5904 Devonshire Dr.
Bethesda, Md. 20816

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May 25, 1999

Commissioner Jane E. Henney, Md.
FDA
5600 Fishers Lane.
Rockville, Md. 20816

Dear Commissioner Henney :

I strongly agree with the FDA's decision to allow foods to be irradiated (such as meats, fruits, and vegetables). I have read a lot about the irradiation process and came to the conclusion that it's the right thing to do. I personally think it's horrible that people can die from eating foods with harmful bacteria in them. Irradiation can save lives! It should be enforced on our food to help prevent diseases. We already lose enough people to cancer and AIDS. We cannot let our food be a problem, too. I will explain why I have come to this decision in this letter.

Irradiation will benefit both beef producers and consumers. This new use of technology will produce safer beef. Both Brian Sansoni and Charles P. Shroeder of the Cattleman's Beef Association agree on this in an article I discovered in the Dallas Morning News. Five cents are being added to the price of irradiated beef, but it is a really worthwhile use of money.

Another wonderful thing is that no worker working with irradiation has ever been hurt with it. The Washington Times states that irradiation is totally safe. It is not scientifically harmful, but can kill the bacteria that is dangerous to us, says Health & Fitness. I am thrilled I will not have to worry about what is in the steak or strawberries or such that I eat frequently.

The most important reason I found out of all of my research (through newspapers and magazines) is that irradiation is already approved. The Food & Drug Administration approved of irradiating harvested wheat over 32 years ago. Health & Fitness clearly stated this little-known fact. In the Dallas Morning News 1997 announced the FDA's decision to allow raw meat, spices, and other raw produce to be irradiated. My opinion is that if the big

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companies are approving of the irradiation process, they have to have realized it is completely safe. There is no threat to have eaten meat that was irradiated before cooked. This is great.

So, I still strongly agree with the Food and Drug Administration's (a government agency for this subject-matter) decision to allow food be irradiated. I find it wonderful that this process will save lives and help so much. I found some negative opinions during my extensive research on irradiation, but I think irradiation is truly a great achievement. We cannot let people die by eating unsafe food. And irradiation obviously kills harmful bacteria. I agree that irradiation is great!

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Mattey

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25 MAY 1999

Attn: Cynthia Jenkins HFE-88
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