PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARD FOR GRANULAR [STURGEON] CAVIAR

(At Step 3 of the Procedure)

1. SCOPE

This standard shall apply to granular sturgeon caviar.

2. DESCRIPTION

2.1. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are used in this standard:

2.1.1 Fish eggs: product obtained from ovules separated from the connective tissue of ovary.

2.1.2 Granular caviar: The product made from fish egg of the sturgeon family by treating with salt or mixture of salt with a food additive.

2.1.5 Caviar lot: An amount of caviar taken from one biological fish species, treated in the same manner and packed in similar containers by the same producer for delivery to the same customer.

2.1.10 Primary package: (primary container). Metal cans or glass jars or other suitable containers in which caviar is packed directly.

2.1.11 Secondary package: (secondary container). Package containing one or several primary containers.

2.2 Product Definition

The product is prepared from fish eggs of sturgeon fishes belonging to the Acipenseridae family (four genus Acipenser, Huso, Pseudoscaphirhynchus and Scaphirhynchus and hybrids of these species)

The product is made with, or without food additives, and is intended for direct human consumption.

2.3 Process Definition

2.3.1 The product shall be prepared by using appropriate preliminary processing of caviar-grain to be salted with food grade salt, with or without food additives, packed in containers, and chilled to the temperatures so as to maintain the quality during storage, transportation and marketing.

The product shall be packed in:

- metal tins coated inside with stable food lacquer or enamel;
- glass jars.
- other suitable containers.

2.3.2 Industrial re-packaging of the product from larger to smaller containers under controlled conditions shall be permitted without mixing caviar from different [lots] species and quality (including from the same species but different in colour). The product shall be packaged so as to minimize the time that the caviar remains unpacked in order to prevent its warming and microbial contamination, as well as physical contamination.

2.4 HANDLING PRACTICE

7 Granular caviar is produced from fish ovary reached maturation stage IV and extracted from sturgeon fishes without impairing their integrity, and under stringent sanitary conditions without disturbing the entirety of fish ovary. The roe is separated from the connective tissue of ovary. When the roe is

delivered in large quantities it is kept until processing in closed containers in a refrigerating chamber at a temperature from minus 1°C to plus 2° C for no more than 8 h.

Caviar-grain is sorted by quality, colour and size. Before salting it is washed out in clean cooled water to remove clots of blood, squashed eggs and film pieces. Washed roe is immediately directed to the drained. Then it is treated with food grade salt with/without preservatives. All the above mentioned technological operations shall be performed without delay to avoid microbial spoiling.

Preparation of granular caviar shall comply with the International Code of Practice for Sturgeon Caviar (to be elaborated).

3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS

3.1 Raw Material

Granular caviar shall be prepared from ovaries extracted from sturgeons of the biological species described in Section 2.2, which are of a quality necessary for human consumption.

3.2 Other Ingredients

Potable water and salt shall be of food grade quality and conform to all applicable Codex Standards.

3.3 Final Product

3.3.1 By its sensory and chemical characteristics the product shall comply with the requirements prescribed in Table 1

- **Table 1**

Index	Characteristics and norms
Appearance	Eggs of one size
Color	Even and characteristic of roe from the given biological species: from light gray to black, or from light yellow to yellowish gray. Yellowish and brownish shades are permissible
Consistence and state	Eggs can be easily separated from each other
Taste and odour	Characteristic of roe from the given biological species; without foreign taste and odour
Salt, %	3.5 – 5.0
Foreign admixtures	Unacceptable

3.3.2 The product shall meet the requirements of the present Standard, when a lot examined in accordance with the requirements described in Section 10 complies with the provisions set out in Section 9.

The product shall be examined by the methods given in Section 8.

4. FOOD ADDITIVES

4.1 (to be additionally developed)

4.2 A complete list of permitted food additives shall be approved by the Codex Committee for Food Additives and Contaminants.

5. CONTAMINANTS

5.1 Pesticide residues

The product covered by this standard should comply with those maximum residue limits established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for these products.

5.2 Other contaminants

The product shall comply with the provisions of the Codex General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food (Codex Stan 193-1995).

6. HYGIENE

[6.1. The final product shall be free from any foreign material that poses a threat to human health.

6.2. When tested by appropriate methods of sampling and examination prescribed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the product shall be free from microorganism or substances originating from microorganism in amount which may present a hazard to health in accordance with the Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods (CAC/GL 21-1997).

6.3. It is recommended that the product covered by the provision of this standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969,Rev.3-1997).]

7. LABELLING

7.1 Labelling of the product and the name of granular caviar shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985, Rev. 1-1991).

The name of the product shown on the label shall be "Granular caviar" or "Caviar", and may precede or follow the common or established name of the biological species of sturgeon in compliance with the laws and traditions of the country where the product is distributed to avoid misleading of the customer. The information on the salient feature (characteristic) of caviar (granular) may be placed in the immediate vicinity of the product name.

