

From: Matt Taylor <phasedreality1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, December 18, 2009 1:49 AM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Help! Our food security is as stake.

I am writing this email because I have serious concerns regarding the overwhelming influence large companies, like Monsanto, have on our food supply. Why is it that our government has sided with these companies when it comes to issues like saving seed, safety oversight, and genetic modification labeling? I've heard corporate lawyers say labeling foods as GMO would cause undo concern for consumers. Where is the LONG-TERM testing that shows the safety of these new genetically modified foods, both with consumer health and with environmental impact? I am disturbed to find that 90% of the soy seed used in the United States comes from Monsanto and is genetically modified and touted as "Roundup Ready" because they can sustain treatments of the pesticide Roundup. This is an alarming development considering a recent study released by the nonprofits The Organic Center and the Union for Concerned Scientists. The research found:

?The rapid adoption by U.S. farmers of genetically engineered corn, soybeans and cotton has promoted increased use of pesticides, an epidemic of herbicide-resistant weeds and more chemical residues in foods... Herbicide use grew by 383 million pounds from 1996 to 2008, with 46 percent of the total increase occurring in 2007 and 2008. Even with the reduced usage of insecticides, the net result has been an increase in U.S farm fields of 318 million pounds of pesticides??

Source: Reuters - <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE5AG0QY20091117>.

Monsanto won't take responsibility for the safety of the food. "Monsanto should not have to vouchsafe the safety of biotech food," said Phil Angell, Monsanto's director of corporate communications. "Our interest is in selling as much of it as possible. Assuring its safety is the FDA's job."

Now, Monsanto has set its sights on monopolizing wheat seed. Has everyone lost their mind? I cannot believe that my elected officials would sanction such widespread experiments on the American people. There are many such practices that have been approved by the FDA, which are obviously aimed to line the pockets of this large corporations at the expense of all else. It's corruption--plain and simple. These corporations have an unfair influence on our elected officials and judges. Politicians who get money and who are friends or former colleagues of the offending companies are aiding in the destruction of our natural resources and our health. I'll continue to use my vote to change this unconscionable behavior, but I have little hope I can make a difference.

I want the foods I buy to be LABELED with what is in it, including levels of pesticide, hormones, and other chemicals, and whether it is genetically modified. People in the United States DO care about what is in their food. They are just uninformed. If they knew the truth, they would DEMAND change. Of course, that is what Monsanto, the FDA, and other rich, powerful companies are trying to prevent. These large corporations are making record profits. Farmers are struggling and the price of food is on the rise. Where is that money going? It's going to the oil companies and the huge, influential corporations like Monsanto. Monsanto doesn't care about the long-term survival of our natural resources. They only care about short-term profits. They promote the use of their toxic product Roundup and bully farmers to use their privately owned seed. What happened to public seed projects? Why is everyone so short sighted? Organic may be more expensive;

there may be less yield per acre (which is debatable); however, long-term these non-organic practices will ruin us. Luckily not all countries in the world are as corrupt and short sighted as ours. Some countries recognize the folly in our practices and have charted a more sustainable course.

My sincerest thanks to the Department of Justice officials who have asked to hear stories of how corporate control of our food system affects average citizens.

Thank you!

Matt Taylor
phasedreality1@yahoo.com
Zip Code: 99208