

# PRODUCT REFERENCE

## Retorted goods for human consumption

### Overview



(Source: <http://retortprocessing.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/packaging.jpg>)

Retorting refers to the process of cooking canned food or food in a retort pouch after it has been sealed in the container. The packages either go through a continuous retort (i.e. continually moving conveyor system) or may be cooked in a batch retort (i.e. big sealed pressure cooker).

Many different types of food may be retorted e.g. canned fruit and vegetables, canned meals (e.g. Irish stew), canned soups, retort pouches of tuna, etc.

Importers and department staff should always refer to BICON for the current conditions and ensure these are met.

### Retorted products

Retorted products are heated in an unopened, hermetically sealed container for a time, and to a temperature beyond 100°C, sufficient to render the contents commercially sterile. In order to meet the Department requirements, all retorted products must be shelf stable and not require freezing or refrigeration in order to maintain quality.

### Shelf stable

Shelf stable refers to food that will last for an extended period of time, packaged or not, without any special storage conditions. For example heat-treated canned/retorted food will last many years on the shelf.

### Hermetically sealed

A package is hermetically sealed if it is “airtight” e.g. Heat sealed plastic bag, sealed can or glass jar with screw cap. Note, many foods are packed in hermetically sealed containers, but do not undergo heat treatments in that package.

### Acceptable packaging

Acceptable packaging of retorted products may include the following:

- Cans: metal, plastic and composite
- Glass jars or bottles
- Retort pouches
- Plastic containers with heat sealed lids or lids closed by a double seam (excludes snap off plastic lids)
- Aseptic cartons such as Tetra Pak<sup>®</sup>.

## Retort pouches/packaging

A retort pouch/package is a lightweight, flexible container or pouch in which foods are heated and sterilised. Retort pouches generally have the following features:

1. Manufactured from a laminate of flexible plastic and/or metal foils.
2. Material used for manufacture of retort pouches may be thicker than the polyethylene used for vacuum pouches.
3. Soft and flexible to touch.



Source: <http://heatermeals.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/HeaterMeals-Pouch-1.jpg>



Source: [http://2012.ingoodcompany.fsc.org/md/gd/GD\\_autoxauto\\_600\\_134\\_6759702\\_image.jpg](http://2012.ingoodcompany.fsc.org/md/gd/GD_autoxauto_600_134_6759702_image.jpg)



Source: Source: <http://ittechnology24.com/global-retort-packaging-market-research-report-2018-2023-amcor-limited-berry-plastics-corporation-mondi-group-otsuka-holdings-company-limited-sonoco-astrapak-limited/>