line.

### **4.3 Processing Requirements for Chicken**

4.3.1 The live chicken shall be slaughtered in licensed premises and the carcasses shall be thoroughly bled and properly dressed.

4.3.2 The chicken shall be dried-plucked, wax-plucked or semi-scalded and all feathers, pinfeathers and body hair shall be removed. The feet shall be well cleaned and vents emptied.

4.3.3 At evisceration, the carcass shall be subjected to Government authorized post-mortem inspection.

#### **4.4 Refrigeration Requirements**

4.4.1 **Type 1: Chilled Chicken** – Type 1 shall be fresh chickens and chicken parts that have been thoroughly chilled to a temperature range of 2 - 4°C and held in that temperature range until delivery.

4.4.2 **Type 2: Frozen Chicken** – Type 2 shall be fresh chicken and chicken parts that have been packed in suitable material and shall be frozen solid at - 18°C(0°F).

#### **4.5 Minimum Requirements**

4.5.1 Regardless of grade, whole chicken (eviscerated) and chicken parts shall be:

- a) intact;
- b) clean, free from any visible foreign matter, dirt or blood;
- c) free of foreign smell;
- d) free of visible bloodstains except those which are small and unobtrusive;
- e) free of protruding broken bones;
- f) free from severe contusions; and
- g) show no evidence of deterioration.

### **5 PACKAGING, LABELLING AND TRANSPORTATION**

5.1 Packaging – Unless otherwise agreed to between the buyer and the seller, the whole chicken (eviscerated) and chicken parts should be wrapped in suitable transparent material. Chicken or frozen chicken shall be individually packed. Chicken not individually packed shall be delivered in closed containers (ice-packed if necessary).

5.2 Labelling – Package containing whole chicken (eviscerated) and chicken parts shall be marked to include the following information:

- (a) Complete name and address of processor;
- (b) Product type, class and grade, according to this standard (3.1);
- (c) The following caution, as applicable, printed in bold lettering

**“KEEP FROZEN (OR REFRIGERATED)”**

- 5.3 **Transportation** – The vehicle in which chicken is transported shall be of an enclosed design, insulated and/or refrigerated to prevent deterioration and contamination of the chicken. Chilled chicken shall be transported at a temperature not higher than 4°C(39°F) and frozen chicken shall be transported at a temperature not higher than - 12°C(10°F). Upon delivery, frozen chicken shall show no evidence of defrosting or freezer deterioration.
- 5.4 The provision of (**BZS 1:Part 3: 1998 – Specification for the Labelling of Prepackaged Food**) shall apply.

**6 SAMPLING**

- 6.1 Representative samples of the material for test, shall be drawn according to the method prescribed in Appendix A.

**APPENDIX A****(Clause 6.1)****SAMPLING OF WHOLE CHICKEN (EVISCERATED) AND PACKAGES  
CONTAINING CHICKEN PARTS****A-1 Scale of Sampling**

A-1.1 In any consignment all the packages of the same size and the same grade shall be grouped together to constitute a lot.

A-1.2 The number of packages to be selected from the lot shall depend on the size of the lot and shall be in accordance with Table 2.

**TABLE 2****NUMBER OF PACKAGES TO BE SELECTED**

| NO OF PACKAGES<br>(IN THE LOT)<br>(N) | NO. OF PACKAGES TO BE<br>SELECTED<br>(n) |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Up to 65                              | 3  |
| 66 to 110                             | 4  |
| 111 to 180                            | 5  |
| 181 – 300                             | 6  |
| 301 – 500                             | 7  |
| over 500                              | 8  |

A-1.3 The packages shall be selected at random. Random number tables should be used. When these are not available, the following procedure may be followed:

Starting from any package in the lot, count them as 1, 2, 3, etc. up to  $r$  in one order, where  $r$  equal to the integral part of the value  $N/n$ ,  $N$  being the total number of packages in the lot and  $n$  the number of packages to be chosen (see A-1.2). Every  $r^{\text{th}}$  package thus counted shall be taken out until the requisite number of packages is obtained from the lot to constitute sample for test.

**A-2 Testing of Samples**

A-2.1 The sample selected according to A-1.2 shall be tested for the requirements as given in item 4.

**A- 3 Criteria for Conformity**

A-3.1 The lot shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements of this specification, when the sample tested satisfies the requirements prescribed in item 4.