

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL STANDARD

**PNS/BAFS 46:2020
ICS 67.040**

Code of Hygienic Practice (COHP) for the Sale of Fresh Agriculture and Fishery Products in Markets and Authorized Outlets



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Foreword

The Philippine National Standard (PNS) on the Code of Hygienic Practice (COHP) for the Sale of Fresh and Agriculture and Fishery Products in Markets and Authorized Outlets was developed in 2006 by then Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS). In 2016, the Bureau initiated the review of the standard to check if the provisions are still relevant and effective to the current regulatory and market needs. The standard has been revised by the Technical Working Group (TWG) for the Revision of the as per Department of Agriculture Special Order Nos. 205 Series of 2016 and 778 Series of 2016. This Standard has been approved by the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture in 20xx.

The PNS/BAFS 46: 2020 cancels and replaces PNS/BAFS 46:2006 which has been technically revised.

This edition includes the following significant changes compared to the previous edition:

- Revision of the terms and definitions in Clause 3;
- Mandatory consideration of the Republic Act No. 9003 or the Solid Waste Management Act and Republic Act No. 9275 or the Clean Water Act for Waste management;
- Modification of general provisions as minimum requirements;
- Inclusion of the recommended practices in sourcing fresh agriculture and fishery products;
- Reinforcement of the food safety and sanitation provisions in accordance with Presidential Decree No. 856 The Code of Sanitation of the Philippines or Republic Act No. 10611 or the Food Safety Act; and
- Deletion of the provisions for the responsibility of vendors and municipal / city market and health officers.

This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

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1 Scope

This Code contains minimum requirements and practices to be observed in the sale of fresh agriculture and fishery products in markets and authorized outlets that are fit for human consumption.

This Code applies to all agriculture and fishery products consisting of fruits, vegetables, meat, fish, and fishery products that exhibit good quality characteristics and have not undergone any treatment or any processing.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

Presidential No. 856 The Code of Sanitation of the Philippines

Recommended International Code of Practice -General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969)

Republic Act No. 7394 or the Consumer Act of the Philippines

Republic Act No. 9003 or the Solid Waste Management Act

Republic Act No. 9275 or the Clean Water Act

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1

authorized

permitted by the competent authority

3.2

carcass

all parts, excluding viscera of slaughtered animals after bleeding and dressing used for human consumption

3.3

chilled

foods are cooled to a temperature approaching that of melting ice/ freezing water

3.4

cleaning

removal of soil, dirt, grease or other objectionable matter

3.5**competent authority**

entity/agency who has the knowledge, expertise and authority as designated by law

3.6**disinfection**

reduction, by means of chemical agents and/or physical methods, of the number of microorganisms in the environment, to a level that does not compromise food safety or suitability

3.7**environment**

surrounding area/ place where food is sold, prepared, maintained, and/or exposed

3.8**equipment**

article that is used in the operation of markets and authorized outlets such as but not limited to freezer, grinder, ice maker, mixer, chiller, weighing scale, slicer and table. It does not include apparatuses used for handling or storing large quantities of packaged foods that are received from a supplier in a case or overwrapped lot such as hand trucks, forklifts, dollies, pallets, rackets and skids

3.9**fish and fishery products**

includes all fish and other aquatic species such as crustaceans (e.g. crabs, prawns, shrimps and lobsters), cephalopods (e.g. squid, cuttlefish and octopus), mollusks (e.g. clams, mussels, scallops, oysters, snail and gastropods) and products of aquatic living resources or parts thereof (e.g., seaweeds, invertebrates, etc.)

