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Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2009 8:53 AM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment

Robert Underwood
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December 19, 2009

US Department of Justice

Dear US Department of Justice:

I am a small farmer, and I am deeply concerned about the broad power Monsanto and other seed companies wield. Their patents on life, unfair business practices, and aggressive genetic engineering of seed for commercial farming are making farmers dependent on their very expensive seed and killing the millennia-old practice of saving seed.

Since I was a child, the cotton business has been radically changed by developments like Round-Up Ready cotton. Farmers are forced by market pressures to adopt new practices, like using Monsanto seed, that are locking them into annual tithes to a monopolistic seed company. Monsanto, in particular, has forced hundreds of small seed companies out of the business with litigation and threats of litigation, and it's no accident. Farmers are afraid to collect seeds at all, for fear that Monsanto will accuse them of patent infringement.

I hope you will rein in these companies and start to restore a sense of fair play to agribusiness. Family farmers have enough to deal with without big chemical and seed companies holding them hostage.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Underwood
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