

Chapter Ag 81

**CHEDDAR, GRANULAR, COLBY AND WASHED CURD CHEESE**

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**Ag 81.01 Definitions.** As used herein:

- (1) "Department" means the Department of Agriculture.
- (2) "Cheese" means cheddar, granular, colby or washed curd cheese with or without rind formation.
- (3) "Rindless cheese" means cheese which has not formed a rind due to the impervious type of wrapper, covering or container enclosing the cheese.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58; cr. (4), Register, June, 1961, No. 66, eff. 7-1-61; r. (4), Register, April, 1969, No. 160, eff. 5-1-69.

**Ag 81.02 Grades.** Grades of cheese manufactured in Wisconsin are Wisconsin State Brand or Wisconsin Grade A and Wisconsin Junior. Cheese represented to be of a grade prescribed herein shall conform to the standards and specifications for such grade and shall be graded by the department or a grader licensed by the department pursuant to section Ag 81.06.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58; am. Register, April, 1969, No. 160, eff. 5-1-69.

**Ag 81.03 Factory marks.** All cheese manufactured in Wisconsin shall be identified at the factory with the Wisconsin factory serial number, designated by the department; the month, day and year of manufacture; and a vat designation by letters or numerals in case more than one vat was used for making cheese. Such identification marks shall be applied to the cheese, its wrapper or container, or a tag attached thereto, in letters and numerals not less than 1/2 inch high, and without intervening written or printed matter.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58.

**Ag 81.04 Grade marks.** (1) Cheese may be graded at any time after manufacture. Cheese which has been graded shall be plainly marked to indicate its grade and the grader's license number. Grade markings may be applied to the cheese, its wrapper or container, or a tag attached thereto. Cheese inferior in quality to Wisconsin Junior shall be marked "Undergrade". The letters and numerals of all such markings shall be at least 1/2 inch high. The words "WISCONSIN STATE BRAND" or "WISCONSIN GRADE A" and the grader's license number shall be enclosed within a miniature map of Wisconsin. The words "WISCONSIN JUNIOR" and the grader's license number shall be enclosed within a diamond-shaped border.

(2) Cheese which has not been graded shall be plainly marked "Not Graded" in letters at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch high. Such mark shall be applied to the cheese, its wrapper or container, or a tag attached thereto. Marking shall be done at the factory or at the warehouse where it is first delivered in this state.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58; am (1), Register, April, 1969, No. 160, eff. 5-1-69.

**Ag 81.05 Regrading.** Cheese that has developed any objectionable off-flavor or other defects after being graded shall be regraded. Original grade marks shall be removed and proper grade marks applied.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58.

**Ag 81.06 Licensing graders.** Cheese graders shall be licensed under section 93.11, Wis. Stats. Any person who desires to grade cheese shall make application for a license to the department in writing on a form furnished by the department. The department may require satisfactory evidence of the competency of the applicant before issuing a license. The department may suspend or revoke the license of any grader who knowingly or carelessly grades cheese improperly, or who fails to keep records and furnish reports thereof as requested. Such records shall show the quantity, identification and date of grading of each lot.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58.

**Ag 81.07 Grade certification.** The department may, upon the request of any person, certify the grade of cheese and it shall establish fees sufficient to cover the cost of such service.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58.

**Ag 81.08 Arbitration; appeal grading.** (1) In case of disagreement between producers and buyers as to the grade of cheese, either party may request a grade arbitration committee. The committee shall consist of 3 arbitrators, selected from a list of competent graders compiled by the department. Each party shall appoint one arbitrator and 2 arbitrators shall appoint a third. The decision of the arbitration committee on the grade of the cheese shall bind the parties. The party who requests arbitration shall pay the costs thereof.

(2) In lieu of arbitration any party affected by a grade/certification may appeal to the department as provided in section 93.11, Wis. Stats. Such appeal shall be requested in writing and shall be made not later than 10 days following the date of delivery to the purchaser.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58.

