

**Media Coverage of Center for Food Safety & Save Our Seeds: *Seed Giants vs. U.S. Farmers* Report and Amicus Brief for Bowman v. Monsanto Supreme Court Case**



SEED GIANTS vs.  
U.S. FARMERS



A REPORT BY THE CENTER FOR FOOD SAFETY & SAVE OUR SEEDS  
2013

**Op-Eds:**

**[OP-ED: Monsanto, the Court and the Seeds of Dissent](#)**

19 February, 2013 By George Kimbrell and Debbie Barker (LA Times)

*Also published in Chicago Tribune, Dallas Morning News, and Tampa Tribune.*

“Through this process, farmers developed a diverse array of plants that could thrive in various geographies, soils, climates and ecosystems. But today this history of seeds is seemingly forgotten in light of a patent system that, since the mid-1980s, has allowed corporations to own products of life.”

“Properties of these genes are the product of centuries of plant breeding and should not, many argue, become the product of a corporation. Instead, these genes should remain in the public domain.”

**[OP-ED: We need to protect farmers' rights](#)**

15 February, 2013 by Debbie Barker (The Progressive)

*Published in a number of McClatchy papers nationwide, including the Kansas City Star.*

“Farmers have been saving, buying, replanting and breeding seeds for centuries. Yet today, with patents in hand, huge corporations are prosecuting farmers for these age-old practices. Seeds, once a shared, renewable resource, are now being privatized and monopolized.”

**Major Newspaper Coverage:**

**[Monsanto Sued Small Farmers to Protect Seed Patents, Report Says](#)**

12 February, 2013 by Paul Harris (The Guardian)

*Quotes SOS Program Director, Debbie Barker and CFS Senior Attorney, George Kimbrell*

“‘Corporations did not create seeds and many are challenging the existing patent system that allows private companies to assert ownership over a resource that is vital to survival and that historically has been in the public domain,’ said Debbie Barker, an expert with SOS and one of the report’s co-authors. Another co-author, CFS legal expert George Kimbrell, said victory in the

Bowman case could help shift that balance of power back to farmers. 'The great weight of history and the law is on the side of Mr. Bowman and farmers in general,' he said."

### **Farmer's Supreme Court Challenge Puts Monsanto Patents at Risk**

15 February, 2013 by Andrew Pollack (New York Times)

*Quotes CFS Science Policy Analyst, Bill Freese*

"Patents have 'given seed companies enormous power, and it's come at the detriment of farmers,' said Bill Freese, science policy analyst for the Center for Food Safety, which was an author of a brief on the side of Mr. Bowman. 'Seed-saving would act as a much needed restraint on skyrocketing biotech seed prices.'"

### **Indiana Soybean Farmer Sees Monsanto Lawsuit Reach US Supreme Court**

9 February 2013, by Paul Harris (The Guardian)

*Quotes SOS Program Director, Debbie Barker*

"This coming Tuesday, farming campaign groups the Center for Food Safety and Save Our Seeds will release a joint report examining the modern seeds industry. The organizations are enthusiastic backers of Bowman's cause. Debbie Barker, a program director for SOS, said a Bowman victory at the Supreme Court could nudge the industry towards opening up and treating seeds as a common resource, not a fiercely fought-over commercial battleground. 'It would help with wider reforms,' Barker said. SOS believes Monsanto and other major firms are less concerned with protecting interests in research than in their lucrative business model. After all, just three firms now control more than 50% of the global seed market."

### **Farmer's Use of Genetically Modified Soybeans Grows Into Supreme Court Case**

9 February 2013, by Robert Barnes (Washington Post)

"'The current intellectual property environment of transgenic crops has spurred the privatization and concentration of the world's seed supply,' said a brief filed by the Center for Food Safety and Save Our Seeds, groups that have been highly critical of Monsanto and genetically modified crops. 'Market concentration has resulted in 10 multinational corporations holding approximately two-thirds (65%) of commercial seed for major crops, reducing choice and innovation, and increasing prices for the American farmer.'"

### **The Future of Patent Law Rests in a Farmer's Hands**

14 February, 2013 by Ian Berry (Wall Street Journal)

"Critics of Monsanto, including environmental groups and organic-farming advocates, have rallied around Mr. Bowman, arguing that his case is part of a long-standing history of bullying by Monsanto. The company has investigated the planting activities of many farmers over the years, and it has filed 144 lawsuits alleging patent infringement, according to the Center for Food Safety, a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy group."

