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Sent: Tuesday, December 29, 2009 3:22 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject:

December 29, 2009

Legal Policy Section
Antitrust Division
U.S. Department of Justice
450 5th Street, NW. Suite 11700
Washington, DC 20001

To Whom It May Concern:

In response to the upcoming public workshops that are going to be held by the Department of Justice and the Department of Agriculture, I would like to submit my opinion on some of the matters that are important in this area.

I have been a farmer in Iowa for 24 years at a family operation started by my great grandfather, and passed down through my grandfather and father before me. I am also a seed dealer in my area, and sell fertilizer and other products. As a result, I work with a lot of other farmers.

The farming industry has changed in many ways over the past few years and I think it begins with the different seed choices and options available these days. There are more to choose from, more genetics, and more disease resistant options. Prices have gone up with the innovations in seed technology, but the return on investment is greater. Price is important to a lot of farmers, and there are several companies competing for farmers' business each year, but the bottom line is, you get what you pay for. The biotech seed varieties available today offer a higher crop performance with less risk.

Most of the farmers in this area grow anywhere from two to three different brands of seed on their farms, all with biotech traits in them. With the money and research spent by all the companies, and the motivation of the marketplace, there is no question about the significance of biotech seed innovations and how important they are to farming practices today. Because of the seed trait varieties available, farmers are using less pesticides and herbicides, therefore spraying less and plowing less, which reduces the over-all use of fuel and time. The benefits go beyond just the farmer. The consumer and the environment are also reaping the benefits of the newest biotech seeds – less pesticides and herbicides are making their way into our food supply and waterways.

As I mentioned earlier, the price of seeds are going up as private research and development continues to advance beyond public programs, but the performance and the seeds today are bringing better returns on the farmers' investment. As long as there are several seed companies competing for customers' business and loyalty, the expectation of balance and return continues to grow. Farmers are willing to pay more for their seed, so long as the benefits justify the cost.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to voice my opinion in these matters, and I hope you take my views into consideration.

Sincerely,

Tim Reever
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