**Ag 81.09 Exemption.** To encourage improved methods of production and marketing, the department may exempt any cheese producer or dealer from the requirements of this chapter. Application for exemption shall be made in writing and shall set forth the grounds therefor. The department will issue a letter of exemption only upon a satisfactory showing by the applicant that (1) his proposed method of producing or marketing cheese is both unique and commercially feasible, and (2) compliance with this chapter would effect hardship or would otherwise defer his engagement in the proposed method.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58.

**Ag 81.10 Explanation of terms.** (1) **PARAFFIN.** Refined paraffin, amorphous wax or any combination of such or any other suitable substance.

(2) **VERY SLIGHT.** Detected only upon very critical examination.

(3) **SLIGHT.** Detected only upon critical examination.

(4) **DEFINITE.** Not intense but detectable.

(5) **PRONOUNCED.** So intense as to be easily identified.

(6) **LACKING IN FLAVOR DEVELOPMENT.** No undesirable and very little, if any, cheese flavor development.

(7) **FEED.** Feed flavors (such as cabbage, sweet clover, silage, or similar feed) in milk carried through into the cheese.

(8) **ACID.** Sharp and puckery to the taste, characteristic of lactic acid.

(9) **FLAT.** Insipid, practically devoid of any characteristic cheese flavor.

(10) **BITTER.** Distasteful, similar to taste of quinine. Most frequently found in aged cheese.

(11) **FRUITY.** A sweet, fruit-like flavor resembling apples; generally increasing in intensity as the cheese ages.

(12) **UTENSIL.** A flavor that is suggestive of improper or inadequate washing and sterilization of milking machines, utensils or factory equipment.

(13) **METALLIC.** A flavor having qualities suggestive of metal, imparting a puckery sensation.

(14) **WHEY-TAINT.** A slightly acid flavor and odor characteristic of fermented whey caused by too slow expulsion of whey from the curd.

(15) **YEASTY.** A flavor indicating yeasty fermentation.

(16) **MALTY.** A distinctive, harsh flavor suggestive of malt.

(17) **OLD MILK.** Lacks freshness.

(18) **WEEDY.** A flavor due to the use of milk which possesses a common weedy flavor. Present in cheese when cows have eaten weedy hay or grazed on common weed-infested pastures.

(19) **BARNY.** A flavor characteristic of the odor of a cow stable.

(20) **LIPASE.** A flavor suggestive of rancidity or butyric acid, sometimes associated with a bitterness.

(21) **BROKEN DOWN.** Changed from a firm, smooth, or coarse, curdy or rubbery condition to a waxy condition similar to that of cold butter or to a mealy or pasty condition.

(22) **SMOOTH.** Feels silky; not dry and coarse or rough.

(23) **SOLID, COMPACT AND CLOSE.** Practically free from openings of any kind.

(24) **FIRM.** Feels solid, not soft or weak.

(25) **WAXY.** When worked between the fingers, molds well like wax or cold butter.

(26) **TRANSLUCENT.** The appearance of being partially transparent.

(27) **CURDY.** Smooth but firm; when worked between the fingers is rubbery and not waxy.

(28) **COARSE.** Feels rough, dry and sandy.

(29) **OPEN.** Mechanical openings that are irregular in shape and are caused by workmanship and not gas fermentation.

(30) **SWEET HOLES.** Spherical gas holes, glossy in appearance; usually about the size of BB shots; also referred to as shot or swiss holes.

(31) **SHORT.** No elasticity to the plug; when rubbed between the thumb and fingers it tends toward mealiness.

(32) **MEALY.** Short body; does not mold well and looks and feels like corn meal when rubbed between the thumb and fingers.

(33) **WEAK.** Requires little pressure to crush; is soft but is not necessarily sticky like a pasty cheese.

(34) **PASTY.** Usually weak body; when the cheese is rubbed between the thumb and fingers it becomes sticky and smeary.

(35) **CRUMBLY.** Loosely knit and tends to fall apart when rubbed between the thumb and fingers.

(36) **GASSY.** Gas holes of various sizes, which may be scattered.

