March 22, 1999
Sandra K. Johnson
235 Michigan St.
Lawrence, MI.
49064-9614

6149 '99 MAR 26 A9:34

Dear Sirs,

Food irradiation is not the answer to the problems plaguing the U.S. food supply.

Irradiation differs drastically from sunlight and microwave ovens. Irradiation is nuclear, ionizing radiation; both sunlight and microwave ovens are non-nuclear and non-ionizing radiation sources.

Irradiation creates new chemicals in food called radiolytic products. Some are known carcinogens, like benzene in irradiated beef, others are unique to the irradiation process and their effects on

98N-1038

C277

on human health remain unknown. No studies have been done to show that a long-term diet of irradiated foods is safe.

The meat and poultry industry need to clean up their act and get the inspectors back on the side of consumers. Irradiation is the wrong hope.

Labeling of irradiated food products is needed in order to give shoppers a choice, between products customers have the right to know.

A recent CBS poll found 77 percent of the public would not buy irradiated foods, while 73 percent simply oppose it. The public wants a safe food supply, not contaminated food that's been exposed to nuclear radiation. Sincerely.

Sandra Johnson

SANDRA JOHNSON
235 MICHIGAN ST
LAWRENCE MI 49064-9614

1999

33 USA

Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane
Room 1061
Rock