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Sent: Sunday, December 27, 2009 2:22 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: My concerns about agriculture and antitrust enforcement in this economy

I'm a parent, gardener, and previous editor for agriculture publications. I have been concerned for about 10 years now about the increasing monopoly that a few global corporations have over our food-production and supply system. I'm concerned about the security of food and clean water for my children and future generations in this country and worldwide. Reliance on too few crops and farming practices that degrade the land and water supply are simply unsustainable practices that cannot continue to provide nutritious food for future generations. Large industrial farms and consolidated buyers have provided us with less freedom of choice. When farmers are reliant on only a couple of companies to provide their seed and fertilizer, insecurity is built into our food-supply system. The industrialized, corporate-controlled farming system that we have today in the United States does not serve its people well enough nor is it a model that is flexible enough for our future need.

It's ironic that we have to pay a premium price for fresh nutritious food that tastes good, when in other countries such as Spain, fresh nutritious vegetables and fruit at low prices is standard fare. It was strange to have to explain to my friends when I was visiting there that it's cheaper for people in the U.S. to buy processed, packaged, less-nutritious food -- that buying avocados, grapes, or olive oil, for example, is a luxury for many people even though we grow those items in the U.S.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concern on this matter. I look forward to following this investigation in the coming year.

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