Red Dead Redemption: How the Use of Carbon Monoxide in Meat Packaging Benefits Consumers

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“carbon monoxide”[1] “enhance color of meat”[2]

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In the United States, companies use carbon monoxide to enhance the color of meat.[1] This process keeps meat redder longer than it would otherwise. This process is banned in Japan,[2] Singapore,[3] and the European Union.[4] Such a practice has been deemed safe for human consumption in study.[5] after study.[6]

The charge against such action is a concern that it masks spoilage; in other words, the product is so
effective, it may hide the signs of decay.[7] However, the F.D.A. utilizes a system to detect spoilage based on odor, not color.[8] Still, fears linger about the process.

The flip side to this concern is an overall reduction in wasted meat. If meat, perfectly healthy to consumers, can remain on shelves longer, and the process by which this is achieved is harmless, there should be little incentive to challenge this. It is the most economically effective use of resources. This result could also be achieved through a massive public education campaign about why less-red meat is still fit for consumption, but here, such results may be achieved at no cost to the government and have a more environmentally-friendly impact.

[8] id.

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