

622 North Edison Street
Arlington, Virginia 22203

9609 '00 FEB 15 P2:26
January 20, 2000

The Honorable Donna Shalala
Secretary
United States Department
of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Re: Food Irradiation

Dear Ms. Shalala:

This letter is sent to register my disapproval of food irradiation and other interference with our natural food resources. I believe that we as a nation are causing many of today's health problems. We re-engineer, irradiate, and otherwise interfere with our natural food sources. Irradiation is an excuse to ignore clean and safe processing of meat and other foods, and I never will be convinced that the radioactivity itself is harmless. And Heaven forbid that we should have a tomato with a blemish or one that requires careful handling. Let's just cross it with a fish and make something round and red that tastes like cardboard and probably isn't healthy for anyone. I am not a vegetarian, or a "health nut," nor do I see myself as meeting any definition of an extremist. But more and more I find myself shopping in health food stores and just plain avoiding many of the foods I love because of the industry's interference with their growth or processing. I don't know why—so they can save a buck? to prove they can?

More and more I read about the food industry pressuring the FDA to approve various actions associated with the irradiation of meat, vegetables, frozen foods, fruits, fresh vegetables, and other items. I also have read lately that the food industry wants the FDA to lift the requirement that irradiated food be so labeled. I can't believe the FDA would approve removal of such labeling except as a political "deal." Please consider carefully before ruining not only the taste of food, but also the health of this country by continuing to cater to the food industry. We wonder how to decrease the cost of health care—let's stop polluting our food with chemicals and radioactive substances.

Sincerely,

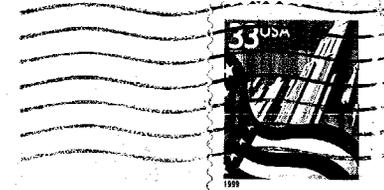
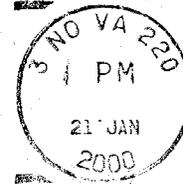
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