


Lean Fine Textured Beef

USDA

- Since the early 1990s, Lean Finely Textured Beef (LFTB) has been allowed as a component of the ground beef purchased by USDA for distribution through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The maximum allowable percentage of LFTB that may be formulated into single servings of the ground beef purchased for the NSLP is 15 percent, which is similar to the composition found in many commercially available ground beef products. USDA does not purchase LFTB directly. Rather, LFTB may be used as a raw material in USDA-purchased ground beef products after it undergoes stringent testing. Of the ground beef purchased by USDA in 2011 for the NSLP, LFTB comprised approximately 6.5 percent of the total volume.

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- All USDA beef purchases for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and other Federal food and nutrition assistance programs meet very high food safety standards, which include stringent pathogen testing. Beef supplied by BPI as a component of the beef products purchased by USDA for the NSLP is subject to the same strict pathogen testing requirements for beef raw ingredients.

USDA Foods Special Update

March 20, 2012

- **Information on Lean Finely Textured Beef and Ammonium Hydroxide**
- **Lean Finely Textured Beef (LFTB)**
- LFTB is beef. It therefore does not require separate identification.
- **LFTB is not a filler.** It is nutritionally equivalent to 95% lean beef and does not contain connective tissue.
- USDA Foods does not make direct purchases of beef or beef products from Beef Products, Inc. (BPI). Various vendors who supply beef products to USDA Foods may make purchases from BPI or other suppliers of LFTB.
- In 1993, the specification to use LFTB as a vendor option was introduced into NSLP. LFTB was available for use by the industry in other markets prior to then.

Ammonium Hydroxide

- **Ammonium hydroxide is not “used” as an ingredient. It is a food safety intervention. This intervention is used in many other foods throughout the commercial food system such as grocery store products and restaurants. Ammonium hydroxide is also present in foods naturally. Here is an example provided by USDA of the ammonium levels in a bacon cheese burger:**
- o Cheese slice – 1.5 oz = 76 mg (813 ppm)
- o Hamburger Bun - 2 oz = 50 mg (440 ppm)
- o Condiments – 2 oz = 50 mg (400 ppm)
- o Beef patty – 3.2 oz = 40 mg (200 ppm)
- o Bacon slice - 1 oz = 16 mg (160 ppm)

The National School Lunch Program uses three types of product for products to be diverted to companies for processing.

They are:

100155 Beef Fresh BNLS Combo 20/2000- Not ground at arrival

100156 Beef BNLS Trm Frz Ctn 60 LB- Not ground at arrival

100154 Beef Coarse Ground FRZ Ctn 60 LB

There is no requirement to label the use of LFTB in any ground beef product- whether it is for the National School Lunch Program or the retail market.

“The amount of LFTB can vary from truck to truck. It is difficult to provide a definitive answer to the amount of LFTB in the products received at processors from USDA Foods on behalf of Massachusetts schools since within a truckload some product may contain LFTB and some may not.”

The USDA commodity advisory board for Massachusetts, which I am a member, voted at it's last meeting to recommend that the Massachusetts USDA opts out 100154 for the next school year. This motion was made and seconded with a unanimous vote. The reason for the motion was based on inventory management as some towns opting in and some opting out would have been a logistical problem.

Press Conference Secretary of USDA

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwocwbTfftA&feature=player_embedded