

submissions

From: MJ & RJ Aylward [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 15 March 2016 6:11 AM
To: submissions
Subject: Submission on Rec 34: Review required labelling of irradiated foods

Dear FSANZ & Food Forum Ministers,

Please keep labels on all irradiated foods so I am informed and can decide between fresh and irradiated food when shopping.

For clarity, the words “irradiated” or “treated with irradiation” should be required on the label. I regard it as against my human rights to not clearly label irradiated foods. I have a human right to know exactly what is in my food and whether it has been irradiated or not.

My comments and answers to FSANZ questions are as follows:

Are you aware of, do you understand, and how do you respond to food irradiation labels?

I have never seen an irradiation label or sign though I always read labels. Food Standard 1.5.3 should continue to require irradiation labels as there is no other way of differentiating fresh from irradiated foods or food ingredients. Without the label, I am likely to be misled and deceived.

Do you buy, or would you consider buying, irradiated food? Yes/No? Why?

No. Though I would avoid buying irradiated foods if I came across them, that is no concern of yours. You have a responsibility to enable us to decide for ourselves between fresh and processed foods and vegetables. Labels do that.

Should required labels on all irradiated foods be removed? Yes/No? Why?

No. The requirement is not onerous and is now required. We have the right to know and decide, as shoppers also do in other countries.

Should the wording of irradiation labels be optional instead of required?

The wording should be required and the label should be clear, simple, in large print and not confusing: “irradiated” or “treated with irradiation” are a lot better than “treated with ionising radiation and the radura symbol is meaningless.

Should irradiated ingredients in restaurant meals still be labelled?

Should irradiated ingredients in processed food still be labelled?”

Yes, whether irradiated products are 0.1%(e.g. pie with spices) or 100%(e.g. frozen mango) they should carry labels.

Should information on the “safety and benefits” of food irradiation be on food labels?

No. Labels are for information and not product promotion. If such claims were made anywhere, in the interests of fairness and balance the risks, costs and hazards must also be included.

Should food irradiation's "safety and benefits" be publicised in other ways, without labels?

Education is always good. However, any such promotional information must also include a factual, fair and balanced portrayal of the short and longer term risks, costs and hazards so those getting the message were not deceived. No straw arguments or spin!

FSANZ now only requires a very general statement: "to the effect that the food, ingredient or component has been treated with ionising radiation".

Would requiring words such as "irradiated" or "treated with irradiation" be clearer?

Yes, "irradiated" or "treated with irradiation" are a lot clearer and the wording should be mandated. Processors and retailers must meet their responsibility to disclose that a food or ingredient is highly processed and thus not fresh.

Please send a reply to my comments.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Aylward,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.