## **News Wire Coverage:**

### **Vernon Bowman, Indiana Farmer, Prepares To Take On Monsanto In Seed Patent Case**

15 February, 2013 by Carey Gillam (Reuters)

*Quotes CFS Executive Director, Andrew Kimbrell*

*Also published in Huffington Post*

"'Through a patenting system that favors the rights of corporations over the rights of farmers

and citizens, our food and farming system is being held hostage by a handful of companies,' said Andrew Kimbrell, executive director of the Center for Food Safety, one of the groups supporting Bowman. 'Nothing less than the future of food is at stake.'"

### [High-Stakes Fight Over Soybeans At High Court](#)

18 February, 2013 by Mark Sherman/Associated Press (Salt Lake Tribune)

*Quotes CFS Science Policy Analyst, Bill Freese*

*Also published by NPR, Honolulu Star, Seattle PI, ABC News, as well as many others.*

"'It has become extremely difficult for farmers to find high-quality conventional seeds,' said Bill Freese, the center's science policy analyst. Consumer groups and organic food producers have fought Monsanto over genetically engineered farm and food issues in several settings. They lost a campaign in California last year to require labels on most genetically engineered processed foods and produce. Monsanto and other food and chemical companies spent more than \$40 million to defeat the ballot measure."

### [Monsanto Takes on 76-Year-Old Farmer Over Seed Patents](#)

12 February 2013, by Susan Decker and Jack Kaskey (Bloomberg)

"Monsanto can use sales contracts, rather than patents, to prevent copying while permitting farmers to save seed for themselves, the Center for Food Safety, a Washington-based critic of genetically engineered foods, told the court in a brief. That would help cut farmers' soybean seed costs that quadrupled after the 1996 introduction of Roundup Ready beans, the center said."

## **Radio and Television Interviews:**

### [Indiana Farmer Takes Seed-Giant Monsanto To Supreme Court](#)

20 February 2013 (NPR's On Point with Tom Ashbrook)

*Panel Discussion featuring SOS Program Director, Debbie Barker*

### [Farmer vs. Monsanto](#)

20 February 2013 (Huffington Post Live)

*Panel discussion featuring CFS Science Policy Analyst, Bill Freese*

### [Corporate Tax Bandits, Suing Monsanto, Science Fiction Realities](#)

20 February 2013 (Russia Today's "Breaking the Set")

*Interview with CFS Science Policy Analyst, Bill Freese*

### [Bowman v. Monsanto: Indiana Farmer's Supreme Court Challenge to Corporate Control of Food Supply](#)

21 February, 2013 (Democracy Now!)

*Interview with SOS Program Director, Debbie Barker*

### [Monsanto v. Bowman: Soybeans to Stem Cells](#)

24 February, 2013 (BioCentury This Week)

*Debate featuring CFS Senior Attorney, George Kimbrell*

## Foreign Press, 5 Languages Worldwide:

### [La guérilla judiciaire des géants des semences contre les fermiers américains](#)

13 February, 2013 by Grégoire Allix (Le Monde)

### [Sementi, più di 400 gli agricoltori portati in tribunale dalla Monsanto](#)

13 February, 2013 by Valentina Neri (Valori.it)

### [Ένας «Δαβίδ» ενάντια στη Monsanto και την «ολιγαρχία των σπόρων»](#)

14 February, 2013 (tvkosmos)

### [Monsanto y su 'oligarquía de la semilla', de nuevo en tela de juicio](#)

14 February, 2013 (RT Spanish)

## Additional Coverage:

### [Who owns seeds? Not you, Monsanto says.](#)

15 February, 2013 by Jane Wells (Christian Science Monitor)

“Bowman has his own supporters filing briefs on his behalf, including the Center for Food Safety, which wrote about ‘Monsanto Company's use of U.S. patent law to control the use of staple crop seeds by farmers.’”

### [Genetically Modified Seed Patents In Shocking Numbers: Report](#)

February 13, 2013 by Rachel Tepper (Huffington Post)

“The Supreme Court will hear arguments Feb. 19 in ‘Bowman v. Monsanto Co.,’ a landmark court battle that has pitted farmer Vernon Hugh Bowman against the international agriculture corporation over the issue of seed patents. In anticipation, the Center for Food Safety and the Save Our Seeds campaigning groups released a report Tuesday detailing similar cases, titled ‘Seed Giants vs. U.S. Farmers.’”

### [Testing the Limits of Seed Patents](#)

11 February, 2013 by Kevin Hartnett (Boston.com/Boston Globe)

“The Obama administration is also on Monsanto’s side, seeing a defeat for the company as a defeat for patent protections of all kinds of self-replicating biotechnologies. Bowman, meanwhile, is supported by groups like the Center for Food Safety and Save Our Seeds. They hope that a favorable ruling would lead to more reforms throughout a commercial seed business that is currently dominated by a small handful of companies.”

