



SCOTT M. MATHESON
GOVERNOR

STATE OF UTAH
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
SALT LAKE CITY
84114

January 9, 1979

The Honorable Bob Bergland
Secretary, Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

Re: Radiation Fallout and Public Health in Utah

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to request your assistance and cooperation in connection with the current re-evaluation of the public health impact of atomic testing conducted at the Nevada test site from the early 1950's to the present. I have recently become aware of facts that have given me cause to be concerned about the Nevada testing and attendant fallout. These concerns led me to request of the President that the federal government, in cooperation with the State, undertake a thorough re-examination of past studies on the health impact of the testing and design and implement new and more comprehensive studies. In a press release issued by the White House on November 27, 1978, the President directed Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Califano to undertake this effort and directed the Secretary of Defense to "cooperate fully in this endeavor."

In the statement of November 27, the President also asked Secretary Califano to "work closely with the State of Utah as he proceeds." A joint state-federal Radiation Effects Study Management Committee has already been established, with members from H.E.W., my staff, the Utah Division of Health, the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta and the University of Utah Medical School. This committee is to oversee the re-evaluation of past studies, as well as the formulation and implementation of any new studies.

In order that my staff and I may knowledgeably participate in this study effort, we must be fully informed of all relevant facts. The Food and Drug Administration was a component of your agency for some time, and it had a unit that dealt with radiological health. In addition, we understand that some agencies within the department may have studied various aspects

The Honorable Bob Bergland
January 9, 1979
Page Two

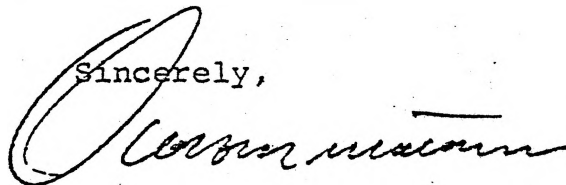
of the impact of fallout in crops and animals. Thus, we have reason to believe that pertinent information exists in the files of your department and would like access to that information.

The purpose of this letter is to request that your office assume responsibility for identifying all pertinent information in the files of Agriculture, its constituent agencies and their predecessors and for releasing that information to me. Should some of the information be restricted, I would like that information identified so that we can take the steps to arrange for its release.

Recognizing that I do not know what information may be available, I will attempt to itemize the categories to which this request relates: any information (including studies and proposals for studies) regarding fallout from the testing, including its dispersion; the long- and short-term health effects on life forms of exposure to fallout; precautions that were proposed or actually taken to protect life forms from the effect of fallout resulting from the Nevada tests. Obviously, this list is general, but once we know better what is available, we can and will be more specific.

It is imperative that the management committee have full knowledge of all the facts so that the new health studies are as thorough and comprehensive as possible. For that reason, I would appreciate your response to this request as soon as possible. I would also like an indication of the time required for you to expeditiously comply with the request.

Sincerely,



Governor

SMM:mlw

cc: The Honorable Joseph Califano
Mr. Eugene Eidenberg
Ms. Sue Foster, H.E.W.
Dr. Lyman J. Olsen,
Director, Utah Division of Health
Dr. Chase Peterson, University of Utah
Medical School
Dr. William Foege,
Atlanta Center for Disease Control