



Keeping Irradiated Food out of School Lunches

Talking Points



For Parents

- Irradiated foods have not been proven safe to eat. It creates new chemicals in the food that have not all been studied for safety.
- Irradiated foods haven't been eaten by any population as a substantial part of their diet, and there are no studies proving that it is safe to eat over a long period of time. Do we want our kids to be the guinea pigs?
- Kids are exposed to many toxins daily, and since their bodies are still developing and they consume more food and water for their weight, they are more susceptible to environmental toxins. Irradiated food would add more toxins to their diet.
- Irradiation won't solve the problem of foodborne illness. Proper food handling and cooking meat to 160 degrees F will.
- -Irradiation may even make the quality of meat worse, since it kills bacteria after it has been processed, but leaves all of the filth in the meat. Do you want your kid eating feces in their meat, even if it's been sterilized? What's to stop meat companies from cutting corners to make their practices dirtier, since they can just irradiate it at the end?
- I wouldn't serve this stuff to my kids at home, why should they eat it at school?
- If it's served in schools, it doesn't have to be labeled, so we won't even know what our kids are eating.
- It's going to cost the schools 13-20 cents more per pound. This is not something that the school should be spending extra money on.
- We should be working towards making school food better. There are programs that work to bring in local farm goods to cafeterias. We should be encouraging our school board to take those kinds of steps, not to make school food worse with irradiated meat.

For School Board Members

- The USDA approved irradiated beef, despite the fact that most of the comments received on this proposal were OPPOSED to irradiated meat. (over 93%) Parents don't want it, and the USDA acted against the will of parents.
- Irradiated meat doesn't sell in the supermarket, so why serve it to kids who may not even realize what they're getting?
- The NSLP is meant to provide low-income children with free or reduced price nutritious lunches. Irradiated meat is NOT nutritious, so serving it to low-income children would be classist. Kids from middle class or wealthy families have the option of bringing food from home, but low-income kids may not have that option.
- It's going to cost the schools 13-20 cents more per pound. This is not something that the school should be spending extra money on.
- We should work to support our local farmers and community, not serve our children sub-standard food.