



Packaged and Canned Food Defect Guidelines



Prepared by:
AFDO Food Recovery Committee

2021

Contact AFDO
717.757.2888
afdo@afdo.org

Introduction

The Food Recovery Committee of the Association of Food & Drug Officials (AFDO) is pleased to provide this adaptable pictorial guide to assist individuals in evaluating defects that may exist in food packages and containers.

Damaged or defective packaged or canned food products are a potential public health issue. The packages or cans could leak and allow microorganisms to enter which may cause food poisoning or other significant health problems. It is imperative that packaged and canned food products with visual and/or external defects be identified and properly assessed.

Food labels are a legal requirement and are important to help consumers make informed choices and help them safely store the food they purchase.

This guide contains photos of some of the major types of damaged, defective, and mislabeled packaged and canned foods, which may be found during routine visual inspection of donated products.

Directions for Use

There are several ways to use these resources. You may:

1. Print out “Defect Guidelines Document” and put in a binder or booklet
2. Print out individual pages and use them in various locations
3. Print out pictures and use in various locations
4. Take either poster (Poster – White or Poster – Blue) to a printer and hang in your facility
5. Replace the pictures on the posters with ones you want to use
 - a. Download the picture you want to use

- b. Open the poster with Adobe Acrobat Pro
- c. Navigate to “More Tools” and “Edit PDF”
- d. You will be able to highlight a picture and replace it with one you want to use.

Additional Resources:

A Guide to Can Defects and Basic Components of Double Seam Containers; Association of Food & Drug Officials (AFDO);

https://www.afdo.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/A_Guide_to_Can_Defects_and_Basic_Components_of_Double_Seam_Containers_acc_updated_2011.pdf

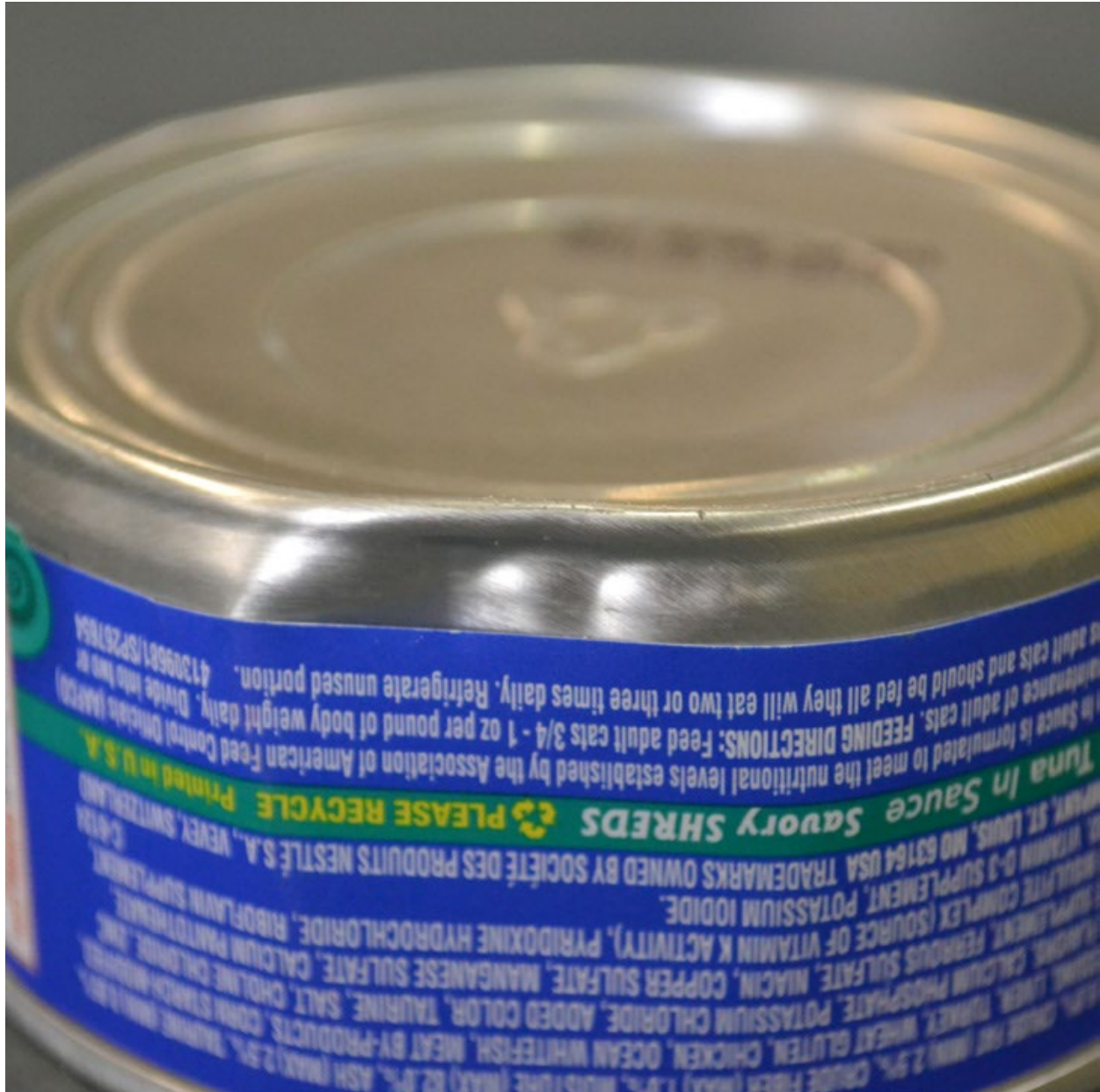
Metal Can Defects; Identification and Classification; Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA); <https://inspection.canada.ca/preventive-controls/metal-can-defects/eng/1510763304486/1510763304952#a1>

