

Poll: Farmers Overwhelmingly Oppose Bayer Monsanto Merger
An overwhelming majority of surveyed farmers are concerned about the proposed Bayer-Monsanto merger and believe it will have a negative impact on independent farmers and farming communities, [a poll released today has found.](#)

According to the poll, of the farmers who responded:

- **93.7 percent are concerned about the proposed merger of Bayer and Monsanto (82.8 percent are very concerned/10.9 percent somewhat concerned);**
- **93.7 percent of farmers are concerned that the proposed Bayer-Monsanto merger will negatively impact independent farmers and farming communities (83.9 percent are very concerned/9.8 percent somewhat concerned);**

The farmer's top three concerns of the merger are:

- **91.9 percent of farmers are concerned that the merged company will use its dominance in one product to push sales of other products (79.6 percent very concerned/12.3 percent somewhat concerned);**
- **91.7 percent of farmers concerned that Bayer/Monsanto will control data about farm practices (79.5 percent very concerned/12.2 percent somewhat concerned)**
- **89.0 percent of farmers think the merger will result in increased pressure for chemically dependent farming (77.1 percent very concerned/11.9 percent somewhat concerned).**

The poll also found a high level of concern amongst farmers surveyed that the merged company will control data about farm practices, will increase prices, diminish quality, choice and seed varieties including availability of regionally adaptive seed, which farmers identified as critical given increasing climate

variability.

The new poll, fielded by a coalition of farm groups, comes as the U.S. Department of Justice is reviewing the merger between chemical giant Bayer (NYSE:BAYN) and agrochemical giant Monsanto (NYSE: MON). If the Bayer-Monsanto merger is approved, the new company would be the world's largest vegetable seed company, world's largest cottonseed company, world's largest manufacturer and seller of herbicides, and the world's largest owner of intellectual property/patents for herbicide tolerant traits.

A white paper, prepared by the Konkurrenz Group, examines why the U.S. Department of Justice's Antitrust Division should not accept Bayer's proposed divestiture and behavioral remedies. Relying on the survey findings and other evidence, the white paper examines why the likely complex behavioral and structural remedies will not likely restore competition in the seed, trait, and pesticide industries.

"This survey underscores what we've been hearing from our farm family members for decades - that overwhelming consolidation has substantially eliminated competition in the marketplace. Four or five firms dictate the prices that farmers pay for their inputs. Family farmers deserve fair prices, choices in what they plant, and the type of market competition that incentivizes firms to compete and innovate for their business. A Bayer-Monsanto merger stands to move each of these factors in the wrong direction, and that is away from competitive markets. Our survey makes it pretty clear that farmers want the merger blocked," said Roger Johnson, President of National Farmers Union.

"The American Dream is built on the core value that family farmers and business men and women should have an opportunity to take their ideas, ingenuity, hard work and resources to the market and have a fair chance at being successful in their endeavors. If allowed, this merger will deny farmers and businesses the ability to have access to seed traits and chemicals that would allow them to differentiate their products in the market, denying consumers the choices they are demanding," said Joe Maxwell, Executive Director of Organization for Competitive Markets.

"The chemical-intensive agriculture these corporations promote has given rise to superweeds and a reliance on even more potent, and potentially dangerous, chemicals," said Farm Aid communications director Jennifer Fahy. "The proposed merger of Monsanto and Bayer further strengthens their ability to threaten the development of a sustainable food system that supports independent family farmers and rural economies, meets the growing demand of concerned eaters, and protects our soil and water. If we care about our food and our planet, the time to enforce antitrust laws is now!"

"This merger will further concentrate ownership of our seed supply, inevitably leading to fewer seed variety options in the marketplace, less genetic diversity in our fields, and higher seed prices for farmers," said Kiki Hubbard of Organic Seed Alliance. "Seed prices have nearly quadrupled in the past 20 years, even though yield and the prices farmers receive for their crops have not. History shows us that mergers of this magnitude also reduce rather than inspire innovation. Mergers of this magnitude therefore affect all farmers, regardless of how they farm, where they farm, and what they grow."

"A merger between Bayer and Monsanto would be a massive threat to food supply and farmers around the world," said Anne Isakowitsch, Campaign Manager at SumOfUs. "Now that Monsanto and Bayer are closer than ever to this potentially disastrous takeover of our global agricultural system, we must all step up our efforts and speak out. The future of farming and food safety depend on it. This deal has the capability to usher in a new era of sterile crops soaked in dangerous pesticides around the world; we cannot not simply allow this to happen."

"The evidence is overwhelming clear that divestitures or remedies will fail farmers and consumers," said Tiffany Finck-Haynes, senior food futures campaigner, Friends of the Earth. "We urge the Department of Justice to listen to farmers and the more than 1 million Americans calling on the department to block the Bayer-Monsanto merger. The only answer to this merger is NO."

The unprecedeted poll of farmer's opinions was conducted between January 26 and February 12, 2018 by a coalition of farm groups who collected 957 responses from farmers in 48 states. Cumulatively, the farmers who responded to the poll

cultivate close to 2 million acres, and represent all sectors of farming.

The following organizations administered the survey to their members or networks: Agricultural Justice Project, California Farmers Guild, Center for Rural Affairs, City Seed, Community Alliance with Family Farmers, Domestic Fair Trade Association, Farmworker Association of Florida, Family Farm Defenders, Farm Aid, Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance, Farmworker Association of Florida, Florida Organic Growers, Friends of Family Farmers, Hawai'i Farmers Union United, Hawai'i Tropical Fruit Growers, Iowa Farmers Union, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, Kansas Rural Center, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, Minnesota Farmers Union, Missouri Coalition for the Environment, National Family Farm Coalition, National Farmers Union, National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association, Natural Born Tillers, New Britain ROOTS, Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance, Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut, Northeast Organic Farming Association of Massachusetts, Organic Farmers Association, Organic Farming Research Foundation, Organic Seed Alliance, Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association, Organization for Competitive Markets, Our Family Farms, Pesticide Action Network North America, Practical Farmers of Iowa, Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, United Stockgrowers of America, Rural Coalition, Rural Vermont, Sustainable Food Center, Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, The Cornucopia Institute, Vilicus Farms, and the Women Food and Agriculture Network.

The full results and white paper, which demonstrates that the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division should reject Bayer's proposed divestitures and behavioral remedies and say NO to this merger, are [available here](#).