

From: shillmanbourne@mpf.org
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To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment

Susan Hillman Bourne
159 Western Avenue
Waterville, ME 04901-4631

December 22, 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.

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 make every effort and utilize every opportunity to the fullest to protect plant species, especially the tens of thousands of food varieties, from companies like Monsanto that are consciously eliminating them for their own profit and quite probably to our peril! Their plan to manipulate nature may cause not only far-reaching, but likely irreversable damage both to the ecosystem and to the health and welfare of us all! This is a dangerous game they are playing and they should be stopped, and stopped

sooner rather than later. My greatest fear is that if you do not act now, there may not be a second chance. There may not be a "later"!

I strongly urge you to please include in your investigation a consideration of the importance of keeping seeds, the foundation of human life, at least in the marketplace, if not in the public domain where they really and truly belong. Your job is to protect private citizens of this country, is it not? When you consider the truth in the old adage that "we are what we eat", you will realize that we have a basic and fundamental right to expect that our food, the essential building block of life on earth for each and everyone of us, is pure, and as nourishing as nature intended. Please stop Monsanto from altering our food in ways that will ultimately make it unrecognizable to our bodies and thereby cause our bodies to react as if they were ingesting poison. If Monsanto is allowed to continue in this way we are all sentenced to a long and painful death by poison. Monsanto's poison! What a tragedy if you do not act to stop this travesty!

Sincerely,

Susan Hillman Bourne
207-873-2925