From: bjcorbitt@yahoo.com
Sent: Wednesday, December 30, 2009 7:37 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment

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December 30, 2009

US Department of Justice

Dear US Department of Justice:

I had written a completely new email addressing Monsanto's anti-competitive and egregious policies in relation to 1) controlling the seed market and thereby dictating availability - thereby exerting unrivaled influence on farmers and the market; and 2) their rural intimidation and litigation practices that are destroying honest farmers across America. I also touched on the travesty of patenting life forms, gene-flow and the great likelihood that traditional crops could be lost in a very short period and other serious issues related to modern commercial Agriculture practices and policies. Unfortunately, this was lost in a browser crash, but please consider that myself and the many who simply send the default form letter feel passionately that these issues are important and definitely should be investigated and corrective action taken where necessary.

...

Thanks for your time and for the opportunity to submit comments in advance of the Department of Justice's workshops on "Agriculture and Antitrust Enforcement Issues in Our 21st Century Economy."

As an American produce consumer, I am particularly concerned about Monsanto's control over the seed supply.

By buying seed companies and aggressively patenting life, Monsanto has gained control over as much as 90 percent of seed genetics. This is anti-competitive behavior that skews markets and subjects farmers and consumers to the unchecked power of a company that can raise prices at will.

But, my main concern is that, while Monsanto has acquired a diverse store of seed genetics, they are only making available a few seeds that are genetically modified to be dependent on their chemicals.

The vast bounty of food crops that farmers have cultivated and improved upon over the last 10,000 or so years should not be allowed to be bought up and put out of commission by a company bent on whittling down food varieties to a few pesticide-dependent genetically modified crops.

The most devious part of Monsanto's business model is that their Frankenseeds can cross-pollinate with organic and traditional varieties, destroying their unique characteristics and infecting them with genetically engineered chemical dependence or even "Terminator" or "Traitor" technology that renders seeds sterile, a literal death sentence for seeds maintained through conventional breeding.

The same way we protect animal species from extinction, we should protect plant species, especially the tens of thousands of food varieties, from companies like Monsanto that are consciously eliminating them.

I urge you to please include in your investigation a consideration of the importance keeping seeds, the foundation of human life, at least in the marketplace, if not in the public domain where they truly belong.

Sincerely,

Blake Corbitt