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August 1, 1994

Secretary Mike Espy
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Room 200-A
14th St. and Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20250

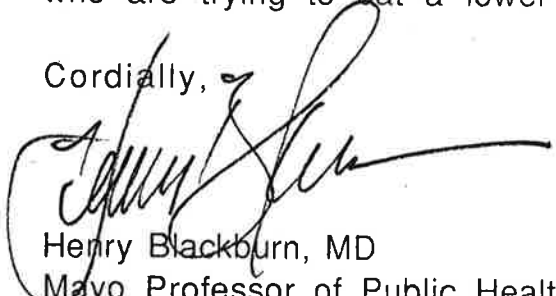
Dear Secretary Espy:

I strongly oppose USDA's proposal to allow "percent lean" labeling on ground beef. These percentages imply that ground beef is lean or low in fat, even though it rarely meets the USDA's definitions of those terms.

Even "percent fat" claims on ground beef will confuse people who are just learning to check labels for the "% Daily Value" for fat.

I urge you to allow no special exemption for ground beef. An exemption would undermine the public's health by confusing or misleading people who are trying to eat a lower-fat diet.

Cordially,


Henry Blackburn, MD
Mayo Professor of Public Health
and Professor of Medicine