

From: birddoc@harrisonsbirdfoods.com
Sent: Saturday, January 2, 2010 4:12 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Stop Monsanto

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January 2, 2010

US Department of Justice

Dear US Department of Justice:

I have been supplying an organic pet bird food for three decades to veterinarians. Four years ago I decided the best way to support the farmer who did the lions share of my product raw ingredient procurement and pre cooking activities was to purchase a small farm and convert to organic.

My farm had only round up ready soybeans and corn for decades. In places 2 feet of soil were lost to erosion from the poor soil conservation practices and artificial fertilizers and pesticides used.

Production from the start was low due to poor soil conditions. In these four short years frogs, dragon flies, butterflies and earth worms have returned. The soil has begun to lose the dense compact condition the chemical damages have done. Production is improving.

This summer I accompanied a former Monsanto corn expert on a field investigation. The corn had failed to produce cobs in a Monsanto GM seed corn. I mentioned the corn had blight (mold infestation). The comment was they would just suggest extra antifungal sprays for this variety.

That is what has happened to Monsanto GM corn and soy - farmers must add more roundup to control weeds every year. This raises chemical cost not production - that is Monsanto's grasp on the world seed market. More chemical use while paying \$300 a bushel for seed you are not free to use after raising it or even if you did it would not breed true but instead produce an inferior offspring with 1/4 the production.

Their goal of 400 bushels of GM corn per acer will increase the demand for liquid ammonia which is already polluting wells, rivers and streams nation wide.

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."

As an organic consumer, I am particularly concerned about Monsanto's control over the seed supply.

By buying seed companies and aggressively patenting life, Monsanto has gained control over as much as 90 percent of seed genetics. This is anti-competitive behavior that skews markets and subjects farmers and consumers to the unchecked power of a company that can raise prices at will.

But, my main concern is that, while Monsanto has acquired a diverse store of seed genetics, they are only making available a few seeds that are genetically modified to be dependent on their chemicals.

The vast bounty of food crops that farmers have cultivated and improved upon over the last 10,000 or so years should not be allowed to be bought up and put out of commission by a company bent on whittling down food varieties to a few pesticide-dependent genetically modified crops.

The most devious part of Monsanto's business model is that their Frankenseeds can cross-pollinate with organic and traditional varieties, destroying their unique characteristics and infecting them with genetically engineered chemical dependence or even "Terminator" or "Traitor" technology that renders seeds sterile, a literal death sentence for seeds maintained through conventional breeding.

The same way we protect animal species from extinction, we should protect plant species, especially the tens of thousands of food varieties, from companies like Monsanto that are consciously eliminating them.

I urge you to please include in your investigation a consideration of the importance keeping seeds, the foundation of human life, at least in the marketplace, if not in the public domain where they truly belong.

Sincerely,

Greg Harrison
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