

From: Nicole Tichenor <nicoletichenor@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 18, 2009 2:46 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comments

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

Just one company, Monsanto, controls the majority of seeds in the US, and regularly threatens farmers who don't buy its seeds. We should be encouraging competition in the seed market, not consolidation by one large corporation. Farmers should have a variety of options when shopping for seeds - oftentimes farmers who want conventional, non-genetically modified seeds have no one to buy from.

Furthermore, big food companies have made huge profits this year while farmers around the country are struggling to get by. We have rising prices at supermarkets, but farmers do not get to see that money. Corporate control of the market is strangling farmers and denying them the due compensation they should receive for growing our food. This is unjust and should not be tolerated in this country. Our regulations and policies should first and foremost protect our farmers, not the industry giants that manipulate and practically enslave some of them.

I work for a food bank that serves 16 rural counties in Kansas, and I am confronted with declining farm incomes everyday. More and more, farmers and their workers are lining up at our mobile food pantries. It is a cruel irony that the men and women who grow our food can scarcely afford to feed themselves. Please help correct this injustice, and take a stand against consolidation in agricultural markets. Here in Kansas, we're depending on you.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Nicole Tichenor

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