

Baby Food

MEAT

Description

Baby food meats are produced in two grades, "baby" and "junior". They are essentially the same, except for the fineness of the product. Baby food meats are homogenized to achieve smoothness, while junior food meats are coarse and not processed with homogenizers.

Objective

Baby food meat is homogenized to provide a smooth product having no particles of muscle, fiber, fat, bone or sinew detectable on the palate. This is to help eliminate the possibility of choking and to improve the digestibility of the product.

Equipment and Process

Homogenizers are usually used for baby meats. They operate in a range of 2000 to 8000 psi. If the meat contains any bone or sinew, it must be pre-ground with fine plates or hammer mill.

Depending upon the type of meat and percentage of water in the product, the homogenizing pressure will vary from 2000 to 8000 psi. The higher pressure prepares a stiffer product. To a degree, this will permit higher moisture content and still maintain the desired consistency in the final, packaged product. The meat slurry should be pumped to the homogenizer at a temperature not to exceed 45°C. From the homogenizer it is delivered to the filler and packaged in either bottles or cans. The cans are autoclaved to ensure sterility and to cook the meat.

Testing

Visual testing of the finished package for overall appearance, shrinkage and liquid separation is usually performed. Microscopic or sieve testing to determine the presence of oversized particles may also be used.