Condition of Food Container Manual; United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); Marketing and Regulatory Programs; Agricultural Marketing Service; Fruit and Vegetable Program; and Specialty Crops Inspection Division;

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/FV-Manual-ConditionofContainer.pdf>

Guide for Can Defects; AOAC International;

<https://www.wupdhd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/AOAC-Can-Defects.pdf>



Dent on Seal



Rim damage



**An opening below the double
seam or plate fracture**



Severe double seam dent plate fracture



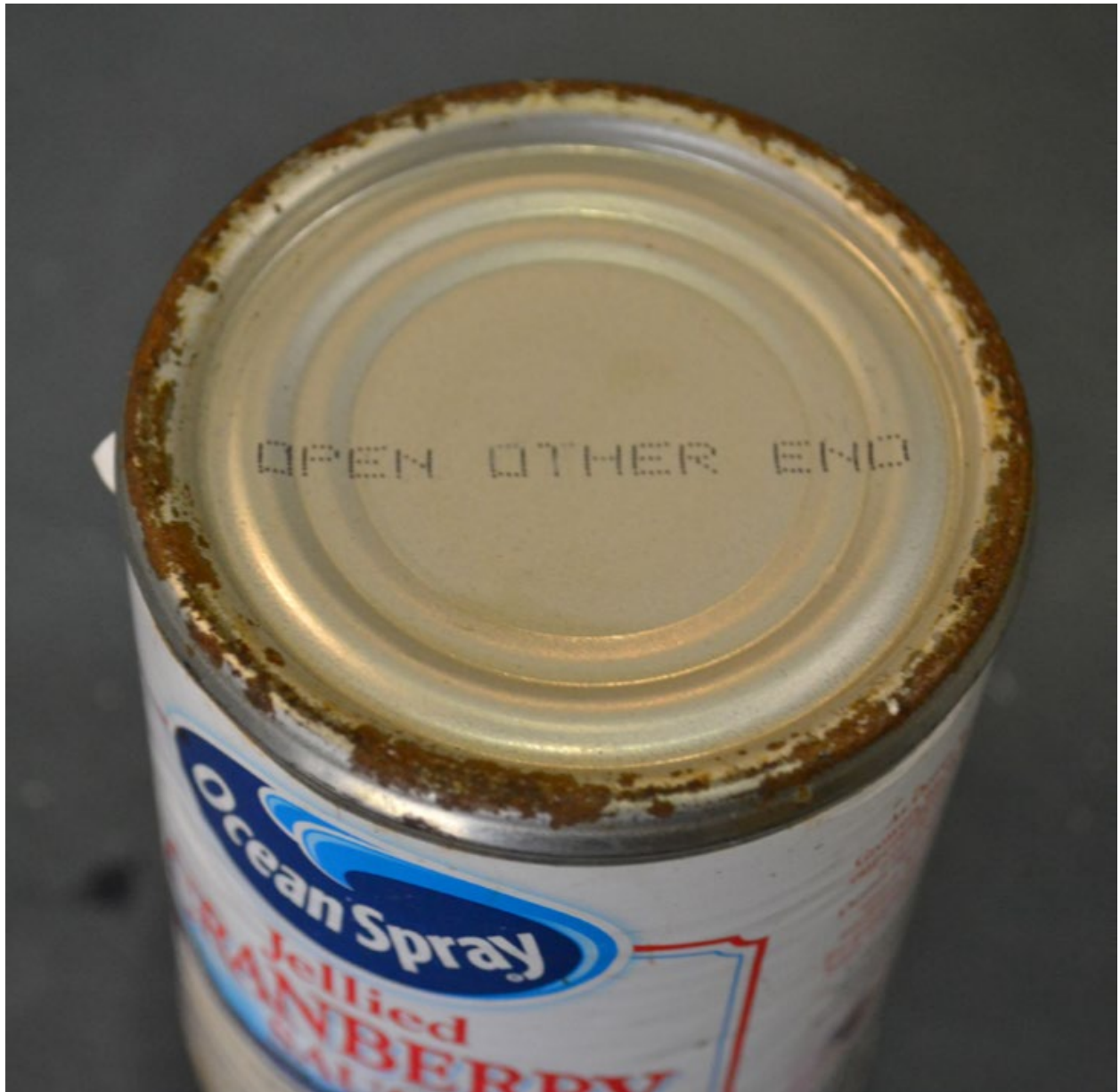
**Plate fracture in double seam
or can body**



**False seam with loss of
hermetic seal**



Knocked down flange



Excessive rusted end



Excessive and pitted rust



Missing label



Swollen can



Metal touching metal/crimped over



Severely dented



Severely dented



Severely dented



Puffy and bulging container



Open box with no inner seal



Missing ingredient labels



Torn inner package



Open or torn packaging



Puffy packages



Puffy packages