

**From:** Maribel Jerez-Bennett <maribel@maribelandco.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 31, 2009 6:36 PM  
**To:** ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>  
**Subject:** GMO's protest and call for reform

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Esteemed Sir or Madam,

Recently I bought some heirloom seeds for my garden and felt gratitude for the company who provided me with the opportunity to grow them without the contamination of GMO's. I also feel concerned that this opportunity is threatened, since it has become increasingly harder to find corn seed stock (as well as other species) that is uncontaminated. Upon laboratory testing this contaminated seed would have a corporate owner even though it was initially grown by a small family farmer wanting nothing to do with the patented seed variety. How is our natural history being protected by comparison to how we choose to protect corporations? This is one of the fundamental questions entangled with our survival as we look toward the protection of the Earth's environment. Our natural history is key in putting together the puzzle which leads to a clearer understanding of climate change and the devastating effects of invasive species.

I am appalled to learn about the poor scientific and unethical practices of Monsanto all over the world. They have managed to infiltrate a cycle of prosperity the world was freely a part of for millennia. The cycle of harvesting includes the gathering of seeds for a new season at the end of the reaping. In the US we are allowing a corporation to disrupt this cycle and take ownership of a source of life and prosperity for farmers and consumers. How can we regulate food prices efficiently while the food supply is privately held by a monopoly? It only makes sense that to influence them one need either to put the breaks on early or get in bed with them later with disastrous consequences for the subordinate party, which in this case would surprisingly be the government. We have watched this happen over and over again with diverse industries, but we as a nation can choose to stop this monopoly on seeds and genetic monoculture now before it goes any further. I submit my plea that we reconsider the usage of Monsanto as a seed supplier to our farmers. That we ban this seed supply of GMO's from our agricultural programs and instead encourage a direction of innovation which we will not regret. Begin a new green revolution where the emphasis lies in working with nature's intelligence, the usage of biomimicry as an alternative to destructive and counterproductive measures of biological defense. Can we afford to let Monsanto learn from its greedy mistakes? Well, I think we can safely say by looking at the recent shifts in the American automotive industry that we can and we must. Part of changing the infrastructure of our nation to a better functioning model is being accountable for the mistaken and unchecked growth of the past. It might feel like a hit in the short term, but the long term will be healthier and sound. Please, let us stand against corporate greed in our government and aid in the instigation of an agricultural revolution worthy of 21<sup>st</sup> century awareness.

Warmest regards,

Maribel

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