(37) **SLITTY.** Narrow elongated slits generally associated with a cheese that is gassy or yeasty. Sometimes referred to as "fish-eyes".

(38) **CORKY.** Hard, tough, over-firm cheese which does not readily break down when rubbed between the thumb and fingers.

(39) **UNCOLORED.** Absence of artificial coloring.

(40) **SEAMY.** White thread-like lines that form if the pieces of curd are not properly joined together.

(41) **WAVY.** Unevenness of color which appears as layers or waves.

(42) **ACID-CUT.** Bleached or faded appearance which sometimes varies throughout the cheese, appearing most often around mechanical openings.

(43) **UNNATURAL.** Deep orange or reddish color.

(44) **DULL OR FADED.** A color condition lacking in lustre or translucency.

(45) **TINY WHITE SPECKS.** Specks resembling grains of salt scattered throughout the cheese. They are generally associated with aged cheese.

(46) **WAX OR PARAFFIN THAT ADHERES FIRMLY TO THE SURFACE OF THE CHEESE.** Thin or thick coating with no indication of cracking, breaking, or loosening.

(47) **RIND.** Hard coating caused by the desiccation of the surface of the cheese.

(48) **SOUND RIND.** Possessing a firmness and thickness (not easily dented or damaged) consistent with the size of the cheese, which is dry, smooth and closely knit, sufficient to protect the interior quality from external defects; free from checks, cracks, breaks or soft spots.

(49) **BURST OR TORN BANDAGE.** A severance of the bandage usually occurring at the side seam, or is otherwise snagged or broken.

(50) **WRAPPER OR COVERING.** Transparent or opaque material (plastic film type or foil) next to the surface of the cheese, used as an enclosure or covering of the cheese.

(51) **ADEQUATELY AND SECURELY ENVELOP.** Wrapper or covering properly sealed, and entirely enclosing the cheese, with sufficient adherence for ample protection and prevention of mold.

(52) **SMOOTH BRIGHT SURFACE.** Clean, glossy surface.

(53) **SMOOTH SURFACE.** Not rough or uneven.

(54) **SOILED SURFACE.** Milkstone, rust spots or other discoloration on the surface of the cheese.

(55) **SURFACE MOLD.** Mold on the paraffin or the exterior of the cheese.

(56) **MOLD UNDER BANDAGE AND PARAFFIN.** Mold spots or areas that have formed under the paraffin, or mold that has penetrated from the surface and continued to develop.

(57) **MOLD UNDER WRAPPER OR COVERING.** Mold spots or areas that have formed under the wrapper or on the cheese.

(58) **ROUGH SURFACE.** Lacks smoothness.

(59) **BANDAGE EVENLY PLACED.** Overlapping the edges evenly about one inch.

(60) **IRREGULAR BANDAGING.** Bandage improperly placed in the hoop resulting in too much bandage on one end and insufficient on the other, causing overlapping; wrinkled and loose fitting.

(61) **LOPSIDED.** One side of the cheese is higher than the other side.

(62) **HIGH EDGE.** A rim or ridge on the follower side of the cheese, which is raised in varying degrees. In extreme cases it may bend over.

(63) **SOFT SPOTS.** Soft to the touch, and the spots are usually faded and moist.

(64) **HUFFED.** Swollen because of gas fermentation. The cheese becomes rounded or oval in shape instead of being flat.

(65) **WEAK RIND.** Thin and possessing little or no resistance to pressure.

(66) **WET RIND.** A wet rind is one in which the moisture adheres to the surface of the rind.

(67) **RIND ROT.** Soft spots on the rind that have become discolored and have decayed or decomposed.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58.

**Ag 81.11 Wisconsin State Brand or Wisconsin Grade A. Cheese** labeled or sold as Wisconsin State Brand or Wisconsin Grade A shall conform to the following standards:

(1) **FLAVOR.** The flavor shall be pleasing. The cheese shall be free from undesirable flavors and odors. It may be lacking in flavor development or may possess characteristic cheese flavor. It may possess very slight acid or slight feed flavors.

