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**Sent:** Thursday, December 31, 2009 2:47 PM  
**To:** ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>  
**Subject:** Comments

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I am writing because I am very concerned about the direction agriculture and horticulture is heading in this country. The growing of food has become a big corporate business in such a way that puts our entire population, environment, health and security at risk. I am talking about:

- the increasing epidemic of diabetes and related health issues due to poor quality 'cheap' food.
- the monopolization of seed distribution, and the bullying of farmers who want to diversify.
- giant 'corporate farms' pushing the small farmers out of business and centralizing food growing and supplies. This makes our entire 'food distribution network' vulnerable and less resilient. This is a serious security issue.
- the questionable practice of growing GMO crops that contaminate other crops (particularly certified organic crops), plus the growing evidence that consuming GMO food crops may have serious health consequences.
- how modern farming practices are polluting our environment including the water table, waterways, soil, air (through toxic spray drift) and of course the food itself.
- the loss of crop diversity due to large companies (ie Monsanto) taking control of seed development and distribution.
- the increasing de-naturing of our food for processing and packaging ease (and money saving) instead of for health, sustainability and environmental reasons.

The bottom line is that Big Business should not be running our food production, but if they are, then they MUST be monitored, regulated and kept in line by a transparent, honest (ie uncorrupt) system. Laws will have to be changed and enforced. Unregulated free market capitalism does not work when comes to sustaining the health and wealth for the common good of a country. This has become apparent over and over again. Our current system is so bad that it is literally destroying this country by weakening the health of our people, land and creative motivation.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Aria Seidl

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