### [Supreme Court to Hear Monsanto Seed Patent Case Today](#)

19 February, 2013 (Food Safety News)

“Monsanto sued Bowman for a legal settlement of nearly \$85,000. He was far from the first farmer to find themselves on the receiving end of Monsanto’s patent defense. According to a joint report from the groups Center for Food Safety and Save Our Seeds, ‘Monsanto has alleged seed patent infringement in 144 lawsuits against 410 farmers and 56 small farm businesses in at least 27 U.S. states as of January of 2013.’”

### **Biotech Seed Patent Case Goes To Supreme Court**

16 February, 2013 by Voice of America (Albany Tribune)

*Quotes CFS Senior Attorney, George Kimbrell*

“But George Kimbrell with the Center for Food Safety said patents on seeds have helped just a few companies, like Monsanto, concentrate control over the food supply. ‘To have the privatization and the concentration of seeds the way we do now is only a few decades old. So this case is the current vehicle that could offer a way to renegotiate that social contract,’ said Kimbrell. Kimbrell and others say loosening patent protection would push the balance of power away from the big corporations, and return to farmers a measure of control over one of their primary inputs – their seeds.”

### **In the ring: Monsanto and the farmer**

24 February, 2013 by Charlotte Silver (Al Jazeera)

“A recent report published by the Centre for Food Safety and Save Our Seeds, *Seed Giants vs. US Farmers*, emphasises that since the late 18th century, the US government resisted lobbying efforts to patent seeds while the USDA and private farmers developed plant species through backcrossing, hybridisation and other breeding processes.”

### **Farmer's Use of Modified Seeds Reaches Supreme Court**

8 February 2013, by Ellyn Ferguson (Roll Call)

“Bowman has the support of the National Farmers Union, Center for Food Safety, American Antitrust Institute, the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association and the Public Patent Foundation. The groups say a court decision in favor of Monsanto will give patent holders undue control in the distribution and use of their products. Competition, they argue, will suffer.”

### **Soybean Farmer, Monsanto About to Enter Supreme Court Ring**

13 February, 2013 by Josh Long (Food Product Design)

“The Center for Food Safety on Tuesday released a report that paints an unflattering picture of Monsanto Co. and other corporate titans that control an indispensable commodity for farmers: seeds. The report, ‘Seed Giants v. U.S. Farmers’, was unveiled one week before the U.S. Supreme Court hears oral arguments in a case that pits an American farmer from Indiana against Monsanto Co. Supreme Court justices will decide whether 75-year-old farmer Vernon Hugh Bowman is liable to Monsanto in a patent infringement lawsuit over its crop-protecting biotechnology.”

### **The Worst Thing About GMOs Is That They're Not In the Public Domain**

13 February, 2013 by Brian Merchant (Mother Board)

“A new report, *Seed Giants vs. U.S. Farmers*, details the damage they’ve done. Here’s a quick list of some of the stats: Monsanto alone has brought 142 lawsuits against 410 farmers and 56 small businesses. As a result, it has extracted \$23 million from American small farmers and businesses. Now, 93% of soybeans planted in the U.S. are now genetically modified. So are 86% of corn crops. Those same three big ag firms that control 53% of the global market control 73% of the American market”

### **Monsanto takes home \$23m from small farmers, seeks to maintain 'seed oligarchy'**

13 February, 2013 (RT)

“The lawsuits concern Monsanto’s patent rights as the company strives to prevent farmers from replanting crops grown from the company’s seeds. It’s a concept that a study published on

Tuesday – title ‘Seed Giants vs. U.S. Farmers’ – refers to as creating a ‘seed oligarchy.’ In the report, the Center for Food Safety (CFS) said it discovered 142 patent infringement suits against 410 farmers and 56 small businesses in more than 27 states as of December 2012. The amount of money pocketed by Monsanto comes to a whopping \$23 million. The study was co-produced by the Save Our Seeds (SOS) campaign.”

**Food Future at Stake: Indiana Farmer Takes Monsanto to Supreme Court**

12 February, 2013 (City Watch)

*Quotes CFS Executive Director, Andrew Kimbrell*

“Mr. Bowman’s case represents a systemic crisis in US agriculture,” said CFS Executive Director, Andrew Kimbrell. “Through a patenting system that favors the rights of corporations over the rights of farmers and citizens, our food and farming system is being held hostage by a handful of companies. Nothing less than the future of food is at stake.”