

September 29, 2000

5 9 2 7 '00 OCT -5 P2:07

Food & Drug Administration:

RE: H.R 4461/S.2536 -- FDA Labeling Requirements for Irradiated Food

It is difficult for ordinary people to touch bases with their Congressional Representatives due to the overwhelming workload imposed on them. I therefore am cognizant that individuals or groups seeking recourse from the Federal Government are oft considered an additional superfluous burden.

Nevertheless, in a democracy based on equal representation, a high sounding ennoblement of peoples Rights, Hope for Equality Never Dies.

I couldn't have expressed my views more concisely than the enclosed Form Letter about the subterfuge surrounding Irradiated Food and Industries Nefarious Rider To The Appropriateous Bill To Scrub The Word Irradiated And Substitute a Misleading Alternative Such As Cold Pasteurization Or Electronic Pasteurization. Both deceptive descriptions of the Irradiation Process.

Perpetrating Fraud on the Public via False Labeling is not in the best interests of Congressional rectitude. It might appear at the onset that Mislabeling is a minor infraction but in this instance its significance in misleading the Consumer is a matter of grave consequence.

We've seen a similar scenario played out in GMO's bereft of labeling to keep the public blind sighted. The recent Kraft Taco Bell recall of Taco Shells, sold in Super Marts, under the Taco Bell Brand name made with Genetically Engineered Corn containing CRY 9C, a pesticide capable of triggering allergic reactions was not approved for Human Consumption, confirming peoples fears that when labeling information is deliberately withheld peoples health is placed in jeopardy. The Food and Drug Administration in this instance is culpable in restricting the Public's Right To Know and bears part of the blame for abandoning their responsibility. But it is common knowledge that a faction in Congress has defanged the FDA whereby they are fearful of retribution if not compliant with their dictates.

Don't compromise the integrity of labeling by allowing Industry to wantonly flaunt their supremacy, making a mockery of our elected officials in Congress. I believe you will concur that the Public's Right, as consumers to evaluate a products acceptance is inherent in a Free Society.

Lincoln said, "Let The People Know The Facts And The Country Will Be Safe."  
Is our Country Safe when Facts are withheld or disguised?

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Yet, I realize that the compulsion to adhere to the principle of the Public's Right To Know is of a tenuous nature that can be countervailed. Please don't allow that to happen. Both Irradiated Food and GMO seed are experimental endeavors in the sense that their effect on Human Health cannot be immediately assayed but will be borne out over a protracted period of time. If adverse effects do occur, future generations will bear the brunt of your decisions.

Allowing the Public to determine the quality of Food they purchase should be an inalienable Right. Congress and the FDA should desist from countermanding that Right!

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*Louis Mincer*

5928 '00 OCT -5 P2:08

**RE: H.R. 4461 / S. 2536 FDA Labeling Requirements for Irradiated Foods**

Dear *Sir*

I am writing to oppose any attempt to change or weaken the current FDA labeling requirements for irradiated foods.

It is my understanding that the USDA/FDA appropriations bill (H.R. 4461 / S. 2536) contains a section requiring the FDA to develop "alternative terms" for describing irradiated foods ( such as cold pasteurization, electronic pasteurization, etc.) I believe this would be deceiving to consumers since there is no better term to describe irradiation than the term "irradiated." Pasteurization is defined by the dictionary as "exposing food to elevated temperature" not ionizing radiation.

I urge you to remove all labeling instructions from the final appropriations bill coming out of the conference committee and let the current FDA labeling requirements for irradiated food stand as they are. Industry can comment directly to the FDA on labeling requirements by submitting its comments like the rest of us. Irradiated foods are sold internationally and need to be honestly labeled as such for international commerce.

A U.S. consumer should not have to ask a grocery store manager- "Has this product been heat-treated or irradiated?" to find out how the "fresh" meat has been further processed. Consumers want straight-forward, prominent labeling of irradiated foods by the use of the term "irradiated." A free market depends on truthful consumer information. Any change in the current, accurate labeling of irradiated foods will be seen by consumers as an accommodation to business interests at the expense of the consumer and will cause them to lose confidence in both Congress and the Food and Drug Administration. Many voters already believe that industry money controls Congressional votes. An action such as this would confirm voter cynicism.

Please let me know what action you plan to take in response to my letter.

Sincerely,

*Louis Mincer*



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