

**Tailee Vecchi**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 11 December 2020 11:09 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Submission RE: A1193: Irradiation as a phytosanitary measure for all fresh fruit and vegetables

**Categories:** [REDACTED]

To Food Standards Australia and Government Members,

I understand that FSANZ has changed the date of public consultation on this important matter without properly informing the public. I ask you to extend the public consultation period and increase public awareness of proposed changes.

I oppose the approval of irradiation for all fresh fruit and vegetables. I have concerns about the health of irradiated food as well as the environmental impacts of irradiating our food. I do not believe that the irradiation of these fruits for quarantine purposes benefits the health of my family. I am worried that irradiated food will not be adequately labelled, and thus consumers who would choose not to consume irradiated food will unknowingly be buying and eating these products.

Numerous studies have shown the potential health risks posed by irradiated food. The approval of regularly eaten fruit and vegetables could significantly increase the amount of irradiated food in our diet, mostly unknowingly, with it not only being purchased in supermarkets, but also used in food outlets including takeaway and restaurants. In these places, labelling is not visible, and thus the consumer could be eating irradiated food unknowingly, and at greater quantities than they realise.

I believe that in 2003, concerns over the safety of irradiated food led the European Union Irradiation to rule out further irradiation approvals and that the Australian Senate followed suit with a call for approvals to be halted until further research has been conducted. No research on long term consumption of an irradiated diet have been conducted, meaning that safety cannot be assumed.

Irradiation has been shown to deplete vitamin C, vitamin A, proteins, essential fatty acids and other nutrients in food and has been linked to health problems such as nutritional deficiencies, immune system disorders, abnormal lymph cells, and genetic damage.

In 2008-9, irradiation was responsible for neurological disorders leading to paralysis and in some cases, death, of up to one hundred Australian pet cats. Irradiated cat food is now banned in Australia. The European Food Safety Authority acknowledges that the risk to humans cannot be ruled out. If the Australian government sees irradiated food as being problematic for animals, it would be inexcusable to approve it for human consumption.

While irradiation is promoted as beneficial to Australian farmers; each approval also enables irradiated imports from overseas. Irradiation is a tool of large agri-business – and supports mass production systems that diminish the power of local food producers and destroy local markets. Irradiation will not eliminate the use of chemicals and pesticides in crop production; it will be used in conjunction with these and other food processes.

In conclusion I am not confident that these fruits will be adequately labelled. This will lead to foods being marketed as “fresh” though they are processed. Irradiated food and their packages must be individually labelled “treated with radiation” or “irradiated.” A1092 does not assure me that this will be the case.

For these reasons I call on you to reject A1193 and to rescind all previous irradiation approvals. I look forward to hearing your response to my concerns.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]