7.2 The following provisions in respect of the labelling of this product are subject to endorsement by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling:

The package shall bear clear directions for the regime and time of keeping the product, including the following information:

- the name of the biological species of fish in English; e.g. beluga, kaluga, sturgeon, sevruga and sterlet;
- the storage time should be calculated as from the date of making, and the marking should include the "storage time", and a reference to the place of the label where the date of making is shown.

The information on the salt share index, e.g. malossol, should be shown in the label when the weight share of salt in the product shown is less than 3.5%.

It is allowed to show the information on the container of granular caviar at one or several places, suitably legibly, as well as to use the background on the labels, or on lithographed containers, according to the species of raw material, as follows: blue for beluga and kaluga, yellow for sturgeon, red for sevruga, green for starlet in accordance with the information in Annex C.

7.3. The granular caviar of sturgeons should be labelled for identification with disposable sticker labels according to the CITES guidelines for a uniform system of labelling caviar for trade or identification:

- information on the source of caviar: not to be given for "wild" sturgeons; for aquaculture – grown fish the label should read "Aquaculture product" (to be marked near the biological name of the species);
- the three-letter code for the biological species according to Annex B should be given as a sign over the line on the level of the upper edge of script, with the name of the fish in English, e.g. beluga^{hus}, sturgeon^{per}, sturgeon^{gue};
- the two-letter Alpha – 2 code of the country of origin in Latin according to ISO 3166-97;

- international standard code;
- data on the food value of product in accordance with the guidelines for marking of food products CAC/GL 2-1985 (Rev. 1-1993);
- the official registration code (up to four symbols – xxxx) of the producing plant, or code of the caviar repackaging plant; when caviar is repackaged in the importing country the code should include the two-letter ISO code, and the official registration code of the plant, e.g. when the granular caviar is repackaged in France: FR – xxxx;
- the date of making the product should be marked as a sequence of digits; one digit for the ten day period, two digits for the month, the last digit of the year for the year.

8. SAMPLING, EXAMINATION AND ANALYSES

8.1 Sampling

8.1.1 Sampling of lots for examination of the product shall be in accordance with the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Sampling Plans for Prepackaged Foods (AQL 6.5) (CODEX STAN 233-1969).

A lot of granular caviar shall mean a volume of product prepared in accordance with Section 2.1.5.

8.2 The methods of analysis and sampling described hereunder are to be endorsed by the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling.

8.2.1.Sensory and Physical/Chemical Examination

Samples taken for sensory and physical/chemical examination shall be assessed by experts trained in such examination and in accordance with methods elaborated in Sections 8.2.1- 8.2.2 and the Codes of Practice for the Sensory Evaluation of Caviar and Caviar Products (to be developed).

8.2.2.Determination of Net Weight

The net weight of each sample unit shall be determined in accordance with the following procedure:

- container filled with the product shall be swept dry and weighed;
- container shall be opened, and freed from caviar;
- empty container with a lid, (and packing material, if available), cleaned of the product, washed and dried, shall be weighed;
- subtract the weight of the empty container with a lid (and packing material, if available) from the weight of the container with the product, and determine the net weight of product.

8.2.3. The weight share of salt shall be determined using the method developed for salted fish.

9. DEFINITION OF DEFECTS

The sample unit shall be considered as defective when it exhibits any of the properties defined in Sections 9.1-9.3.

9.1 Foreign admixtures

The presence in the sample unit of any matter which has not been derived from sturgeon eggs, does not pose a threat to human health, is readily recognized without magnification; or when it is present at a level determined by any method including magnification, that indicates non-compliance with good manufacturing practices and sanitation rules.

9.2 Odour and Flavour

The product affected by persistent and distinct objectionable odour and/or flavour indicative of decomposition, oxidation, or taste of feed (in sturgeon reared in aquaculture), or contamination by foreign substances (such as fuel oil).

9.3 Consistency and Condition

Hard cover of caviar grains is not easily chewable, or tenuous, destroyed when the grains are separated from one another.

[9.4. Extraneous material

Membranes and fats clusters shall be absent from finished granular caviar]

10. LOT ACCEPTANCE

A lot shall be considered as meeting the requirements of this standard when:

8 1. The total number of defectives as classified according to Section 9 does not exceed the acceptable number of the appropriate sampling plan given in the Sampling Plans for Prepackaged Foods (AQL – 6.5) (CODEX STAN 233-1969).

9 2. The average net weight of all sample units is not less than the declared weight, provided no individual container is less than 95% of the declared weight.

10 3. The Food Additives, Hygiene, Packing and Labelling requirements of Sections 4, 2.3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are met.

SENSORY AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

The samples used for sensory evaluation should not be same as that used for other examination.
1.Examine the sample unit for foreign matter, bones and discolouration.

2. Assess the odour in the uncooked sample in accordance with the Guidelines for the Sensory Evaluation of Fish and Shellfish in Laboratories (CAC/GL 31-1999).

3. Assess the flavour in cooked sample in accordance with the Guidelines for the Sensory Evaluation of Fish and Shellfish in Laboratories (CAC/GL 31-1999).