



THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE GRANGE

December 29, 2009

VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL & E-MAIL - (agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov)

Legal Policy Section
Antitrust Division
U.S. Department of Justice
450 5th Street N.W., Suite 11700
Washington, DC 20001

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter as comments toward the joint public workshop to be conducted in Iowa on March 12, 2010. We very much appreciate the U.S. Department of Justice and USDA accepting input from the various entities that may be interested.

The Grange is the oldest agricultural organization in the country, and the North Carolina State Grange has been a long-time advocate for agricultural interests in the state. Family farming remains an extremely important means of livelihood, and it represents a significant portion of the economy in North Carolina. Advances in agricultural technology have allowed farmers to increase production over the years, and we look forward to continued improvements in seed quality in the future. The fact that farmers have choices in the marketplace for the seeds they desire is important. Agriculture will continue to benefit from competition among seed products as companies strive to generate better varieties with improved traits.

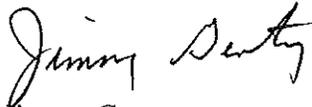
We believe that the Department of Justice should be very cautious in regards to mergers or acquisitions that could lead to monopolies within segments of agriculture. Fewer choices combined with less competition could affect pricing as well as quality and ultimately lead to reduced income for producers. Each year, producers make their seed purchase decisions based upon a variety of factors including price, quality, as well as prior performance. When producers wish to purchase new varieties that they have not utilized before, there should be adequate choices of quality seed at reasonable prices.

Seed companies are encouraged to continue providing high-quality seed that will provide good yields. America is going through a continual process of losing farmland to

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development. If this trend continues, it will be imperative that we produce more from less available farmland in order to feed a growing population. This will be a gigantic challenge for the future of agriculture. Just as in the past, new innovations through sound science and technology will lead to a more productive agriculture for tomorrow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jimmy Gentry".

Jimmy Gentry
President

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cc: Mr. Glenn Jernigan *(via e-mail)*