

6241 '04 FEB 10 P1



Division of Dockets Management
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061 (HFA-305)
Rockville, MD 20852

Feb. 1, 2004

Re: Citizen Petition No. 4Z4752 on irradiated ground beef

Our non-profit center is supported by seven denominations in behalf of farming people and rural communities in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin. In support of the petition identified in this correspondence, I request that the Food and Drug Administration revoke its 1997 approval of irradiation for ground beef. As I understand this issue further, irradiation does nothing to protect consumers as far as prions present in meat contaminated by the so-called "mad cow" disease are affected. The practice of irradiation in that case, where labeling is concerned, could give consumers an illusion of being protected from this sort of contamination. This would be false and misleading; until an adequate, credible testing system is set up to screen significant percentages of meat for this problem and protect consumers in the United States, the practice of irradiating meat ought to be suspended.

Respectfully submitted,

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