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Sent: Wednesday, December 30, 2009 8:52 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Corporate control of our food supply in the United States

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you 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".

I am an organic consumer and a cancer survivor. For years, I have been interested in food issues. I have become increasingly concerned about the trend toward consolidation of power in the agricultural and food processing sectors. I strongly support small family farms, farmer's markets, and eating locally grown foods in season - food which is farmed by sustainable methods.

Our food supply is not safe when it is governed by corporate food interests. I am extremely uncomfortable with some statistics I recently read: "There are two million farmers and 300 million eaters in the United States. Standing between them are a handful of corporations who control how food gets from one side to the other." For the small farmers and consumers, that equation is a recipe for disaster. And, for the environment, it is the same since these few companies support chemical agriculture, factory farming and genetic engineering. Not only does chemically laced and GMO mutated food substantially contribute to a general decline in health in the United States (and in the world), but such practices also destroy our environment and destabilize the climate. Maintaining this course is suicidal to all life on this planet.

We once had an abundant and diverse seed supply. Monsanto now owns close to 90% of seed genetics and makes available only a few varieties of seed - those that are genetically modified and dependent on their chemicals. Studies have shown that GMO seed requires more pesticides and other chemicals to realize a harvest.

Centralization may work well in some sectors of the economy. But, it does not work for our food supply which must decrease its reliance on fossil fuels and rely substantially less on large, centralized processing plants (a breeding ground for e coli). For these reasons, and for so many more that others will present in their letters, I support agriculture that is free from control by multinational companies for whom profit and expediency are the major considerations.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns in this matter. I will follow the investigation in the coming year.

Sincerely,
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