

**From:** Denyce Rusch <denyce.rusch@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 29, 2009 6:07 PM  
**To:** ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>  
**Subject:** Agricultural Workshops Comment

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To the Department of Justice,

I am writing because I am concerned about the lack of competition in agricultural markets. I am sure you are aware that most all the food that is available to eat in the US is controlled by just a few companies. They decide what we eat and how it is produced.

I have lived and raised a family in rural Iowa for the past 25 years, and I know how the system works. I know if a farmer would rather not use Monsanto GM seed for their beans or corn after they have tried it for a year, they are stalked by the Monsanto thugs and informed that they will be sued if they tried to save seed, even from crops that were not grown from the Monsanto seed, because they know that further crops will be contaminated by their "patented" genes. The farmer always does what they say because they do not have the money to fight Monsanto in court.

I know that large meat producers who get local farmers to grow pigs according to their specs dictate the manner in which they are grown, requiring the farmer to go deeply into debt to use their methods. (Their methods are not the best for our rivers and streams and air quality to be sure, and the animals themselves are treated like products, not living creatures.) If the farmer decides not to produce pork for them, they limit his access to markets and thereby put him or her out of business.

I have noticed there is a "revolving door" of personnel between corporate lobbyists and government?regulators. No wonder corporations aren't held to strict standards.

As a rural resident, there are days when we cannot go outside due to the application of putrified "manure" on nearby fields. Then, if the rain comes too soon, much of this runs off into the rivers and kills fish and other aquatic life.

We plant a garden to grow what food we can, plus shop at the local farmers markets. The food from there is always fresher and tastier. I would love for the local farmers to have more access to supermarkets so more people could enjoy this food.

We also make this effort because we do not want to eat forced Genetically-Modified organisms. (We have no problem with the hybrids that mix traits from the same species, but take issue with implanting genes from different species in food we eat. Plus, huge amounts of herbicides are used on the GM crops.)

As consumers, we just want good safe food. (More inspections at meat processing facilities and limiting the size of these corporations would be a good thing.) What's in our food, anyway? And why aren't there decent labels telling you where it grew, what chemicals are on it, and if it's genetically modified?

As an Iowan, we just want everyone to prosper and get along. It is heartbreaking to see my farmer friends have to decide to either "do it their way, or get out of the way." (Constantly supporting the large agricorporations with subsidies and laws that do not make it possible the small farmer to compete makes this happen.)

This is a huge problem to fix that also connects to our health crisis in this country. Too much GM high-fructose corn syrup, and not enough fresh vegetables equals early onset diabetes in alarming rates. Because of artificial subsidies, junk food is cheaper for people to buy than fresh nutritious fruits and vegetables. Many people are forced to feed their families with it. We all then pay for it with many sick people and high insurance rates for all.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment. It is a big problem that we must take immediate steps toward solving.

May 2010 bring all more health and prosperity.

Sincerely,

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