From: vbaker@sstar.com
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To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comment on Monsanto control over seed supply

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US Department of Justice

Dear US Department of Justice:

This is an issue I have been concerned about for many years. A farmer in Canada was successfully sued by Monsanto when seed from their test field blew over and sprouted on the edge of the farmer's field. The farmer was found guilty of illegally growing Monsanto's seeds. This is one small example of the way that natural processes are being made illegal (blown seed is a fact of life), controlled, and monopolized by Monsanto. This is outrageous and is very much not in the national interest of the United States for food security. Food security demands rich diversity of supply and ability to call forth genetic stocks as conditions change. Monsanto is situated to interfere with food security, not only "just" the sovereignty of farmers and food producers.

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,

Victoria Baker