



Office for Safety, Health and Nutrition  
Jennifer Miller  
Director

Superintendent of Public Instruction

## MEMORANDUM

To: National School Lunch Program and Summer Food Service Program Sponsors

From: Jennifer Miller, Director, Office for Safety, Health and Nutrition

Date: October 13, 2004

Re: **Irradiation Requirements in "The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004"**  
FY 04 School and Community Nutrition Programs Policy Memorandum #04-25

At the present time, this office has no plans to bring irradiated meat into our warehouses for commodity distribution to schools or summer program in FY05. However, irradiation has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration as one of several tools that may be used to help protect consumers from food-borne illness. *The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004* contains several requirements regarding irradiated USDA commodity products.

USDA must ensure that:

- Irradiated commodities are made available only at the request of States and school food authorities.
- Reimbursements to schools for such product are equal to reimbursements for non-irradiated products. (In other words, ordering irradiated beef will have no effect on your reimbursement or entitlement. However, prices for irradiated product may not be the same as for non-irradiated product.)
- States and school food authorities receive factual information on the science and evidence of irradiation technology including a notice that irradiation is not a substitute for safe food handling techniques.
- States and school food authorities are given model procedures on how to provide irradiation information to school food authorities, parents, and students. (This information can be found on the FNS web site at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/foodsafety/irrad-edmaterials.htm>.)

USDA, States, and schools must ensure that:

- Irradiated commodities are clearly labeled with the **radura** symbol or another prominently displayed printed notice of irradiation.
- Irradiated food products are not commingled in containers with non-irradiated foods.

In addition, the Act encourages schools to offer non-irradiated alternatives when irradiated commodities are offered.

We highly recommend that schools which choose to serve irradiated USDA commodity product inform parents, students, and others in the school community of that fact, and make it clear that they have a choice on whether or not to consume it. States and schools receiving irradiated product are encouraged to conduct informational and educational activities that provide science-based information about irradiation so that informed decisions can be made about its consumption.

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