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**Subject:** Comments Regarding Agriculture and Antitrust Enforcement Issues in Our 21st Century Economy

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I am a retired dietitian with a Masters in Nutrition. Since retiring I have become ever more aware of the ways in which big corporate interests have exercised their influence on our politicians and bureaucracy to the detriment of our food supply and our health. Big agricultural and food companies have promoted all the processed foods made from corn and soybeans, which are the source of numerous health problems, while blaming saturated fat and cholesterol from nourishing whole foods for a variety of problems - erroneous conclusions based on misinterpreted research.

The National Animal Identification System (NAIS) had being pushed by our agriculture authorities, under the heavy influence of big corporate farms and food processors, as the answer to the food safety crises caused by the poor handling methods, when in fact it does little to solve the problems and it places an enormous burden on small farmers many of whom will be put out of business by its costs. I am part of a small private farm club that gets high quality grass-fed meat and dairy from a local farm. This farm is providing a valuable service to the community, but they are not making huge amounts of money and would find the costs of NAIS a great burden, while doing absolutely nothing to make their already safe food safer. The food safety bill currently being considered in Congress, similarly is promoted by the big food & agriculture corporations but threatens to place misguided and burdensome regulations on small organic farmers, who are not causing the food safety problems.

I am appalled every time I see that a small ethical seed or organic food company has been bought out by a big corporation, while Monsanto promotes its genetically engineered seeds all over the planet to the detriment of our environment and our health. Because of their power they suppress the very research that is showing the serious problems with GE, and exert undue influence over our government, our educational institutions, and our media with the mistaken claim that GE will save the world from hunger. Meanwhile the eco-farmers and their consultants, who are at the cutting edge of sustainable agriculture methods that do not require use of poison chemicals, receive little support from our agriculture educational institutions who draw much of their financial support from the big chemical companies that make chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. I garden organically, and live in farm country, so I am well aware of how farmers have been brainwashed into thinking they must rely on these chemicals, and understand the damage their use has caused to our soils.

A homeopathic physician I know reported that a small company that made a valuable remedy that she often used with her patients, that cost \$12, was bought out by a big drug company, which jacked the price up to \$40. Drug companies make huge amounts of money on statin drugs, while doing everything they can to suppress the truth, which many doctors now acknowledge, that these drugs are of little benefit and have many serious side effects. Meanwhile our conventional medical professionals are under such heavy influence of the drug industry that they have little knowledge of or appreciation for the healing qualities of well-planned nutritional supplementation, and, in fact, attack doctors who use these helpful alternate methods instead of the conventional drug therapies. The effect of this enormous influence of the drug industry is an ever increasing burden of poor health on our citizens and high costs for our society because our doctors are taught to prescribe drugs to treat symptoms and not how to bring true healing by finding and correcting the underlying cause. I have seen this commercial influence taint the typical advice given in my own profession, dietetics, and I work to counteract that by the classes I am teaching since I retired and became aware of these problems.

I urge you to rein in the power of these big corporations that are undermining the health of our nation while profiting from their toxic chemistry, unhealthy processed foods and expensive drugs.

Thank you for listening to my comments. I will be following the progress of these investigations over the

coming months.

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