6.29.99

5963 '99 JUL -1 P1:46

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to state my unequivocal opposition to the irradiation of food. This process eliminates vital nutrients, and changes chemical composition of the food. Known carcinogens are created in some cases, particularly where meat is concerned. Clearly, this is a threat to public health and the agency must decide whether its mandate to public service supersedes its "mandate" to bend to corporate and political will.

Further, a case could be made that the approval process was corrupted by politics and profit. Out of over 400 studies on the topic, only five were cited by the Agency, and at least two of these are scientifically flawed. The Agency must not pick and choose which studies will hew to the party line, but must use the best available evidence to fully protect the public. For example, the argument that irradiation will kill harmful bacteria like e. coli is unacceptable, as the best way to avoid bacteria is to clean up the dismal conditions under which food is processed. If business interests prevail, and irradiation is foisted on an unwilling public, I insist that foods so treated be so labeled, clearly and unmistakably. Do not let Sen McConnell and his ilk eviscerate once again your commitment to public health.

signed, Michael Durell

C3125

98N 1038

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