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Sent: Friday, December 18, 2009 1:08 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment on pesticides, GMOs and our food supply

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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."

I am unable to eat food produced through conventional methods and I believe it is due to the amount of pesticides, herbicides and potentially even the process by which seeds are being mutated - genetically altered.

What happens to me personally? It varies depending on the substance. Until 2008, I did not connect it with what Monsanto has been doing but...

I've experienced severe headaches immediately after eating green peppers. I experience flu like symptoms - nausea, inability to eat, fullness, bloating when I eat conventional wheat or barley; I feel extraordinarily tired when I eat a conventional Indian dish [pre-packaged] from a grocery store and suddenly lose all prior energy [even with good sleep before and feeling good before eating].

The flu-like symptoms also occur when I get any amount of Nutrisweet [aspartame]. I feel sick when I drink non-organic milk, too, so I only drink organic milk - could this be from the growth hormone developed by Monsanto?

When first experiencing severe symptoms from eating - what some might call food allergies - it concerned me that I may have difficulty finding food I can eat someday.

I have hope you will see that giving Monsanto a pass and calling whatever they say is "safe" - 'safe and substantially equivalent', could be harming millions of Americans including children. My body responds as a child's does to all medications so it is possible that the "maximum allowable dose" is too high for some people in this country [of pesticides, herbicides, and other substances]. May you find that we need to test these products thoroughly for the health of people across the U.S.

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. Please protect the farmers of this country from a monopoly on seeds. This is our food supply and it could harm people's health, the economy and our way of life if this is left unchecked.

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. Especially for the health of those sensitive to these pesticides.

Genetically modified seeds can cross-pollinate with organic and traditional varieties, destroying the traditional seeds unique characteristics and infecting them with genetically engineered chemical dependence or even technology that renders seeds sterile, a literal death sentence for seeds maintained through conventional breeding.

The same way we protect animal species from extinction, we should protect plant species - all the varieties of grains and various produce we have enjoyed and bred for thousands of years.

I urge you to please include in your investigation a consideration of the importance keeping seeds and not make it extraordinarily difficult for individuals to save seeds and share organic varieties with each other.

Sincerely,

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