

From: lkutina@roadrunner.com
Sent: Friday, December 18, 2009 4:33 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment

Laurie Kutina
681 Olden Rd
West Falls, NY 14170-9717

December 18, 2009

US Department of Justice

Dear US Department of Justice:

As an environmental scientist responsible for air quality analysis and PCBs remediation, I am not comfortable with the monopoly Monsanto has gained 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.

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. And I am not comfortable with the litigation actions that Monsanto has taken against farmers who have accidentally had Monsanto crops grow in their fields.

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. Our sustainability in food production depends on variety.

Since many other countries have rejected GMO products, and I believe that if the public understood just how much GMO product is in our food they too would be concerned. Monsanto or the EPA has not demonstrated the safety of these products, which could be contributors in a variety of epidemics in this country, from autism, to allergies, to obesity and diabetes. While Monsanto would dismiss these accusations, we cannot be sure, because of the pervasiveness of the GMO products. And having worked on projects dealing with the problems of other Monsanto products once thought safe, such as DDT and PCBs--I have trouble trusting the company's word.

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,

Laurie Kutina