

**From:** askwitha@lighthouse.net  
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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 an organic consumer, I am particularly concerned about Monsanto's control over the seed supply.

The most repulsive ad of Monsanto to me is that of a mountain climber scaling up to spray dead a dandelion peeking out of the rock. This company has secretly altered the world's plant life without respecting the billions of connection any plant has to other beings. It has stole the plants of the world, slightly altered them and patented them for resale. It has attached their seeds to pesticides which are altering the lower beings, sterilizing the soils and diminishing the nutrition and diversity of nature. They have not been up front about what genetic alterations have taken place, instead sneaking it in until one day you find all the basics have been altered. It all boils down to living for profits instead of living in awe of what Earth itself has done and does do -- and its wisdom is accepted, sought, protected and fostered. It shows what can happen when companies are allowed to control governments and nations; when they are allowed to change their names with a rapidity that makes your head swim; when companies are allowed destroy the human language and call things 'natural' and 'organic' that are not; when one company can intend to battle Earth into control even if it means maiming and torturing the last 65 millions years of florescent life. Monsanto is out to control Earth's food supply and it has radically diminished the nutrition and varieties of foods. To stop Monsanto, you will have to subsidize the seed savers. My dream for health: go organic. We've got it all wrong: It is Earth that is primary; all else is derivative. Let's start with respect for existence.

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,

Annemarie Askwith  
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