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Sent: Monday, December 28, 2009 7:36 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comments on the Food System

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm writing to voice my opinions on the agribusiness. I have become much more informed about the US's food system in the past two years. I was startled to find that I didn't know what was in my food, and even more upset to find that it's not being well-regulated.

I would like to see Kevin's Law go into effect--the USDA needs to have the ability to reprimand or shut down the businesses that aren't producing healthy food. If we allow the big businesses to have complete power, we will be accepting poor food and therefore risking the nation's health in order to save costs, ease production, and vote for technology (especially in the form of pesticides and antibiotics) over healthy practices.

I believe in healthy, responsible farming, and so I vote with my money by buying food at the local farmer's markets and buying at least 90% organic foods. These items cost more than the non-organic alternatives, but I would rather lower my risk and my family's risk of heart-disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes by eating healthy foods that haven't been saturated with pesticides or chemicals. I'm very lucky to live in a city that has farmer's markets and lots of organic options at the supermarket, but most of the country isn't this lucky, and they don't have these positive alternatives. I want my country to represent my values and my dedication to health--that's why I want a better farm bill in place in my legislation that doesn't just subsidize corn. I'm not interested in eating a diet that consists mainly of corn, just because it's easy to make and has a high-caloric content. I'm not interested in finding out how many ways we can modify corn to produce more and more by-products of it. I want to see more local farmers being subsidized and more healthy options being supported by the government, and I want to see big business out of my food--Monsanto is too big and too powerful, and I don't agree with their practices, forcing farmers to use their seeds. Seeds are life, not property. If a farmer wants to save their seeds and use them again, they should be allowed to--even encouraged to! That's how farming has sustained itself for the history of farming.

I hope that the US is interested in more than just making money--I want to live in a culture that values and supports health.

Victoria Fowler