

## INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON RADIATION PRESERVATION OF FOOD

U. S. Department of Commerce      Washington 25, D. C.

February 20, 1959

Lt. Col. William W. Cox  
Chief, Medical Research Branch  
Research and Development Division  
Office of The Surgeon General  
Department of Army  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Colonel Cox:

The Secretariat of the Interdepartmental Committee on  
Radiation Preservation of Food takes pleasure in sending you  
the attached material.

Sincerely yours,

John Weber  
Executive Secretary

Washington National Record Center  
Office of the Army Surgeon General  
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Rac. Pres. of Food Program. Interdepartmental  
Committee on Radiation (1959-1960)

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Office of Technical Services  
Washington 25, D. C.

MEMORANDUM

February 19, 1959

TO : ALL FIELD OFFICES

FROM : Bradley Fisk, Director  
Office of Field Services *B.F.*  
and  
John Weber, Assistant to the Director  
Office of Technical Services

SUBJECT: Interdepartmental Committee on Radiation Preservation  
of Food

Because of the increasing interest in the process of preserving food by ionizing radiation, and especially in the transition of this process from the stage of research and development to commercial production in the free economy, in which the Department of Commerce has a special interest, it seems desirable to provide field offices with some background information.

For the past six years the Department of the Army has been engaged in an intensive program of research and development directed primarily toward provision of fresh foods for combat troops overseas through the medium of radiation sterilization. Much basic research that is applicable to civilian uses of the process has resulted. A number of other government agencies - for example, Agriculture, Food and Drug Administration, Atomic Energy Commission - necessarily were drawn into the program. In May 1956 this interdepartmental participation was formalized in the creation of the Interdepartmental Committee on Radiation Preservation of Food which is a co-ordinating, not an operating body.

The primary purposes of this Committee are to guarantee a high level of participation by the pertinent government agencies and industry, and to effect as rapidly as practicable the transition of program responsibilities from the military to civilian agencies and thence to free economy and commercial production. Member agencies as of February 1959 are the Departments of State, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Health, Education and Welfare, Army, and the Atomic Energy Commission, the Small Business Administration, International Cooperation Administration. Commerce has been a member from the beginning.

The Department of the Army provided the Chairmanship, in the person of Dr. William H. Martin, Director of Research and Development, Office of the Secretary, for the first two years and it likewise supplied the Secretariat during the same period. In July 1958, in keeping with the

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objectives of the Committee, the Chairmanship was passed to the Department of Commerce, and Mr. H. B. McCoy, Administrator of Business and Defense Services Administration, was named Chairman. John Weber, Assistant to the Director of the Office of Technical Services, was named Executive Secretary.

For your information we are enclosing one copy each of the Minutes of the Eighth Meeting which was held on December 9, 1958; the Digest of Progress Reports of Phase Group Leaders which was prepared in November 1958; and a reprint of a good summarizing article published in August 1958 by the former Executive Secretary, Dr. Kevin G. Shea.

The First Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Radiation Preservation of Food was issued in February 1957 and is for sale by the Office of Technical Services as PB 131169. The Second Report of the Committee is now in draft form and should be ready in about 90 days. This will also be distributed by the Office of Technical Services, and we will send you a copy. Last December the Army Quartermaster Corps published at the Government Printing Office a monograph, entitled "Radiation Preservation of Food," in 461 pages with extensive drawings, tables, and plates. This was distributed on a limited basis. The Office of Technical Services has tentatively completed arrangements to reprint and sell this in the usual way. We will also see that a copy of this second reprint gets to you.

The Secretariat of the Interdepartmental Committee on Radiation Preservation of Food will be glad to receive inquiries from the field and to see that they reach the appropriate agencies for reply.

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