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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

4700 River Road
Riverdale, MD 20737-1228

APR 3 1995

John Jankovichs, Section Leader
Quality Assurance Section, Source Containment and Devices Branch
Division of Industrial & Medical Nuclear Safety
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

RE: Husman Irradiator, Contract No. 54-6395-9-132

Through: John Jensen, Director
Radiological Safety Staff (RSS)
Greenbelt, Maryland

Dear Mr. Jankovichs:

This letter is a follow-up to our meeting with Mr. Jensen, Radiological Safety Staff (RSS) on March 24, 1995, in which we discussed the on-going procurement efforts for the subject irradiator.

A contract to fabricate and load this irradiator was awarded on September 29, 1989. Delays in completing the irradiator occurred when the contractor's Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) approved quality assurance program lapsed. In addition, the traditional source for ¹³⁷Cesium capsules used to load such devices, the Department of Energy, was unable to provide the required capsules.

I wish to emphasize that this irradiator is a critical component of APHIS' exotic fruit fly eradication programs, and we therefore, wish to expedite its fabrication and installation. Although we have repeatedly emphasized Plant Protection and Quarantine's critical need for this irradiator, it is our impression that the NRC has not recognized the importance of it to our exotic fruit fly programs.

Meanwhile, our existing production facilities become less efficient every day due to the natural decay of their existing ¹³⁷Cesium sources. Our employees are beginning operations at 4:00 AM to provide sufficient sterile flies for program needs. Unless a new irradiator and source material for existing units are brought on-line soon, our programs will suffer sterile fly shortages.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Ron Milberg at Area Code (301) 734-5255 or FAX (301) 734-8584.

Jerry L. Fowler
Chief Operations Officer
Domestic and Emergency Operations
Operational Support
Plant Protection and Quarantine

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