

**From:** Jeffrey Hedquist <jeffrey@hedquist.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 27, 2009 11:53 PM  
**To:** ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>  
**Subject:** Comments Regarding Agriculture and Antitrust Enforcement Issues in Our 21st Century Economy

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I'm a consumer, businessman and farmer in Jefferson County, IA.

I have seen first hand what the consolidation of corporate power in the food and agriculture sector has done for communities, small farmers, consumers and the environment.

Almost every week I read or hear about the degradation of our state's air and water, about manure spills, about runoff from manure application during winter, about the toxic materials and antibiotics in that fertilizer that ends up in the ground, in crops, in rivers, and in the Gulf of Mexico.

It saddens me, almost as much as the forced elimination of small farmers - the backbone of this country's food supply, almost as much as the rise of disease and the death of rural communities because of the proliferation of CAFOs throughout this state.

Many big food companies have made record profits this year -- even as consumers are paying more for food, and yet farmers get less for their labor.

The effects of corporate consolidation in the food industry are devastating. It doesn't have to be this way.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit my comments.

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