3.10**fit for human consumption**

fresh agriculture and fishery products that have passed inspection by a competent authority and in which no change in appearance, color or odor due to diseases and pests, decomposition or contamination has subsequently been found

3.12**food animal**

includes all domestic animals slaughtered for human consumption, such as but not limited to cattle, carabao, buffalo, horse, sheep, goat, swine, deer, rabbit and poultry

3.13**fresh produce**

products apart from freezing, chilling or refrigeration, have not been treated for the purpose of preservation other than through protective packaging and which retains its natural characteristics

3.14**frozen**

foods are cooled so that the core temperature of the food is at -18°C or lower after thermal stabilization

3.15**fruits**

succulent edible plant parts consumed as raw

3.16**food handler**

any authorized person (the principal vendor or his/her assistant) who complies with the personal hygiene requirements and directly handles fresh agriculture and fishery products in the distribution chain up until the sale to the consumers

3.17**handling**

manner of packing, storing, transporting, and maintaining the quality and safety of fresh agriculture and fishery products

3.18**ice**

solid state of potable water used to chill and maintain the low temperature of agriculture and fishery products for preservation purposes

3.19**input**

all materials and items including containers and packaging used in the handling and sale of fresh agriculture and fishery products

3.20**market**

outlet

place, building or structure where fresh agriculture and fishery products are bought or sold directly to consumers

3.21**market day**

concerned competent authority designated day(s) in a week where local vendors including other municipalities/cities vendors are allowed and permitted to sell their products in public markets or authorized places

3.22**meat**

fresh, chilled, or frozen edible carcass including offal derived from food animals

3.23**meat by-product**

includes edible part other than meat which has been derived from food animal whether boned or boneless and ground or intact to which no other ingredient has been added

3.24**meat-brand/ mark of meat inspection**

any mark or stamp approved by the competent authority and include any tag or label bearing such mark or stamp

3.25**meat establishment**

premises such as slaughterhouse, poultry dressing plant, meat cutting plant, and cold storage warehouse wherein food animal are slaughtered and meat is prepared, cut or prepackaged, handled and/or stored

3.26**meat inspection certificate**

official certificate issued by the meat inspector or meat control officer who conducted the *ante mortem* and *post mortem* inspection certifying that the carcass is fit for human consumption

3.27**offal**

meat by-product, organs, glands and tissues other than meat of the food animal which may or may not be edible

3.28**packaging materials**

any container such as cartons, boxes, cases and sacks or wrapping and covering material such as foil, film, wax paper, brown/Kraft paper and banana leaves

3.29**perishable**

rapid spoilage or decomposition

3.30**potable water**

water that is fit for drinking for human consumption

3.31**poultry**

domestic fowls like chicken, duck, goose, turkey, pigeon, quail including ostrich

3.32**recall**

measures that are applied to return unsafe or unsuitable agriculture or fishery products that have already been supplied or made available to consumers

3.33**sales stall**

any fixed or mobile structure intended for selling of fresh agricultural commodities in the market or authorized outlets

3.34**traceability**

process to track the movement of food through specified stage(s) of production, processing and distribution

3.35**vegetables**

edible parts of plant which can be eaten in cooked or raw form. It refers to a plant whose fruit, tubers, bulbs, leaves are used as food

3.36**vermin**

collective term for insects such as flies, mosquitoes, cockroaches, mites, ticks, or small animals such as mice and rats that are vectors of diseases

3.37**vermin abatement program**

series of preventive and control procedures and activities for vermin control in the establishment

3.38**washing**

use of potable water to remove contaminants in fresh agriculture and fishery products

3.39**wastewater**

water from domestic and industrial drains

4 Minimum requirements**4.1 Source**

4.1.1 All fresh agriculture and fishery products shall come from licensed and/or registered bona fide producers (farmers and growers) fisher folks or facilities.

4.1.2 Selling of unregulated, unreported, and illegally caught fish shall be prohibited.

4.1.3 Sale of shellfish coming from red tide affected areas shall be prohibited.

4.2 Inputs

4.2.1 Equipment, containers, and utensils

The requirements regarding equipment, containers, and utensils used in handling during sale of fresh agriculture and fishery products, and storage shall be in accordance with Chapter III- "Food Establishments" of the Presidential Decree No. 856 Series of 1975 Sanitation Code of the Philippines and its implementing rules and regulations.

4.2.2 Specifications

4.2.2.1 Holding containers (including ice & water storage like tanks and drums) shall be clean, non-corrosive, non-toxic material, non-absorbent, non-porous, perforated for fruits and vegetables only, free from cracks and defects, easy to clean and disinfect and shall not be used for any other purposes.

