

From: j_rdgrs@yahoo.com
Sent: Friday, December 18, 2009 4:38 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment: Food, not phood

Joanna Rodgers
2145 Garfield St.
Eugene, OR 97405-1546

December 18, 2009

US Department of Justice

Dear US Department of Justice:

YES, I have comments about food, biotechnology, and how the government regulates them and I'm grateful for the opportunity to share with them before the Justice Department holds its workshops on the topic.

As a graduate student, I studied biotech foods and could not believe the lack of prudence & caution that is given to this industry--allowing new foods ("phoods") into the market without any real precaution or testing, the monopolizing powers of Monsanto, and the true environmental threats that biotech poses.

Genetic engineering is like polluting our gene pool. Unlike tires and trash that can be removed from a polluted river, though, we cannot simply pick out any "polluting genes" later. The work of evolution is threatened by these novel gene combinations. And the potential public health threat is simply unknown.

The Precautionary Principle as I understand it is in order here: until it is known to be absolutely safe (which may not ever be truly determined), this technology should be not allowed.

We can feed the planet without biotech despite what its proponents claim. What we need is ORGANIC, SMALL-SCALE farmers to be supported so that they can take care of the land AND feed the people.

As a parent of two young children, I am appalled by the diet that is offered to the majority of people, young & old in the society where they grow up. We are fortunate enough to be able to eat an almost 100% organic diet but this is largely because we save money to do this and don't spend it on other things.

Americans that aren't educated on the topic (as is the case for most) simply believe that what is on the grocery shelves is food--ie, nourishment that helps support life and foster good health. This is truly not the case.

What I ask of you--the policy-makers--is to:

1. Reign in the biotech companies, namely Monsanto but others as well

such as Cargill. Don't let them determine the issue or the legalities.

2. Take actions to push our food industry so that it supports and fosters local, organic food. Let's make jobs and public health win here.

3. Save our seeds that have been developed by farmers in the manner that nature intended: through generations of breeding, NOT shooting new genes into things to make novel organisms.

Thank you for your time & careful consideration of this most critical issue!

Sincerely,

Joanna Rodgers