

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Office of the Director of Research and Development  
Washington 25, D. C.

Mr. H. Herbert Hughes  
Chairman, Interdepartmental Committee  
on Radiation Preservation of Food  
Department of Commerce  
Washington 25, D. C.

Mar 14 1960

Dear Mr. Hughes:

The Department of the Army has completed a study of the report, "A National Civilian Radiation Processed Foods Program," as you requested in your 17 February 1960 letter addressed to the Secretary of the Army.

The Department of the Army concurs in the report. Minor editorial comment is furnished at Inclosure 1.

The revised Army Food Irradiation Program should lend considerable support to your proposed civilian program. Our reoriented program includes seven research tasks in the areas of military applications and economic analyses, assurance of wholesomeness, pre and post irradiation studies, destruction of microorganisms, nuclear effects on foods, acceptance testing and development of packaging. Research on these tasks will be performed over a six year period at an estimated cost of \$5.130 million. Integral to the Army program is the proposed construction of an irradiated food research facility to cost an estimated \$1.8 million. This facility will consist of a megacurie cobalt-60 gamma irradiator; a 1-12 M.E.V. (million electron volt) variable voltage linear electron accelerator; and minimal associated food preparation and laboratory facilities. No site has, as yet, been selected for this facility. It is expected the facility will be available during FY 1962.

I should like to clarify one point which I feel the proposed civilian program does not adequately stress. The Army, by virtue of its reorientation of the National effort which it has spearheaded since 1954, has not lessened its interest in the furtherance of the National and International objectives in the radiation preservation of food field. The realignment of our program was necessitated by the advent of unforeseen complex fundamental research problems. The resolution of these problems demanded the readjustment of the original time phasing of the Army program.

The original Army program, while emphasizing research in high dose treatment (sterilization) of foods, did not neglect the

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technique of low dose treatment (pasteurization). As the civilian program states, these two areas are complementary. Thus, it follows that certain of the problems encountered in the high dose treatment area must be solved satisfactorily before complete success can be realized in the low dose treatment area. The more difficult problems appear to lie in the area of high dose treatment. It seems entirely logical, therefore, to place prime emphasis in the revised Army research program on the solution of these more complicated problems.

In my view, the Army will continue to make the major future contribution to the fund of available basic knowledge which will ultimately make possible the final determination concerning the role of radiation preserved foods in the National and International economies.

The Army welcomes any and all assistance in this effort. We are particularly pleased that the member agencies of your Committee have seen fit to participate more actively in the advancement of this program. The broadening of the national research base in the radiation preservation of foods field is an important step which will most certainly facilitate our mutual objective of early transition to industry.

Secretary Brucker has asked me to convey his appreciation for the past support your Committee has furnished the Army program and for the added active program participation your member agencies envision.

I can assure you that the Army will continue to offer maximum cooperation to the Interdepartmental Committee on Radiation Preservation of Food and to its member agencies. The Army Irradiated Food Research facilities will be made available, on a reimbursable basis, for use by your member agencies, to the maximum extent possible.

Sincerely,

/s/ RICHARD S. MORSE

1 Incl  
Army Comments  
on Rpt, "A  
National Civilian  
Radiation Processed  
Foods Program," Feb  
1960

Richard S. Morse  
Director of Research and Development

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ARMY COMMENTS ON THE REPORT OF THE INTERDEPARTMENTAL  
COMMITTEE ON RADIATION PRESERVATION OF FOOD "A NATIONAL  
CIVILIAN RADIATION PROCESSED FOODS PROGRAM."

1. Recommendation 4, Page 4, added at the 12 February 60 meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee should be changed to read: "The Army complete its wholesomeness and safety program and that the Operating Agency initiate such complementary wholesomeness and safety work as may be required for the Civilian Radiation Processed Foods Program." This recommended change will reflect that the Army's wholesomeness program is not restricted to sterilization dosage; the Army's program is of much broader scope than just resolution of experimental anomalies; a complementary national civilian wholesomeness program should not be limited to sub-sterilization dosages.

2. Recommendation 5, Page 4, added at the 12 February 60 meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee should be changed to read: "A wholesomeness and safety program working panel to the Interdepartmental Committee be established consisting of Army, Atomic Energy Commission, Food and Drug Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, and consultants as required to coordinate this program." Participants from the member agencies represented on this working panel should possess a medical background. This recommended change adds "And safety" to bring the report's 5th recommendation in consonance with the wording in the report's 4th recommendation.

3. It is recommended that the funding level for supplementary wholesomeness studies (Page 24 of report) be revised upward thus providing for the work necessary to resolve problems of induced radioactivity related to the legal clearance for marketing of foods under Public Law 85-929.

4. Recommend last sentence, section VI, Page 16, be changed to read: "Progress is being limited by the need for additional gamma irradiators or variable energy x-ray and electron sources to develop the best and most economic conditions for radiation processing of a wide variety of food products."

5. Recommend last sentence, Page 29, be changed to read: "It will also be desirable to examine the suitability of variable energy electron accelerators for the radiation processing of foods."

6. Preceding recommendations 4 and 5 are believed to be more descriptive of existing conditions with respect to availability of radiation sources and provide for increased flexibility in the research program.

Incl. 1

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