

From: oceanpine@charter.net
Sent: Friday, December 18, 2009 1:03 AM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment

Dean Mindock
114 Portland Terrace
Collinsville, IL 62234-3637

December 18, 2009

US Department of Justice

Dear US Department of Justice:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in advance of the Department of Justice's workshops on "Agriculture and Antitrust Enforcement Issues in Our 21st Century Economy."

As an organic consumer, I am particularly concerned about Monsanto's control over the seed supply.

By buying seed companies and aggressively patenting life, Monsanto has gained control over as much as 90 percent of seed genetics. This is anti-competitive behavior that skews markets and subjects farmers and consumers to the unchecked power of a company that can raise prices at will.

But, my main concern is that, while Monsanto has acquired a diverse store of seed genetics, they are only making available a few seeds that are genetically modified to be dependent on their chemicals.

The vast bounty of food crops that farmers have cultivated and improved upon over the last 10,000 or so years should not be allowed to be bought up and put out of commission by a company bent on whittling down food varieties to a few pesticide-dependent genetically modified crops.

The most devious part of Monsanto's business model is that their Frankenseeds can cross-pollinate with organic and traditional varieties, destroying their unique characteristics and infecting them with genetically engineered chemical dependence or even "Terminator" or "Traitor" technology that renders seeds sterile, a literal death sentence for seeds maintained through conventional breeding.

Monsanto has engineered plants to be less sensitive to the effects of their herbicide, Roundup, so that more of it can be used on crops without harming them. But, the weeds are becoming more resistant to Roundup, causing farmers to spray even more Roundup on them. This increases the amount of toxic residue on plants and also increases pollution of groundwater.

Monsanto has created bT corn that causes the corn to create its own

pesticide. This corn is toxic to animals and humans but Monsanto seems not to be concerned.

The same way we protect animal species from extinction, we should protect plant species, especially the tens of thousands of food varieties, from companies like Monsanto that are consciously eliminating them.

Monsanto is a company that seems profit oriented but cause not a whit about the dire effects of the technology it so carelessly employs. Human lives are being curtailed and made miserable beyond belief, but Monsanto uses bribes and tobacco science to achieve it goal of ever higher profits.

I urge you to please include in your investigation a consideration of the importance keeping seeds, the foundation of human life, at least in the marketplace, if not in the public domain where they truly belong.

Sincerely,

Dean Mindock