

**From:** gypsi\_fw@yahoo.com  
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**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, and a home gardener who is the granddaughter of a family farmer, I am particularly concerned about Monsanto's control over the seed supply. I want to continue to have access to non-genetically engineered foods and seeds. I do not use Roundup, I use compost and good sense, good choices of crops that are appropriate to my area. I will not have access to food that is healthy for myself and my family if the older strains of fruits and vegetables are lost to the money machine. Billions of bioflavinoids and minute substances protect our bodies and help them to meet the challenges presented by an ever-changing environment. The ability to survive spraying with Roundup is not a valid substitute for what is LOST in the genetic engineering process. Sure use GE corn for gasohol, but don't sell it to me as food, not even as pet food. (Although hydrogen from cow urine is a far more efficient fuel source.)

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.

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,

Alice Burkhart