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Sent: Friday, December 18, 2009 12:17 AM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comments

I am writing because I am concerned about the lack of competition in agricultural markets.

As an advocate for sustainable food with social justice, I am appalled at corporations who appear not to give much thought and action to the need for all people, at all times to have the right to access healthy, sustainable, culturally appropriate food, and to know what their food contains and with what methods it was grown. Corporations such as Monsanto and its subsidiaries, Cargill, ADM and others too numerous to mention, do whatever they can to prevent that from happening.

It hurts my heart to see the lives of farmers destroyed by the actions of companies who will SUE a farmer who saves his own seed (the patent issue).

It hurts my heart to see priceless topsoil literally "mined" and poisoned with unnecessary chemicals which then blow away and wash into and pollute our watersheds because of the methods used in large scale industrial agriculture.

It hurts my heart to see what passes for "food" in even the largest of supermarkets...products that pass for "food" but are in actuality MESSes (Manufactured Edible Substitute Substances), which contain substances that may have at one time been PARTS of food, but have been broken down, separated out and put back together as substitutes for real food...and who knows what they really contain? Yuck. Better living through chemistry?? I find that really hard to stomach and from the health statistics in the world, it is not too hard to imagine that my stomach is just the tip of the (melting) iceberg.

And food politics...whoever has the most money to lobby gets their voice heard, and those without monetary resources, regardless of the truth of their positions, don't seem to get heard. This is a real travesty and a real tragedy for all people (at all times).

I could go on and on...but I need to eat a healthy, sustainable meal in order to continue asking for what all people (and other living organisms) on earth deserve to have.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Diane Dodge

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