4.2.2.2 Cutting and chopping blocks shall be made of even, impervious, non-fibrous, and easily cleaned materials and free of cracks and crevices.

4.2.2.3 Utensils such as cutting knives, cutting boards, weighing scale, pair of scissors, pails, and others shall be clean, non-corrosive, non-absorbent, and free from cracks, and defects.

4.2.2.4 Weighing scales to be used should be properly calibrated.

4.2.3 Handling practices

4.2.3.1 Containers previously used for substances that are toxic or harmful to human health, such as pesticide, paint or motor oil, soap or detergent, disinfectant, and the like shall not be used.

4.2.3.2 Containers (including ice & water storage) shall be covered at all times to prevent contamination. Separate containers for blood and internal organs shall be used to prevent cross-contamination.

4.2.3.3 Containers may be stacked on top of one another provided that contamination through drippings from holes are appropriately prevented.

4.2.3.4 Containers, utensils, table surface, cutters, cutting knives, and other equipment shall be in good condition, and properly maintained and cleaned.

4.2.3.5 Equipment shall be in good working conditions.

4.2.3.6 Containers shall be kept in clean, protected, and vermin-free areas.

4.2.4 Cleaning

4.2.4.1 Utensils, containers, materials, and equipment shall be free from all solid particles before being thoroughly cleansed in potable water with soap and acceptable disinfectant.

4.2.4.2 All utensils, containers, and stall materials shall be thoroughly cleaned before and after the day's work, dried, and kept in sanitary container/cabinet.

4.2.4.3 Detergents and disinfectants used to clean and disinfect working surfaces, utensils, containers, water outlets and other components shall be non-toxic and non-corrosive. It shall be kept away from areas where the fresh agricultural and fishery products are prepared, displayed, and stored.

4.3 Packing and packaging materials

4.3.1 Packaging materials should be free from any form of impurities or contaminants.

4.3.2 Packaging materials shall be properly handled and kept clean.

4.3.3 Printed packaging materials like newspaper and magazine shall not be used as a primary packaging material.

4.3.4 Recycling of previously used packaging materials should not be practiced.

4.3.5 Packaging materials should be food-grade and environmentally friendly.

4.4 Water and water storage

4.4.1 Water to be used for the purposes of washing inputs and recipients shall be potable and obtained from approved sources.

4.4.2 Transported potable water should be kept in a clean and appropriate container to prevent contamination. Only those authorized by competent authority should be used in transporting water.

4.4.3 Wastewater shall be properly disposed of and not present a hazard to the potable water, surrounding area, or food handlers.

4.4.4 Water hose shall be in good condition and properly hung after use, not allowing the tip of the hose to be in contact with dirty objects and surfaces.

4.5 Cold storage (fish and meat products)

4.5.1 Cold storage facilities/freezers should be provided with thermometer and should always have adequate capacity to maintain a temperature of -18°C or lower.

4.5.2 Cold storage rooms/freezers shall be kept clean, free from objectionable odor, and in good condition. The following temperature should be maintained:

4.5.2.1 Chilling temperature for fish and fishery products shall be at 0° C to 4° C and 0° C to 10° C for meat; and

4.5.2.2 Freezing temperature of fresh-frozen fish and fishery products and meat shall be -18° C or below.

4.6 Ice and ice handling

4.6.1 Ice shall be made of potable water and should be manufactured from ice plant approved by competent authority.

4.6.2 Ice shall not be placed in direct contact with the floor or unclean surfaces.

4.6.3 Ice crusher, ice picks and ice storage shall be kept clean and properly maintained.

4.6.4 Used ice shall not be recycled.

5 Handling requirements for fresh agriculture and fishery products

5.1 General considerations

5.1.1 Fresh agriculture and fishery products shall be kept clean and protected from any form of contaminants.

5.1.2 Fresh agriculture and fishery products shall be displayed/ sold in tables, shelves, boxes, and storage spaces that are smooth, made of non-contaminating material, clean, and protected from direct sunlight, dust, fumes, vermin and other biological and chemical agents.

5.1.3 Fresh agriculture and fishery products shall be kept or stored away from non-edible products like soap, disinfectants, pesticides, and other toxic or poisonous substances.

