

From: Matthew Swyers <mswyers@earthlink.net>
Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2009 2:15 AM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comments

I am writing because I am concerned about the lack of competition in agricultural markets. Just one company, Monsanto, controls the majority of seeds in the US, and regularly threatens farmers who don't buy its seeds. No one should "own" a biological entity.

Why aren't there decent labels telling you where food is grown, what chemicals are on it, and if it's genetically modified? Food producers should have to prove that ANY additive or process is completely safe. Error should be on the side of caution not commerce.

There is a "revolving door" of personnel between corporate lobbyists and government regulators. No wonder corporations aren't held to strict standards. Science not corporate cronyism should be the basis for regulation.

Prices are rising at the supermarket, but farmers are struggling -- and big food companies have made record profits this year. Smaller, family farms and co-ops should be the rule, not the exception.

Food is grown and raised in ways that are terrible for the environment, with methods that pollute the water, poison the soil, and threaten our long-term food security. We need to be transitioning to local, organic food production and a complete rejection of petroleum based agriculture. We should also be encouraging diversity in the food supply, local and urban gardens, and in the process clean up our water supply.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Matthew Swyers

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, 94550-4770