

The Honorable Donna Shalala
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Or

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E-mail: hhsmail@os.dhhs.gov

Dear Secretary Shalala:

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed weakening of labeling requirements for irradiated food that is being considered by the Food and Drug Administration. I strongly believe that it is my right to know if the food I eat has been treated with radiation.

Food products undergo chemical changes after exposure to radioactive isotopes. These cosmetic and nutritional changes in foods warrant disclosure on a prominent place on the package. In addition, irradiated food that is not packaged should be accompanied by a poster in plain view of where it is displayed for sale. Labels are required by law to be truthful and not misleading to the customer. Only clear, honest and permanent labeling is acceptable for irradiated foods.

I urge you to defend the consumer's right to know in this important decision-making process.

Sincerely,



Paul Eblen
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ur Right to Know if Your Food Has Been Exposed to Nuclear Radiation!

URGENT ACTION ALERT: Public Citizen will meet with Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala this month (December) to discuss consumer concerns about the government's proposal to remove the labels from irradiated food. Now is your chance to tell Shalala the public is concerned! (sample letter on other side)

Today, most food is not irradiated— but that may soon change. In recent months, Tyson and other large food processors have announced plans to test-market irradiated products. Although these test products will be labeled to alert consumers, the nuclear and food industries are working to eliminate the rule that requires labels for food that has been exposed to radiation.

Radiation destroys vitamins and creates chemicals in food that can cause cancer. These changes are not obvious and will not be expected by consumers unless irradiated food is labeled. Without labels, consumers will unknowingly buy irradiated food—*food that has never been tested for its long-term effect on human health.*

Without clear labels on irradiated food, we will lose our right to know and to choose. By keeping consumers in the dark, the nuclear and agribusiness industries gain the right to profit at the expense of our health. We can stop this from happening by speaking out now and demanding our right to know if food has been irradiated!

For updates and more information on this issue contact:



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