

Eat Your Vegetables? (past)

The U.S. federal government displayed even less sense than usual and **yielded to** the French fry industry. Frozen French fries—cut, fried in oil, and then packaged— have been approved as “fresh vegetables” by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The French fry industry has been **asking** the USDA for years to get this approval. They said that their product is similar to cucumbers that have **wax** on them. They argued that they use 100 percent vegetable oil, which is much healthier for consumers than plain wax.

Most **consumers**, of course, **beg to differ**. “You must be joking,” said Annie, 50. “How can you think a product that’s deep-fried in oil is a fresh vegetable? Even if I cooked broccoli, I could **no longer** call it fresh broccoli—it’s cooked! I wish I were a big company, so my congressman would help me. Unfortunately, I’m only a citizen.”

The USDA defended its decision and said that potatoes **undeniably** are vegetables. Although French fries are fried in oil, they are still potatoes. “If you let them sit on your counter for a couple of weeks,” a USDA **spokesman** said, “the fries will rot just like all other fresh vegetables”.

Consumers said the USDA totally **lost touch** with the public. “They'd probably say that eggshells are healthy if a company asked them to,” said one consumer.