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Sent: Thursday, December 31, 2009 10:05 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Agribusiness

I am writing as I am very concerned about the food business in our country. It is important that our food system be totally overhauled. The amount of genetically modified crops is growing and the need to protect our heritage seeds and crops is essential. The dominance of Monsanto and their greed which is destroying the independent farmers needs to be stopped. Farmers have planted their own seeds for centuries and this system works. Monsanto must not control seed distribution and be allowed to harass and destroy farmers that stand up to this giant cooperation.

It is imperative that we support locally grown food and sustainability. The large factory farms are leaving pollution and toxins which will have long term negative effects on our farmlands. The cruel and inhumane ways huge animal factories are functioning creates unhealthy products and increased toxins in our meats and poultry. It is essential for healthy and safe food that small farms be supported as the best products are locally grown and produced on a smaller scale where the farmer is in control of how to operate his business. Currently large agricultural corporations set ground rules for their 'employees' based on maximum profit with no concern for the damage done to the soil, surrounding waterways, integrity of the product, treatment of animals or concern for the safety of the product.

Please critically exam are food supply system and bring the independent knowledgeable farmer back in the picture and give them an opportunity to help transform/fix/improve our food system. We need to support Farmers Markets, educate about the problems and unknowns with genetically modified crops, encourage sustainable farming practices and help everyone to compost as we need healthy fertile soil. More organic-less pesticides and herbicides, will help turn our dysfunctional and unsafe food agribusiness into a system that works with nature rather than trying to manipulate nature.

I am fortunate to live in a rural environment in the Northeast which supports a farmers market made up of local farmers. Also within 15 miles is the Willimantic Food Coop which supports local farmers and sells organic products and is active in promoting sustainable farming practices. My New Years wish is that everyone in America will have access to healthy, locally grown and organic foods. Thank you. Loretta Wrobel, Ashford,CT

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