

From: Christopher Small <metasoarous@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 22, 2009 12:58 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comments

I am writing because I am concerned about the state of our agricultural markets.

At present food is being grown in a terribly unsustainable manner. The use of pesticides, inorganic fertilizers, factory farming of cattle and other agricultural practice in wide use are having a tremendously negative effect on the health of our environment. These practices, which are touted as saving money in production of food as a means for passing on savings to the consumer, will severely degrade the health of the planet at the cost of cheap food now. This is unacceptable.

The agricultural subsidies which are currently in place are also a major problem in my eyes. These encourage the monoculturing of specific crops, notably corn and soy. These crops, when monocultured, have a very depleting effect on the fertility of the soil. This in turn promotes more extensive use of harmful fertilizers and pesticides which invariably degredate our soils and waterways. These subsidies prevent farmers from rotating crops to naturally reinvigorate the soil's health. Yet another side effect of these subsidies is that end up flooding third world markets with cheep food, which which local production markets cannot compete. This puts farmers in these regions out of work and exacerbates poverty issues abroad.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Christopher Small

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