5.1.4 Proper grading and classification of agriculture and fishery products should be observed. Meat should be classified in terms of cut.

5.1.5 Fresh and prepared agricultural and fishery products shall be packed separately according to varieties or species.

5.1.6 Use of formalin and other poisonous substances as preservative and colorant shall be prohibited.

5.2 Special considerations

5.2.1 Fish and fishery products

5.2.1.1 Fish and fishery products shall be handled properly after catch and prevented from any form of contamination and exposure to sunlight. It shall be iced and stored in cool temperature as soon as possible to prevent spoilage and deterioration.

5.2.1.2 Fish and shellfish (mollusk/bivalve) shall be packed properly in clean appropriate packaging materials or fish containers or crates.

5.2.1.3 Oysters and mussels and other bivalves shall be moistened by occasional sprinkling of clear weak brine solution or clean seawater that originates from harvesting area declared as safe for Parasitic Shellfish Poison (PSP) toxin contaminants.

5.2.1.4 Seaweeds and other seaweed species shall be washed with clean seawater or weak brine solution, free from any adhering foreign matter and properly packed in appropriate containers.

5.2.1.5 Live fish shall be kept in clean, and alive in an aerated container.

5.2.1.6 Every container with fish shall be iced properly to maintain the temperature of chilled fish at 0°C to 4 °C (preferably at a ratio of one (1) part of ice to one (1) part fish).

5.2.1.7 Fish containers shall be elevated from the floor and provided with cover.

5.2.1.8 Fish containers shall be easily cleaned and in good condition.

5.2.1.9 Fresh fish and fishery products should be cleaned by removing undesirable parts, when necessary.

5.2.1.10 Fish wastes (e.g. entrails, scales) shall be properly collected and disposed.

5.2.1.11 Dressed, sliced, fillet, steak, or deboned fish shall be washed thoroughly and stored immediately at chilling or freezing temperature where applicable.

5.2.2 Fruits and vegetables

5.2.2.1 The fruits and vegetables displayed for sale shall be well-protected and kept at an appropriate temperature. Fruits and vegetables should not be displayed on the floors/ground and not placed in protruded areas beyond stall perimeter.

5.2.2.2 Fruits and vegetables should be classified according to size, ripeness, variety, and storage life.

5.2.2.3 All fruits and vegetables shall be stored in clean, cool/shaded, and dry place.

5.2.2.4 Leaves of fruits and root crops shall be removed to minimize water loss.

5.2.2.5 Baskets and crates shall be lined with appropriate materials to act as barriers against too much moisture loss.

5.2.2.6 Vegetables should be freshened with potable water, whenever applicable.

5.2.2.7 Cut-up vegetables should be packed with transparent plastic.

5.2.2.8 Perforated plastic film liners should be used on containers for commodities stored at low temperatures and provided with proper ventilation.

5.2.2.9 Fruits and vegetables shall be packed in clean containers.

5.2.2.10 Fruits and vegetables which show signs of degradation shall not be treated with unauthorized preservative.

5.2.2.11 Fruits and should which show signs of degradation should not be repacked.

5.2.2.12 Root and bulb crops should be stored at a relatively dry atmosphere.

5.2.2.13 Fruits and vegetables should be prepared in appropriate manner and according to its intended use.

5.2.2.14 Fruits and vegetables should be peeled, squeezed and/or cut using appropriate and hygienic equipment and utensils.

5.2.2.15 Protective materials and/or tools (e.g. gloves) should be used to avoid direct hand contact with ready-to-eat, including peeled fruits/vegetables.

5.2.3 Meat

5.2.3.1 All meat for sale shall come from licensed meat establishment.

5.2.3.2 All fresh meat shall be properly stamped with mark of meat certification and issued with a Meat Inspection Certificate. All imported frozen meat from cold storages shall be accompanied by Certificate of Meat Inspection (CoMI).

5.2.3.3 Meat shall be displayed in manner where the drip from one piece does not fall on another piece to avoid contamination.

