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Sent: Monday, December 28, 2009 9:34 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Monsanto

I'm a mom, an employee, a wife and a person who loves food!

I don't think what I have to say is new, or anything thousands of others aren't writing you also. But when I saw that you were taking comments regarding an investigation of possible antitrust practices by Monsanto I had to write.

We no longer wish to consume the food that is being grown and marketed to us; we don't feel it's safe. We don't feel it's humane. We don't feel it's healthy. And we don't feel the industry is good for the country, the farmers, the land, or its people.

In the Midwest we are in an agricultural area. My grandfather farmed. Indeed there are generations upon generations of farmers in our family's history. It's sad to see what has happened to farming in the US. Yes our produce and meat is cheap. Cheaper than it ought to be for what it really costs to produce decent food. Corn and high fructose corn syrup fill the shelves in the grocery store, the hot lunch programs at school, the vending machines at work, restaurant food where we can hardly find the ingredients, and the stomachs of the animals we eat. Or used to eat.

Due to animal treatment issues, environmental issues, and the general feeling that it is not our right as Americans to hog and abuse all of the world's resources, half of our family of 4 is now completely vegetarian, and the other 2 of us rarely consume meat or fish. Vegetarian? Yup for 2 years now, and we're just a normal average suburban working family with 2 kids in public school and a few pets. We wonder, what happened to cows fed on grass, chickens eating little seeds and worms and bugs? Fish swimming wild in lakes and streams and oceans, unpolluted and without antibiotics and MORE CORN to eat? Fish aren't supposed to eat CORN. That's just gross.

Anyway, my point is that what has happened to the food industry is wrong. The food industry isn't the only industry that has gotten side-tracked for the bottom line, but it is a sad example.

We are fortunate enough to belong to a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture); a local farm that grows wonderful vegetables without chemicals. But it's expensive and inconvenient compared to the grocery store. But I think the farm's rapidly growing membership demonstrates that a lot of people are concerned about where their food is coming from, the chemicals used on it, the GM seed, the working conditions of the workers who harvest it, and the pollution and environmental issues involved in growing it and shipping it.

The "competitive" practices outlined in movies such as FOOD, INC and others are APPALLING. I cannot believe that the United States allows such practices to continue - it breaks my heart for the farming history of this country and I hope that an investigation will put a stop to it. Give the farmers and the people of the US a chance to succeed, a fair and level playing field. From what I can see it seems it is the small farmer who should be able to sue Monsanto for contaminating THEIR crop (like the rice suit) not the other way around.

One little voice who feels like a Who in Horton Hears a Who,
Kim Benac