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**Sent:** Wednesday, December 30, 2009 7:46 PM  
**To:** ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>  
**Subject:** Corporate control of food and agriculture

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I am a nutrition consultant, chef, and coordinator of an elementary school nutrition and fitness program. I am writing because I am very concerned about the consolidation of corporate control of our food and agriculture sectors.

My main concern, though there are many, is the quality of food most widely available in our grocery stores. Processing and refining of food products are more profitable for corporations, so what most Americans eat are food products steps removed from real food, full of additives, preservatives, high-fructose corn syrup, artificial colors, etc. One look at our current health crises of obesity and diabetes, as well as other widespread health issues, highlights the true cost of a national diet of these types of food.

Corporate control of our food and ag sectors have also been responsible for the introduction of genetically modified organisms, without the proper testing or knowledge of what these products can do to the health of our citizens and natural environment.

Another concern of mine, is the heavy dependence of fossil fuels required by the corporate farming model. Just some of the problems with this situation are the marriage of food prices to the cost of fuel, our dependence on foreign governments for our food production, the toxic by-products in our food and in the environment, and the massive amount of CO2 produced by corporate farming methods, a major contributor to global climate change.

I would urge our government to support small farmers and organic agricultural practices. I would strongly suggest spending a much larger portion of our agricultural support funds to encourage small, local, organic agriculture in all areas of the country. It is imperative to have healthy, fresh foods available from many local sources, creating a healthier, more secure food system for this country. The health of his country's citizens should not be in the hands of a few corporations with global business interests. It should be in the hands of a diverse number of farmers on a community level, not only increasing our access to healthy food, but creating more jobs in the agriculture and food sectors.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts on this important subject.

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