

From: travelerd@inbox.com
Sent: Sunday, December 20, 2009 12:23 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment

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December 20, 2009

US Department of Justice

Dear US Department of Justice:

I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments in advance of the Department of Justice's workshops on "Agriculture and Antitrust Enforcement Issues in Our 21st Century Economy."

I live in a small city on 1/3 of an acre in Florida. I grow many varieties of tropical fruits and some annual vegetables. I do not use pesticides or herbicides and consider the food I grow to be quite healthy. My family eats most of what we grow, because we feel that it is healthier for us and the planet than most of what is available at the store.

I believe that the water that rains down from the sky and lands on my property should be free for me to use as it wends its way toward the ground and through the water cycle. I also believe that seeds from the fruit I grow or buy as well as any plants that have gone to seed should be available for me to use to grow new plants next season. I also believe that it is my right to grow food organically so that I do not have to eat toxic food. This is what nature has bestowed upon us. And it is not up to Monsanto, and companies that engage in similar practices, to take this from me. In fact, it is quite WRONG.

The array of food crops that farmers have cultivated and generally improved upon for human consumption should not be allowed to be owned and even taken off the market by a company bent on whittling down food varieties to a few pesticide-dependent genetically modified crops.

I am especially wary that Monsanto's seeds can cross-pollinate with my seeds and render them sterile. I also consider it an attack on me and my crops that cross-pollination might result in SUPER-weeds that are nearly impossible for me to eradicate via efficient organic methods.

To top it off, Monsanto even feels that if their unwanted seeds end up growing on my land, I have stolen from them and I should have to pay them for such an inconvenience. Indeed, the reverse is true. They are stealing from me. They take from me my ability to grow foods that are not genetically engineered in a way that is sustainable and healthy.

We must protect plant species from the corporate entities that are beholden to their stockholders, but not to humanity or Mother Earth.

I urge you to please include in your investigation a consideration of the importance of keeping seeds, a fundamental cornerstone of human life, in the hands of growers, in full public use (and not privatized by patents), and available for purchase by those who wish to buy and sell them.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Diane Desenberg