

[Dangers of Food Irradiation](#)

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Dangers of Food Irradiation

Tandavan, Devananda

Keeping food fresh is a major problem, and the food industry is always looking for new ways to prolong the shelf life of our food supplies. In the past the industry has used various processing techniques: cooking, salting, drying, bottling, canning, freeze drying, smoking, chilling, freezing, dehydrating and addition of chemical preservatives. None of these methods have been 100% successful, and with each method there are variable effects upon the nutritional value of the food.

The newest technique of prolonging shelf life is food irradiation. Irradiation uses large doses of ionizing radiation to "treat" the foodstuff's. It is claimed that this process will prevent sprouting, delay ripening, kill insects and other pests in grain, fruit and spices, kill or render sterile worms that often infest meats and fish, and especially reduce the amount of salmonella, the dreadful killer bacteria, that is often present on vegetables, meats and dairy products.

This process, it is claimed by some, does all of this with no harm to the foodstuff's or the consumers. They claim that this makes economical sense and helps us to provide food to the starving nations as the life of the food is prolonged sufficiently to allow shipment.

There is a growing body of opinion, however, that realizes that there has not been sufficient scientific evaluation of the true effects that irradiation has upon the food. Are there changes in the nutritional value? Are there new and strange substances created that our bodies do not know how to handle? Are there "free radicals" produced? Even though the foods may look fresh longer, do they truly have sufficient prana to make them vital? Is the "protective" bacterial population hampered so that the toxins from the "non-protective bacteria" increase in

amount? What really happens to the "life" of the foodstuff?

It is said by some that "spoiled" food can be rendered sterile and edible by irradiation; however, the World Health Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization, and the International Atomic Energy Agency have explicitly stated that food should always be wholesome before irradiation and this process should not be used to make an unsuitable product saleable for human consumption. Great Britain, West Germany and some of the Scandinavian countries do not allow food irradiation. Japan does not allow the importation of any irradiated food. Malaysia is the headquarters of the Food Irradiation Network opposed to food irradiation until all outstanding issues are fully resolved.

We are opposed to the premature use of this methodology of prolonging the shelf life of food products especially for shipment to the less affluent nations under the pretext that there is no hazard to the health of the individuals consuming it. We are also opposed to the approval of irradiation without adequate scientific testing to assure us that the process is safe for the long term. Most of the tests done have only been followed for a short term of weeks or months. Contact: The National Coalition Against Food Irradiation, PO Box 590488.

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