

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

February 9, 2011

The Honorable Eric Holder
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Attorney General Holder and Secretary Vilsack,

We are writing in regard to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) competition workshops which were held throughout 2010. From March through December 2010, workshops were held in Iowa, Alabama, Wisconsin, Colorado, and the District of Columbia covering seed, poultry, dairy, livestock, and price margins. In addition, written and public comments were also accepted on these topics.

These workshops brought many of the key players on agricultural competition together and we thank you for this proactive step in beginning a dialogue on vertical integration, buyer power, market transparency, concentration, and retail prices. Producers, economists, academics, and government and elected officials were all able to participate in this process.

With the conclusion of the last workshop on December 8, 2010, we would appreciate an update as to what the DOJ and USDA plans for its next steps. As Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Judiciary, please provide to us an outline of any plans or further action items that DOJ and USDA intend to take in this area. While making the workshop transcripts and comments available to the public has been helpful, we would also like to know what your Departments have learned from this process and whether any additional follow up is warranted.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,


PATRICK LEAHY
Chairman


CHARLES E. GRASSLEY
Ranking Member

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