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**From:** submissions  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Public Submission A1193

[REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday, 24 December 2020 3:56 PM  
**To:** submissions <[submissions@foodstandards.gov.au](mailto:submissions@foodstandards.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** Public Submission A1193

To who this may concern,

I write to you regarding the Proposal A1193 the application seeking permission to allow for the blanket irradiation of all fruit and vegetables for biosecurity reasons most notably control of fruit fly and its spread particularly from region to region. Working in biosecurity I know and understand all too well the challenges and threats that Australian agriculture and equally Australian landscapes face through pests, disease and invasive species. It is the type of challenge that is everyones business, each and every Australian eating food is a part of the system and henceforth a part of the potential solution to the challenges currently faced but equally and more importantly those challenges that are literally knocking on the door with every container, package, ship and aeroplane that makes contact with our island. The impact of pests and disease on our food supply regionally and internationally has real consequences for the nation. I dont take any submission around the work being done to manage our food security lightly. Many individuals across local state and federal jurisdictions work incredibly hard to keep challenges in check. The opportunities in the field are ever expanding and the interface between the public and the frontline biosecurity personnel is a space where real traction and inclusion can have massive ramifications to the big picture solutions. Hence my response today.

In my public role raising awareness about our food system, our growers and farmers, agriculture methods techniques and systems, regenerative practices, landscape management, soil stewardship and community food systems I am constantly bringing to peoples attention the challenges and impacts that individual and community actions or inaction can have on the future of food in our country. Food security is everyones business and food sovereignty is a reality that is all too often lost in the usual day to day hustle and bustle of life, although in 2020 more questions were asked than ever before when it comes to the provenance of our food. The uncertainty of covid led people to ask questions about their food and its status quo. This is a very positive thing but

alas change and awareness takes time. As an environmental educator I know that 2020 has put the spotlight on issues and helped people ask questions and raise awareness that may have taken many years to stir such engagement under the normal state of affairs. The disturbance that covid has created can be seen to have helped alert people to certain realities about their day to day living, habits and routines.

I make this submission because any blanket decision around our food is every individuals business and during the year that is/was 2020 the impact and distraction that it has created for peoples lives and priorities means that information is not always readily crossed. For someone who is involved in food, biosecurity, community, education and engagement I only came across A1193 on December the 21st. ( two days ago). The closing date for submissions is today Dec 24th. Having shared this proposal and begun some discussion in my circles since yesterday I can safely say that people have been genuinely engaged and fired up to learn more and participate in the submission process. But with only two days until the application closes and with a global pandemic across the board and a Sydney outbreak sending peoples holiday plans into chaos the general capacity to respond within 36 hrs or so is pretty much a bridge too far. Engagement in the discussion was immediately rigorous and passionate. People want to know about such developments that impact their food. Whats more the labelling and its responsibility to be labelled is open to query and clarification. Like a virus, unlabelled food can make its way into the food system and be virtually impossible for contact tracers ie you and I the individual consumer, to know what has irradiated ingredients. At present the code does not mandate the display of the irradiated food symbol on the labels of irradiated food. This needs to be a non negotiable totally transparent and readily visual requirement on any irradiated food so that the individual consumer can decide if they choose to buy such food. It is not the decision of the industry as a loose optional extra to include a sign somewhere within the sales area or a code or number or written word saying that a product is irradiated. The irradiated food logo known as The Radura Symbol needs to be mandated and visual on all packaging and on all stands displaying irradiated food. The majority of labels on packaging in may cases require a Hubble telescope to read the written information due to the size of the writing for the average consumer grabbing an item on the way home or in a busy queue etc etc. The Symbol is an immediate traffic light signal from which people can be alerted and then make their choice. Their choice is the point.

I believe that given the nature of 2020 and the fact that A1193 has no had the public reach and dissemination that it requires and at a time when more and more Australians are eating a plant based diet ( [2019 figures from research](#)

company Roy Morgan show that almost 2.5 million Australians or 12.1 per cent of the population now have diets where almost all the food is vegetarian) and further to the requirements to mandate clear labelling, an extension of the submission date and additional advertising and sharing of the proposal to the broader Australian public would be a most proactive and positive action on such an important matter.

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