

3. COMPETITION/MONOPOLIES

The rapid consolidation of agricultural businesses that serve farmers is a growing concern. We will seek information on the merger and acquisition of agricultural businesses and how such mergers and acquisitions will help or hinder our members.

We support:

1. Congress, and the relevant federal agencies, working together to closely monitor the agribusiness sector with the objective that current anti-trust laws are applied and enforced to the fullest extent in order to allow full and fair pricing competition to flourish.
2. Improvements to existing laws and regulations to empower appropriate agencies to conduct expanded anti-trust review and oversight.
3. Anti-trust laws or department operations providing increased protection to competitive markets.
4. Limitations enforced on mergers, acquisitions, and joint ventures by the major competitors in agricultural markets dominated by relatively few firms.
5. Giving the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) broader regulatory authority to include regulation of anti-competitive business behavior to protect farmers as well as consumers.
6. Including the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the decision-making procedure with respect to proposed mergers and acquisitions.
7. The Illinois Attorney General's office to investigate agricultural monopolies in Illinois and cooperate with other State Attorneys General and USDOJ in investigating regional monopolies.

We oppose mergers, acquisitions, or leveraged buyouts that create a monopoly of production, marketing, and transportation situations or reduce competition in acquiring, pricing, or transporting agricultural commodities and products.