

From: girlinflight@gmail.com
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To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment

Kimberly Smith
PO Box 43
Ojai, CA 93024-0043

December 28, 2009

US Department of Justice

Dear US Department of Justice:

Thank you all so much for this opportunity to submit comments in advance of the Department of Justice's workshops on "Agriculture and Antitrust Enforcement Issues in Our 21st Century Economy".

In my (albeit limited) time spent in the breadbasket of this country I first learned of seed-saving from a friend's grandmother who, for her entire life, has raised her own chickens and grown her own vegetables for her, and her immediate and extended family's consumption. Each year she would save seeds from her crop and replant for the next year, each crop being just as gorgeous and delicious as the very first. She inspired me to have a go at my own garden the following summer; not so easy a task at 8500 feet in the mountains of Colorado, but well worth the endeavour!

This monopolizing of the agricultural industry by Monsanto goes against every ideal of raising food for consumption. We are slowly becoming a mutant, more industrialized people by allowing genetically altered seeds to dominate crops in the U.S. I don't feel comfortable, safe or secure eating the typical vegetables and fruits found in large supermarket chains for I know they've either been grown with some type of Monsanto product, or they have fallen victim to being down-wind from a Monsanto seeded and treated 'farm'. So I don't. I purchase locally grown, organic, seasonal vegetables and fruit that I am nearly confident have not been tainted by the 'bad' science.

In addition, the fact that Monsanto literally bullies U.S. farmers into utilizing their product, and their product only, is so horribly wrong on so many levels; the people of this country, the consumers of this 'food', should have a definitive say (besides the volumes the mighty spending dollar speaks) in what they are feeding to their families and who they are supporting in doing so.

The same way we protect animal species from extinction, we should protect plant species, especially the tens of thousands of food varieties, from companies like Monsanto that are consciously eliminating them.

I urge you to please include in your investigation a consideration of the importance keeping seeds, the foundation of human life, at least in the marketplace, if not in the public domain where they truly belong.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Smith