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Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2009 3:51 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject:

Hello!

My name is Helena Grossberg, I am a wife, mother of two, and resident of Florida. I work in Logistics and cook for my family when I come home from work. I have noticed over the years that no matter how much I try, I have fewer and fewer choices as to what foods to buy for my family, as local farms, small shops and small family farmers no longer can compete with Publix or Whole foods. There are a few other supermarkets, but the prices are outrageous. What worries me even more than the prices is the quality of our foods, because I really don't know what I am bringing to my house, yet I am paying always more for the food I bring.

Let me explain. As I shop for fruits, for example, I am limited to the offerings they have, either organic or not, high priced or overpriced. Even then, I am always concerned with the spread of bacteria, fumigations -or not, and safety is always a concern. Also, because of my job I see the struggle that some importers go through with their logistics, and the time constrains they have to get their food and perishable items to the market. The competition is intense, and while we do enjoy certain commodities all year around, I understand that the cost is higher quality, flavor, and local market participation.

Perhpas above all my concerns, is the fact, or the fear that we can no longer replant a seed indefinetely to reap fruits for future generations, and that seed coating while a great idea for better planting, might change the genetics of the actual seed. Perhaps not, but I am concerned that I no longer can trust the food I eat. I can no longer plant a small vegetable garden and trust the seeds I have to be able to reproduce the subsequent years. That I cannot buy food at a local farmer's market. And finally, when I buy food, it might not be safe for my family, even thought the prices continually rise.

Sincerely

Helena Grossberg