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To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: How big corporations affect me and my family

I'm glad for this opportunity to speak out against Monsanto and other mega corporations that rule our country against the will of the people.

I am 61 years old and disabled so not a tax payer but a citizen. I have been very frustrated with the food issue in this country for many years.

Let me say first the I don't believe genetically modified food should be part of our (and the world's) food chain unless the people are better educated in a simple way about what genetic modification involves and just how much long term research has been done with what results and what other countries say and why many won't take our products. Your average American just doesn't have that information.

Second I believe all genetically modified food products should be labeled - with large labels on the front of the package with the fact that that food contains genetically modified grain or whatever. The same should be true for cloned animal products. Cloned animal research and long term affects and why other countries are banning our products should also be widely and simply distributed so that the consumer can make a reasoned and educated choice concerning both of these issues.

Let's face it the drug companies are pushing synthetic drugs on us just because they can patent the products even if natural products are better for us. Their drugs are over kill and have terrible side effects and can kill you. That's why you see so many people interested in and buying natural products. We're self medicating based on whatever knowledge we can gather because our doctors don't educate us but had us pills and say see ya later. Educate us so that we can be responsible for our health. The patriarchal medical system also needs to change.

Here's an example from my own life. I have hypothyroidism. I've been taking Armour Thyroid for 20 years but now Medicare and Medicaid will only pay for synthetic thyroid medicines. The drug companies have for years tried to squash natural thyroid medication and they've won. However even though I'm on a fixed income and don't have the extra almost \$20 a month to spend on a product I used to get for \$2.00, I'm sticking with my natural product. I have NO negative side effects compared to the many side effects Synthroid and other synthetic products have.

The same with food. Nothing has been done legally about the heart deaths caused by trans fats. In the 1950's scientists knew about the deadly effects of trans fats but it took 50 years and untold deaths to get them largely off the market. Major corporations have a soulless policy of "acceptable losses". Death is never acceptable in a moral environment. But we don't live in a moral environment where internal ethics and integrity rule the powers that be. Instead, the bottom line "It's business not personal" has endangered the lives and is actually making America obese and sick. And for that matter, without jobs as the greedy multinational corporations are trying to level the playing field by making the whole world able to buy their products at the cost of the people of the USA.

We live in a very sick society. Over a period of 5 years my son and I have changed our lives in regard to food in America. I had my first angina attack in 2004. I knew nothing about trans fats at that time but I came home from the ER and tossed out everything that had trans fats in it in my home. I gradually quit eating them period. The 60% blockage in my left main artery has remained stable I believe in part because I quit the lifestyle by no longer using trans fats. Next on the list was high fructose corn sugar, a cause of how much diabetes in our country? I have diabetes and am struggling to lose weight and lower my blood glucose.

Next we went to fresh produce, grown locally if possible. All of these choices took time and weren't perfectly carried out but with determination we have successfully changed in major ways. I buy organic local beef,

chicken and pork. Our meat is expensive and is not the main course but a protein accompaniment but we're happy. Our milk is organic. We have stopped shopping or I should say we are in the process of no shopping regular grocery stores because we don't know what's in the Kellogg's cereal or Scoffer's frozen dinner. Are they made with genetically engineered products or clones animals? We don't know so we are shopping at the local health food store more and more and I order on line and am looking at joining a coop.

When you allow big corporations to deliberately hurt the people you pay a price. Just as the drug companies often know of natural products years before the general populace in the USA does (although other countries know about and have used natural products for years, we are kept in the dark-although other countries know not to buy our manufactured food, we are kept in the dark). We live in a sick society, we are spending more and more on health care and wondering why. Our food supply is in large part the culprit. As is the FDA which as approved drugs that harm and kill and kept knowledge of natural alternatives squelched.

Who is to blame for this. In part the congress and president who have sold out the people and true representation for money. Large hog producers ruled the roost here in Iowa for years, spewing their noxious fumes. I know of one woman who died as a result of living near a hog confinement. These places send out sick pork, sick chicken, sick beef. Good God, feeding beef to beef equals mad cow. What kind of sick society do we live in. We make the awful days of the early 1900's look like nothing. And greed runs the show not caring about people not in the USA.

Am I angry, yes and although I'm a drop in the bucket since I am poor, I have a voice and I use it. My sister is following me as I make these changes. My brother is ahead of me on the same path. My friends are with me too. We are all going through somewhat inconvenient changes to promote our health. We are not sold by ads, we don't buy just because we used to be able to trust a company when we were children. We inconvenience ourselves going to farmers markets and local produce coops etc rather than going to our local grocery chain that is chock full of poisons and food we don't even know what's in it.

I may not be a joiner of groups that fight for us but I am changing what I can for me family and friends.