5.2.3.4 Meat shall not be removed from the cold storage/freezers until required for serving or display.

5.2.3.5 Tongs in handling meat shall be used to avoid direct contact. Plastic gloves may also be used by the handler.

5.2.3.6 There shall be no mixing and intermingling of different types of meat.

5.2.3.7 Meat remaining unsold after the expected or prescribed selling time and which has lost some of its original quality such as based on color and texture shall be

withdrawn from the sales area. If there are no signs of spoilage, the meat can be further utilized for other purposes.

5.2.3.8 For meat showing signs of spoilage, it shall be immediately removed from the sales area, properly disposed of, and not further utilized for human consumption.

6 Requirements for the area or place of selling

6.1 Area or place of selling

6.1.1 General considerations

6.1.1.1 The area or place of selling shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the Recommended International Code of Practice -General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1-1969).

6.1.1.2 The requirements of the Sanitation Code of the Philippines (P.D. 856) shall also be considered.

6.1.1.3 The place or area for display for fresh agriculture and fishery products shall always be kept clean and sanitized.

6.1.1.4 Signboards shall be placed in an area where it could not be a source of contamination.

6.1.1.5 Pests and vermin shall be controlled according to PD 856 and other applicable laws.

6.1.1.7 Spillages should be cleaned up promptly and product debris should not be allowed to accumulate.

6.1.2 Specific considerations

6.1.2.1 Indoor areas

6.1.2.1.1 Indoor areas and selling areas shall be sufficiently lit, well ventilated, and always kept clean as possible and situated far from any source of contaminants (e.g. rubbish, wastewater, animals). The use of color enhancing lights shall be prohibited.

6.1.2.1.2 The working area, including surfaces in contact with the fresh commodities, shall be in good condition and properly maintained and shall be washed with potable water and disinfected as appropriate.

6.1.2.2 Outdoor areas

6.1.2.2.1 The stall for the fresh agriculture and fishery products should be elevated at least 60 cm off the ground to avoid contamination.

6.1.2.2.2 The area should be used only during market days.

6.2 Hygienic practices

6.2.1 Facilities

6.2.1.1 Toilets shall have separate rooms for male and female with clean toilet bowls in good working condition. It shall be well-ventilated, well-lighted, and regularly cleaned and disinfected.

6.2.1.2 Individual toilet quarters shall have covered waste bins.

6.2.1.3 Reminders on hygienic practices should be appropriately posted in toilets.

6.2.1.4 Hand washing facilities should be provided with potable water, liquid cleaning detergents and hand drying materials.

6.2.1.5 Locker rooms, when available, should be kept in good hygienic conditions.

6.3 Personal hygiene

6.3.1 Food handlers shall take all necessary steps to prevent contamination by maintaining high degree of personal cleanliness that include:

6.3.1.1 Taking a bath before going to work;

6.3.1.2 Wearing clean apron and hairnet during work;

6.3.1.3 Keeping fingernails trimmed, clean, and without nail polish;

6.3.1.4 No wearing of jewelries, accessories and perfume; and

6.3.1.5 Using suitable protective clothing which shall be changed every day or as often as necessary.

6.3.2 No person who is known to be suffering from, or who is a carrier of any communicable disease or has infected wound or open lesions shall engage in the preparation, handling, transport, and sale of fresh agriculture and fishery products.

6.3.3 Food handlers shall possess valid health certificates.

6.3.4 Food handlers shall refrain from spitting, coughing, sneezing, smoking, or behavior/habits that can compromise food safety. Whenever coughing or sneezing, the food handler shall cover his/her mouth.

6.3.5 Food handlers shall not handle fresh produce, money, and receipts or tickets at same time. When this is not possible, washing and disinfecting of hands before handling and selling products is recommended.

6.3.6 Hands and forearms shall also be thoroughly washed after visiting the toilet, blowing the nose, coughing, sneezing, handling waste, and smoking before handling products and at frequent intervals during the work period.

6.3.7 Tongs or gloves shall be provided to customers when they handle the products, where applicable.

7 Requirements for marketing of fresh agriculture and fishery products

7.1 Sales stall

7.1.1 The sales stall should be built of solid, resistant, and impermeable material with sufficient elevation to be easily cleaned and sanitized.