(2) **BODY AND TEXTURE.** A plug drawn from the cheese shall appear reasonably solid, compact, smooth and close, and should be slightly translucent. It may have a few mechanical openings if not large and connecting, and may have not more than 2 sweet holes on a plug, but shall be free from other gas holes. It may be definitely curdy or partially broken down if more than 3 weeks old.

(3) **COLOR.** It may be uncolored or of any degree of color recognized in the markets. The color shall be uniform, not dull or faded, and practically free from white lines or seams. The cheese may have numerous tiny white specks associated with aged cheese.

(4) **FINISH AND APPEARANCE.** It shall be well dressed, well shaped, and practically uniform in size. The surface shall be well closed, sound, clean, and firm, providing good protection for the cheese. The bandage may be slightly uneven, overlapped or wrinkled, but not burst or torn. The surface shall be practically smooth, bright and have a good coating of paraffin that adheres firmly to all surfaces of the cheese, and there shall be no indication of wet rind prior to paraffining. The surface may possess the following characteristics to a very slight degree: soiled surface and surface mold; and to a slight degree: rough surface, lopsided and high edges. There shall be no indication that mold has entered the cheese. The cheese shall not be huffed. In the case of rindless cheese, the wrapper or covering shall adequately and securely envelop the cheese, be neat and unbroken, and fully protect the surface, but may be slightly wrinkled. Rindless cheese shall be free from mold under the wrapper or covering, and shall not be huffed, but may be slightly lopsided.

(5) **MOISTURE.** Cheese of this grade shall have not more than 39% of moisture.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58; am. intro. par. Register, April, 1969, No. 160, eff. 5-1-69.

**Ag 81.12 Wisconsin Junior.** Cheese labeled or sold as Wisconsin Junior shall conform to the following standards:

(1) **FLAVOR.** It shall have fairly pleasing characteristic cheese flavor, but may possess the following flavors to a slight degree: acid, flat, bitter, utensil, fruity, whey-taint, yeasty, malty, old milk, weedy, barny, and lipase; and feed flavor to a definite degree.

(2) **BODY AND TEXTURE.** Body and texture may be slightly defective. A plug drawn from the cheese may possess the following characteristics to a slight degree: coarse, short, mealy, weak, pasty, crumbly, gassy, slitty and corky; and the following characteristics to a definite degree: curdy, open and sweet holes.

(3) **COLOR.** It may be uncolored or of any degree of color recognized in the markets. The color may be slightly defective and may possess the following defects to a slight degree: wavy, acid-cut, dull or faded.

(4) **FINISH AND APPEARANCE.** The surface shall be sound, may be slightly weak, but shall be free from soft spots, rind rot, cracks and openings of any kind. The bandage may be uneven and wrinkled, but not burst or torn. The surface may be rough, but shall possess a fairly good coating of paraffin. The coating may be scaly or blistered, and there may be slight mold under bandage and paraffin, but there shall be no indication that mold has entered the cheese. The following characteristics may be present to a slight degree: soiled surface, surface mold, checked rind, huffed; and to a definite degree: rough surface, irregular bandaging, lopsided and high edges. In the case of rindless cheese, the covering or wrapper shall adequately and securely envelop the cheese, be fairly neat and unbroken, and protect the cheese, but may be wrinkled. Rindless cheese shall be free from mold under the wrapper or covering, but may be slightly huffed and slightly lopsided.

(5) **MOISTURE.** Cheese of this grade may have not more than 39% of moisture.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58. Register, April, 1969, No. 160

**Ag 81.13 Colby cheese.** In the case of colby cheese, the aforementioned grades are modified to the extent that the texture of colby cheese shall be medium open, having numerous small mechanical openings distributed throughout the cheese. The moisture content of colby cheese shall not exceed 40%.

**History:** 1-2-56; r. and recr. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58.

**Ag 81.14 History:** 1-2-56; r. Register, June, 1958, No. 30, eff. 7-1-58.

**Ag 81.15 History:** Cr. Register, June, 1961, No. 66, eff. 7-1-61; r. Register, April, 1969, No. 160, eff. 5-1-69.

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