

Gamma irradiation of egg and egg products - Minute statement Point 16. (Food Microbiology and Hygiene)

The Committee had previously evaluated the safety of the irradiation of certain foods in its Opinion expressed on 13th March 1986 (Report on the Irradiation of Foods; Report of the SCF, 18th Series). This identifies overall average radiation doses for certain classes of foods (fruits, vegetables, cereals, starchy tubers, spices and condiments, fish and shell fish, fresh meats and poultry), but not for egg and egg constituents. The Report allowed for the extension of the classes of foods, where information is given to the Committee so that thorough evaluation can be undertaken.

Following consideration of information provided to the Committee on the irradiation of egg and egg constituents, the Committee concludes that the petitioner has not provided sufficient data in relation to toxicological and radiation-chemical studies to demonstrate the absence of toxicity following irradiation, and further, that the - studies were inadequate to demonstrate the efficiency of the process.

The Committee was concerned about the poor hygienic quality of the egg and egg constituents as evidenced by their high initial bacterial counts.

It was concluded that the dossier be rejected and the petitioner requested to re-submit it in accordance with the Report of the SCF on the irradiation of food expressed on 13th March 1986.