7.1.2 The sales stall, its surroundings, and equipment or tools shall be kept clean, free of litter and odors, in good repair and condition, and free from vermin at all times.

7.1.3 The sales stall shall be free from personal belongings and other forms of contaminants.

7.1.4 All agriculture and fishery products displayed for sale shall be arranged that the aisles and passageways shall not obstruct the flow of customers.

7.1.5 For wet products, the surface of the display table should be sloping or inclined to allow efficient drainage. The surface should also be smooth, free from cracks or crevices, non-porous, non-corrosive, non-toxic, non-absorbent, and easy to clean and sanitized.

7.1.6 Business permit, stall number, names of food handlers and certificate, (e.g. Meat Inspection Certificate issued for the day) should be displayed in conspicuous place within their respective stall.

7.1.7 Decorations, promotional materials, and other items may be placed in such a way that they do not present a source for cross-contamination.

7.1.8 Animals shall not be allowed in any stall area. Infestations of pest or vermin shall be reported immediately to the market administrator or superintendent for appropriate/immediate action.

7.1.9 When not in use, the sales stall shall be covered and/or kept clean and dry.

7.1.10 The outdoor sales stall shall not be used for any other purpose.

7.1.11 The outdoor sales stall should be in a zone determined by the competent authority so that it is protected from contaminants originating from traffic, pedestrians, domestic animals and/or vectors.

7.1.12 The outdoor sales stall where it should be kept shall be designated by the market administrator or superintendent and shall be stored in clean, safe, and dry area protected from sun, dust, fumes and other sources of contaminants during non-market days.

7.2 Protection and sale of fresh agriculture and fishery products

7.2.1 General consideration

7.2.1.1 The requirements of Republic Act No. 7394 otherwise known as the Consumer Act of the Philippines (i.e. Title III Protection Against Deceptive, Unfair and Unconscionable Sales Acts or Practices) shall be considered. Use of color enhancing lights, mats, and other materials to deceive the consumers as to the freshness/wholesomeness of the agriculture and fishery products shall be prohibited.

7.2.1.2 Care should always be taken to prevent contamination which may include but not limited to fresh agriculture and fishery products falling to the floor.

7.2.1.3 Products should not be handled unnecessarily by buyers. Tools like tongs and gloves should be used.

7.2.1.4 If the outdoor point of sale is a vehicle, the compartment used for handling and sale shall be separated from the driver's compartment. The vehicle shall always be kept clean and sanitized.

8 Waste management

8.1 Waste bins with lid or fitted with an automatic closing device shall be kept away from the handling area.

8.2 Waste bins should be made from rust or corrosion resistant material, waterproof, and easy to clean and sanitized.

8.3 Waste management shall comply with the provisions under the Republic Act 9003 or the Solid Waste Management and the Republic Act 9275 or the Clean Water Act.

9 Pest and Vermin Control

9.1 Vermin control should be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the PD 856. The application of chemical substances for vermin control should only be done by authorized technical personnel. The procedure should avoid the contamination of the commodity, food handlers, consumers, and environment.

9.2 The vermin abatement program duly approved by the competent authority shall be instituted in the market or authorized outlets.

10 Traceability and recall

10.1 Each packaging material of fresh agriculture and fishery products shall be marked properly for effective recall and stock rotation to identify the following:

10.1.1 Producer and contact information;

10.1.2 Place of production or origin;

10.1.3 Packer and contact details;

10.1.4 Product species or varieties;

10.1.5 Weight, volume, or number;

10.1.6 Harvest or Production Date;

10.1.7 Name and address of meat establishment, if applicable; and

10.1.8 Name and address of consolidator, if applicable.

10.2 Competent authorities should ensure effective procedures are in place to deal with any food safety hazard and to enable the complete and rapid recall of agriculture and fishery products from the market.

10.3 All agriculture and fishery products that have been found hazardous shall be withdrawn from the market. A public warning shall be issued.

10.4 Recalled products shall be held under the supervision of the competent authority until they are destroyed and disposed of, used for purposes other than human consumption, or determined to be safe for human consumption.

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- Republic Act No. 9003 or the Solid Waste Management Act
- Republic Act No. 9275 or the Clean Water Act
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