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Sent: Friday, December 18, 2009 2:53 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment

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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."

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

I am currently withholding planting my forty acres, which I strive to keep organic, but because my neighborhood dairy is using genetically altered seed, I fear I've had blow-over contamination these last ten years, and frankly cannot afford the in-depth testing that would confirm this. I am concerned that if not stopped now, there will be no diversity of species and if, God Forbid, a nationwide or world-wide disease or blight hits, there will be massive starvation and food shortages. All because of the greed mentalities of the large agra-businesses, that you, gentlemen and ladies could have put a stop to.

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.

I've tried for five years to find a source of organic black oil sunflower seeds to put in 20 acres to press for organic sunflower oil, and so far have come up with no source to even BUY the seed I desire. The large buy-out of all the smaller seed houses, in secret I must add, keeping all the diversity of "names" of seed companies, but on researching in depth

they all have the same owner... has in effect caused a monopoly that government used to charge criminally illegal, but has winked at Monsanto and other large agri-business domination.

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.

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.

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,

Colleen New
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