

Retailer Thoughts on Irradiation- Wegmans

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“Helping Customers Live Healthier Better Lives through Exceptional Food.”

**53,000 Employees
109 Stores
8 States and DC**



What We Believe



- ▶ At Wegmans, we believe that good people, working toward a common goal, can accomplish anything they set out to do.
- ▶ In this spirit, **we set our goal to be the very best at serving the needs of our customers. Every action we take should be made with our customers in mind.**

- ▶ To our CUSTOMERS and our PEOPLE we pledge [continuous improvement](#), and we make the commitment: **“Every Day You Get Our Best”**





“I have a small project for
you.....”



-Danny Wegman

Summer 1995


Cook to 160° F

COOK TO 160°F

Cooking ground beef to 160°F eliminates harmful bacteria which could cause serious or fatal illness.

Put cooked beef on a clean plate.

Use a thermometer or a T-Stick.®



Wegmans

There's More to Cooking Burgers Than Meets the Eye!

Q: Which burgers are cooked to a safe temperature?

Not these, they're actually undercooked (below 160° F)

Believe it or not, these are fully cooked!!

Cooking to 160°F is the ONLY way to tell if a burger is safe.

How can this be?

Recent research found that many naturally occurring things affect the color of beef, like the age of the animal it came from, whether or not seasonings have been

How to Take Your Burger's Temperature:

Without a T-Stick... it's hard to know, for sure.

With the meat on the grill, insert your instant-read meat thermometer or disposable T-Stick halfway into the thickest part. Be sure it doesn't go through the other



Wegmans Ground Beef Experience

2002



Prior to Introduction

- Education- Employees, Health Departments, State Departments of Agriculture, Land Grant Universities
- History
- Approval Process
- Irradiation choices

Opinion Panel Survey

At the end of the survey, we asked all of the respondents to read this paragraph:

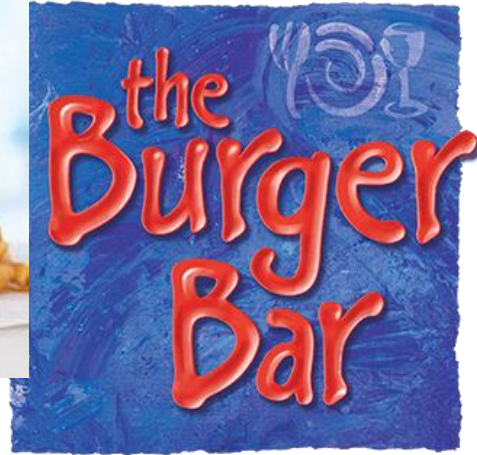
Irradiation occurs when food is passed over, or through, an electrical energy field. For Wegmans Irradiated Fresh Ground Beef, a concentrated beam of electrical energy is used to help reduce any bacteria, such as E. coli and Salmonella, that may be in the meat. Our packaged ground beef passes through these beams and in a few seconds comes out the other side as a safer product.).....In taste, quality, and nutrition, irradiated fresh ground beef is just like traditional fresh ground beef. Myths about irradiation are not true -- the meat is not radioactive, and no radioactive wastes are created by this (electron beam) process.

Then we asked “After reading the above paragraph, what is the likelihood that you would buy irradiated ground beef products from Wegmans in the next 6 months?”

- ❖ **36%** of respondents who have NOT purchased irradiated ground beef said that they would be likely to buy it
- ❖ **77%** of respondents who HAVE purchased irradiated ground beef said that they would be likely to buy it again



by *Wegmans*



by *Wegmans*



Romaine Trial: Spring 2021

- Texas A&M irradiated chopped romaine to *targeted* doses of: 0.0, 0.5, 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 4.0 kGy
- Sensory Evaluation (aroma, appearance, moisture)
 - Wegmans' days 2,5, and 10 post irradiation
 - Texas A&M days 1, 7, and 14 post irradiation

<u>Attribute Rubric</u>	1 (unacceptable)	2 (acceptable)	3 (desired product)
Aroma	Musty, pungent, damp, moldy, grassy, lawn clippings	Mild-no aroma containing: fresh, spring air	Pure aroma that does not linger containing: crisp, green, spring water
Appearance	>5% by wt. off-colors are present (brown spotting, rust, discoloration)	<5% by wt. off-colors are present, dark green outer leaves with light green/pale yellow/clear rib leaves	No off colors are present, dark green outer leaves with light green/pale yellow/clear rib leaves
Moisture	Window of bag has visible water droplets, leaves have moisture on exterior, water has collected in bottom of the bag, leaves are slimy	No significant moisture at bottom of bag, leaves do not have water droplets on exterior, light moisture on inside of packaging.	No moisture at bottom of bag, leaves do not have water droplets on exterior, packaging is dry

Texas A&M

	0.0 kGy	0.5 kGy	1.0 kGy	2.0 kGy	3.0 kGy	4.0 kGy
24hr						
Day 7						
Day 14						

Key Learnings:

1. Romaine irradiated >2.0 kGy had unacceptable sensory, color and texture changes within 5-days
2. Sensory Scores:
 1. Romaine irradiated to 0.0 and 0.5 kGy had the highest sensory scores by day 10 (Wegmans)
 2. Romaine irradiated to 1.0 and 2.0 kGy had the highest sensory scores by day 14 (Texas A&M)
3. Use requires FDA approval

