

From: sarabledsoe@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, January 7, 2010 11:53 AM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Please read! From concerned citizen!

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January 7, 2010

US Department of Justice

Dear US Department of Justice:

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. Plus they are suing for the rights of organic crops that have been contaminated. This is an outrage because it is not the farmers' fault (nor Monsanto's) that this contamination is happening. It is one of Mother Nature's natural characteristics...to blow seeds, to repollinate. So they have no rights to the organic crops that their Frankenseeds polluted. Monsanto is also ruining the lives of farmers who have been doing only what their ancestors have been doing for centuries. Seed cleaning. There is no crime in cleaning or saving the seeds that you have had that do not belong to Monsanto. Monsanto is intimidating these poor people. Alienating them from their fellow farmers who are afraid to stand up to Monsanto. Blacklisting

them. Bankrupting them in court cost until they give up. Monsanto is running a totalitarian dictatorship on a product that we do not even know if it is safe for human consumption, due to inadequate testing.

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. I also urge that we put into act a mandatory labeling law on all GMO's. As a born citizen of The United States of America, it is my right to know what is in the food I am eating.

Thank you for your time. I hope you read this with all sincerity.

Sincerely,

Sara Bledsoe