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Sent: Tuesday, January 5, 2010 8:00 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: corporate power in the food/ag sector

greetings. i am a citizen who is concerned about the state of our nation's food, where it comes from and who is in charge of it. the past years have opened up some gargantuan issues about nutrition and the quality of food that we eat. i am very concerned that, not too far in the distant future, a couple of mega-corporations can be dictating what, how and why we eat the food we do.

here is why:

for decades, in the name of modernization and convenience, we have been ingesting preservatives and chemicals, greasy fast food and much, much less fresh food. this has made corporations extremely wealthy; however, the human body wasn't made to easily digest things like aspartame and high fat contents. human beings need real, natural, as local as possible, food to survive and live healthy lives.

the cost of the above mentioned inventions has been made so affordable that this is the type of "food" that many lower income families live on. this food is also served in school lunchrooms. how is a child supposed to be fully alert and engaged in a class after they have eaten a breakfast of powdered pancakes and a lunch that might offer no fresh food other than a piece of wilted lettuce and a slice of an unripe tomato?

the cost of "real" food has dramatically risen, as has the use of pesticides and genetic modifications.

the escalation that our nation currently faces of obesity, lethargy, childhood diseases that put our children on drugs and major diseases such as cancer, diabetes and heart attacks is devastating. these things, however, have become the "norm."

i'm concerned about democracy, free-enterprise and right-livelihood. these opportunities no longer exist if a few mega-corporations are given the power to control our food. after generations of family ownership, local farms are going out of business because most small farmers can't compete with prices set by industrial farms and consolidated buyers who don't care about the product they produce as much as they care about the bottom line they produce.

my thanks to the department of justice for taking action on this extremely serious life- and culture-threatening phenomenon. i very much appreciate the opportunity to comment on this topic. thank you for your attention and consideration.

sincerely,

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