

From: Dave Miller <davem98607@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 30, 2009 7:08 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comments

I am writing because I am concerned about the lack of competition in agricultural markets.

My main concerns are:

1. More and more people are growing up with no understanding of or connection to where their food comes from, nor what it is composed of.
2. The vast majority of our food is produced by a handful of mega-corporations, whose primary purpose is to maximize profit, at the expense of everything else (the environment, small/local farms, healthy food, genetic diversity, etc.).
3. Our food production and distribution system is inherently unsustainable, which will at some point lead to a catastrophic failure in the system.
4. All signals indicate that we need to convert to a food system that is more local and more sustainable. Personally I believe that we will eventually get most of our food using permaculture principles. See this beautiful 48 minute film from the UK:
<http://www.viddler.com/explore/PermaScience/videos/4/>

Here is a comment submitted by a colleague, that I agree with 100%:

"Honorable Friends,

I have recently become aware of multiple websites promoting contact to the Department of Justice regarding control of US food systems by multinational corporations.

I have a Masters of Science in Agriculture Degree from Washington State University, and own a small consulting LLC which is committed to economic and ecological benefit to our clients and the land they work.

I have studied food systems in depth, and tracked the methods and effect of production and distribution which supplies our large scale food systems.

It is my professional and accredited opinion and witness that the most ecologically and economically sound practices of food production are those which are local to the consumer. It is also the opinion of many of my associates who are nutrition and health specialists that organic, locally produced foods from small to mid scale farms are the most beneficial to the health and welfare of the consumer.

From the deliberate patent of genomes to the massive wasting of ecosystems and clear correlation to compromises of human health ethics, companies like Monsanto, Sygenta, Archer Daniels Midland and Cargill have deteriorated the general welfare of the Citizens of the United States, and the world. They have denied, through lobbying the Congress and Senate, the pursuit of life, liberty and happiness for millions of Americans in the last 30-40 years. They control as much as 85-90% of food production and distribution chains in the USA, and, while I am not a legal analyst, it is my considered concern that the integrated nature of these corporations is a breach of antitrust laws.

The loss of farms and farmers in the United States, well documented by the census, is not an accident or natural progression; it is in fact the result of corporate strategies to dominate the very market which led the United States to be a world power. As such, their actions should be considered a threat to national security. To allow the sublimation of the very Constitution of the United States to their corporate personhood and charters is unthinkable. It will result in continued increases in human and environmental diseases, devastation of ecosystems, and increasing accessibility issues for millions of US citizens in their effort to attain even minimum daily nutrient recommendations as set forth by the office of the Surgeon General and the USDA.

We have become a nation of overweight, diseased weaklings due to lack of connection to our source of nourishment. No Company or

Person is entitled to stand between a person and their chosen, legal source of nourishment. The patenting of seeds, the creation of urban food deserts by monopolization of distribution chains, and the gross breach of social trust entailed in the massive ecological wasting of landscapes by these corporations is more of a danger to this country than terrorism, as over 5000 people die annually from diet related causes; the vast majority of those deaths are attributable to the quality of foods available to the poor in the US's ever growing 'food deserts'. No law should enforce their breach of the public trust.

If we are to curb diabetes, heart disease and other illness related to the consumption of highly processed, low nutrient foods, we must allow small producers and local distribution networks to develop without unfair competition. Farm Direct Sales, Community Supported Agriculture, Farmers Markets and other small, localized food systems provide fresh, healthy, organic, locally grown whole foods to consumers. In the current market these options are widely marginalized by multinational corporations and the unfair edge of subsidized production and distribution chains. This is most often a result of the massive inequities of the Farm Bill provision to the multinational companies, and places local, small business at clear disadvantage; this is the precise reason that the number of farms and farms has decreased, and its direct result is the devastation of the ecosystems, degradation of human health and erosion of economic equity.

This can and must be stopped. Please consider the feasibility of doing to Monsanto, Cargill, ADM, Syngenta and other multinational companies that control our foods systems what was done to Ma Bell from 1974-1982. It will be a Herculean effort, but you will be doing the Nation a great service if you pursue this.

Please let me know if I can be of any assistance clarifying the content of this letter, or if my capacity as a on the ground consultant and witness is in any way useful to your inquiries on this matter.

Sincerely,

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Deston Denniston, M.S., C.P.I.
Principal, Abundance Consulting LLC
www.abundancepermaculture.com"

I could not have said it better than Deston so I wanted to preserve his message verbatim. As I said, I agree 100% with Deston.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Dave Miller

, 98607