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**To:** ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>  
**Subject:** Comment

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December 19, 2009

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. We know that GMO crops can be cross pollinated with naturally growing crops in adjacent fields and the natural crops lose their unique genetic makeup. Farmers in Great Britain learned this fact to their grief and have discontinued planting GMO seeds because of the cross pollination problems. And there is strong evidence that the collapse of the bee populations are linked with the GMO pollen being carried back to the hives.

Monsanto's manipulation of the genetic makeup of their GMO seeds/plants will lead to the destruction of the genetic makeup of our food supply and the bees that carry on the pollination of our crops. Monsanto is not concerned that they are destroying both the organic seed inventory but the pollinating bee population too.

The result of Monsanto corporate decisions and manipulation of the genetic materials in their seeds will directly lead to devastating consequences affecting the entire world population. Controlling access to non GMO seeds/plants is not something I want Monsanto to be able to do, and they are well on their way to accomplishing this feat--they are already in control of 90% of the seed inventory. I do not want to have to use their chemicals in my organic garden to make the plants produce fruit/vegetables. I do not want to put GMO foods in my body.

Allowing the use of GMO crops in products and not requiring labeling to inform the consumer of their presence is another unconscionable action. We MUST be able to make informed decisions at the grocery store. As things stand now, I simply do not purchase anything that I suspect has been manipulated/ tainted with GMO technology. That eliminates hundreds of items from my shopping list and has a direct affect on the bottom line of hundreds of companies--something that should be of great concern to all involved in the food production chain. Allowing these products to be marketed without labeling is equally unconscionable by my government--a system that is supposed to put my health and welfare first not corporate interests. But we all are very conscious of how things really work in

government.

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. 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. This corporate giant can lock away the non-GMO seed inventory from all of us and force us to use their tainted product and the necessary chemicals to make the plants produce. I do not want my food production controlled in such a manner.

Monsanto has gained control over as much as 90 percent of seed genetics. This is anticompetitive behavior that skews markets and subjects farmers and consumers to the unchecked power of a company that can raise prices at will and destroy our health with impunity. Their dream/goal is to make it illegal for me--in my own organic garden--to save seeds from one year to the next, all because it makes me independent of their GMO inventory? I DO NOT WANT THE GOVERNMENT IN MY ORGANIC GARDEN!! I do not want some government worker raiding my seed box and pulling up plants in my home garden that do not meet Monsanto's requirements.

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. If you doubt the results of corporate control of food inventory, just consider the loss of scores of apple varieties. There used to be dozens of varieties growing throughout the country but the transportability and ripening methods used by giant food corporations have limited us to a half dozen choices in our supermarket bins. The only way I can find a wider choice is to drive to Western Maryland to the local orchard there and then I have an expanded inventory of only 20 kinds of apples.

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,

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