

Meat Freshness Alert

Here we go again. We fought the practice of irradiating our foods, but now the meat products in the grocery store meat case may have been treated with carbon monoxide to retain that pink (fresh) look.

The “meat industry” defends treating meat to retain that pink hue saying that they lose large sums of money when sellers throw out meat that is still safe to eat but has turned brown. What do you look for when selecting fresh or frozen meat products? Most people look at color first and then the expiration date.

According to Don Berdahl, vice president of Kalsec Inc., maker of natural food extracts, carbon monoxide treated meat could be left on the kitchen counter for five (5) days and it would still look bright red and fresh. Carbon monoxide also suppresses bad odors and the presence of slime – indications of spoilage. Kalsec filed a petition with the Food and Drug Administration seeking a ban on the use of carbon monoxide in meat packaging. His petition also states that treated meat could hide the growth of pathogens such as clostridium botulinum, salmonella and E. coli.

The Consumer Federation of America wrote that “carbon monoxide masks the natural coloration of meat by reacting with myoglobin in the meat” when asking the FDA to reverse its acceptance of this practice. That’s right, the FDA has approved carbon monoxide use as “safe” (GRAS). The FDA conducts NO research on its own, but relies on the notifier’s documents to confirm the safety of the product or process.

Carbon monoxide is used in some “case ready” meats before being shipped to the butcher or supermarket. Up to 60% of meat sold is now “case-ready”.

The “good news” at this writing is that Kroeger Foods among other supermarket chains announced that they would not sell meat containing CO. Rep. Ed Markey, D-MA said he will introduce a bill to ban the use of CO in meat packaging if the FDA does not ban the use.

What next?

Buy local, buy natural at Rocky Plains Quality Meats, 4022 WCR 11, Dacono, CO 303-833-3791 or visit eatwild.com or our website www.RockyPlains.com