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Monsanto Under Investigation by Seven US States

By Ken Roseboro, ed.
The Organic and Non-GMO Report, April 2010
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At least seven US state attorneys general are investigating whether Monsanto Company has abused its market power to lock out competitors and raise prices on seed. Iowa, Illinois, Ohio, Texas, Virginia, and two other unidentified states are in a working group to investigate the biotech giant.

The states are probing whether Monsanto violated laws by offering rebates to seed distributors for excluding rival seeds, imposing limits on combining the product with other genetic modifications, or offering cash incentives to switch farmers to more expensive generation of seed varieties.

The state investigations add to pressure on Monsanto. The US Justice Department is investigating the company's marketing practices, and DuPont Company has accused Monsanto of anti-competitive practices in licensing litigation.

Daniel Sokol, a law professor at the University of Florida and expert on antitrust matters, told Bloomberg News that a state-level investigation on top of the federal probe "can lengthen the lawsuit and potential settlements and can increase uncertainty and costs for Monsanto."

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