

From: Kylie Phillips <kylieinoly@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, December 29, 2009 2:43 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comments Regarding Agriculture and Antitrust Enforcement Issues in Our 21st Century Economy

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Kylie Phillips and I live in Olympia, WA. I am mother of two small children, an avid gardener, and a concerned citizen about the health and sustainability of our current food production system. I'm writing to express concerns about what I perceive has become an unhealthy and economically dubious food system in our country.

The initial intent of our country's food system was good - to grow more for less cost, help feed the starving in the world, etc. But along the way, farmers went from being farmers to becoming industrialists with the consolidation of our food system into fewer hands. Patents on seeds, genetically modified plants (and animals), heavy use of chemical pesticides and herbicides, large quantities of chemical fertilizers, rampant antibiotic use leading to antibiotic-resistant microbes, subsidizes that encourage the over-production of a certain few crops have undermined and probably destroyed any of the original good that was intended by this system.

The current system rewards those producing less healthy food cheaply (partly because it is greatly subsidized by our tax dollars), and economically penalizes those attempting to grow healthy food. It is corporate welfare of the worst kind - subsidizing the worst types of production and preying on those who have limited food budgets and time. Many of the low cost food items on our shelves should simple be labeled "chemical food substitute" as they contain more chemicals than actual food. Being a conscious consumer I can personally testify that it takes a large effort to control and understand the who, where, how, and what of the foods that I put in mine and my children's bodies. While most corporations want the onus on the consumer to do this research, it is unrealistic. Short of having several hours to sort through all the fraudulent and misleading labels on many mass produced foods plus a food additive dictionary to figure out exactly what is in many of the chemicals in our foods, the consumer cannot do this on their own. I believe it is the responsibility of government is to stop subsidizing and supporting the current industrial food production system. I believe that by ending large corporate subsidies and switching them to smaller family farms the whole food system could be fixed. One simple step that makes it more expensive to make junk and less expensive to make healthy food. Fast food joints should not have a dollar menu on the backs of us taxpayers.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kylie Phillips

Olympia, WA