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To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment

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December 19, 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 a consumer, I am particularly concerned about Monsanto's control 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. 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.

It is noncompetitive to patent seeds and then be able to hold claim to their offsprings DNA through a patent on the first generation. There would not be material legal basis for a company with a patent on a product to sue another company with a similar but improved idea and design, why should Monsanto be able to sue for crops that result as a second generation with only part of the genetic code. A product that is potentially 50% different is different. 50% different ingredients in a cola is not a cola, it could be root beer.

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 aimed at reducing the varieties of plants to a few pesticide-dependent genetically modified crops.

There is nothing efficient about Monsanto's imposed farming practices. It holds little if any gain for American's and the economy due to the harshness of the practices on the soil and limited diversity of the crops that make them vulnerable to environmental change.

An unethical part of Monsanto's business model is that some of their seeds can cross-pollinate with organic and traditional 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. No one invented DNA; therefore no one should not be able to patent it.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Concerned Citizen