Case	3:23-cv-00220-JLS-AHG Document 1 File	ed 02/06/23 PageID.1 Page 1 of 22
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6		
7	IN THE UNITED STAT	TES DISTRICT COURT
8 9		STRICT OF CALIFORNIA
10	JACOB SCHEIBE, individually and on behalf of all those similarly situated,	)
11		) ) No. '23CV0220 JLS AHG
12	Plaintiff,	)
13	<i>v</i> .	) CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT )
14	FIT FOODS DISTRIBUTION INC. dba Mutant, <i>a Canadian corporation</i> ,	) JURY TRIAL DEMANDED
15	Defendant.	) )
16		)
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18	Jacob Scheibe ("Plaintiff"), individually	and on behalf of all others similarly situated, by
19 20	and through undersigned counsel, hereby bring	s this action against Fit Foods Distribution Inc.
20	dba Mutant ("Mutant"), alleging that its "O	GEAAR" essential amino acid powder ("the
22	Products"), a dietary supplement manufactured	, packaged, labeled, advertised, distributed, and
23	sold by Defendant, is misbranded and falsely a	dvertised, and upon information and belief and
24	investigation of counsel alleges as follows:	
25	Р	ARTIES
26	1. Plaintiff Jacob Scheibe is and at	all times relevant was a citizen of the state of
27	California, domiciled in San Diego, California.	
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		1- N COMPLAINT

1	2. Defendant Fit Foods Distribution Inc. dba Mutant is a Canadian corporation with
2	its principal place of business and headquarters in Port Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada.
3	On information and belief, decisions relating to marketing, labelling, and formulation of the
4	Products are made at this corporate headquarters.
5	JURISDICTION AND VENUE
6	3. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to the Class
7 8	Action Fairness Act, Pub. L. 109-2, 119 Stat. 4 (codified in scattered sections of Title 28 of the
9	United States Code); specifically, under 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d), which provides for the original
10	jurisdiction of the federal district courts over "any civil action in which the matter in controversy
11	exceeds the sum or value of \$5,000,000, exclusive of interest and costs, and [that] is a class
12	action in which any member of a class of plaintiffs is a citizen of a State different from any
13	defendant." 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d)(2)(A).
14 15	4. Plaintiff seeks to represent Class members who are citizens of states or countries
15	different from the Defendant.
17	5. The matter in controversy in this case exceeds \$5,000,000 in the aggregate,
18	exclusive of interests and costs.
19	6. In addition, "the number of members of all proposed plaintiff classes in the
20	aggregate" is greater than 100. See 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d)(5)(B).
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22	7. In the alternative, this Court has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C.
23	§ 1332(a). The amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000 exclusive of interest and costs.
24	8. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because this action arises out

25 of and relates to Defendant's contacts with this forum.

9. Those contacts include but are not limited to sales of the Products directly to
commercial and individual consumers located in this district, including Plaintiff; shipping the

1 Products to commercial and individual consumers in this district, including Plaintiff; knowingly 2 directing advertising and marketing materials concerning the Products into this district through 3 wires and mails, both directly and through electronic and print publications that are directed to 4 commercial and individual consumers in this district; and operating an e-commerce web site 5 that offers the Products for sale to commercial and individual consumers in this district, as well 6 as offering the Products for sale through third-party e-commerce websites, through both of 7 which commercial and individual consumers residing in this district have purchased the 8 9 Products.

10 10. Defendant knowingly directs electronic activity and ships the Products into this
 11 district with the intent to engage in business interactions for profit, and it has in fact engaged in
 12 such interactions, including the sale of the Products to Plaintiff.

14 11. Defendant also sells the Products to retailers and wholesalers in this district for
15 the purpose of making the Products available for purchase by individual consumers in this
16 district.

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12. Plaintiff's losses and those of other Class members were sustained in this district.
13. Venue is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2) because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to Plaintiff's claims occurred within this district.

14. Venue is also proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(c)(2) because this Court
 maintains personal jurisdiction over Defendant.

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#### FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

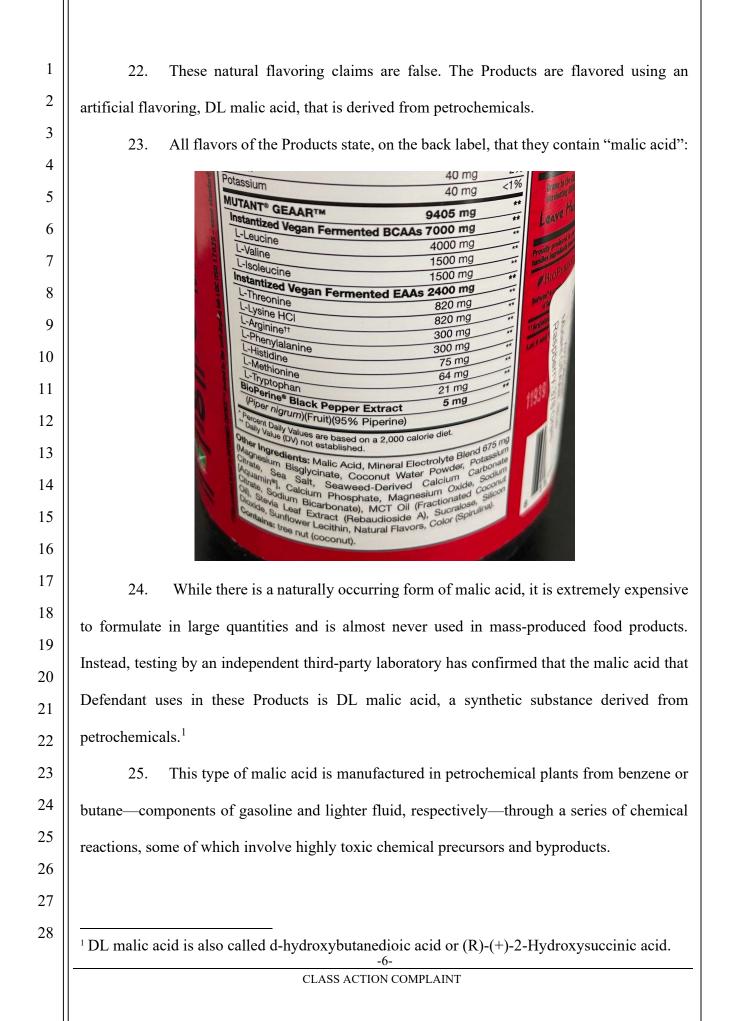
#### A. Consumers Pay A Premium for "Clean Labels."

15. Across the globe, consumers are increasingly attuned to claims that foods are "allnatural," minimally processed, or otherwise free of artificial flavors and preservatives.

27 28 16. For example, a 2018 survey by L.E.K. Consulting found that overwhelming numbers of consumers were committed or casual adherents to so-called "clean label" food

1	attributes: "No artificial ingredients" (69 percent); "No preservatives" (67 percent); or "All-
2	natural" (66 percent). These were the three most attractive attributes in the consumer survey.
3	Roughly 60 to 70 percent of consumers reported a willingness to pay a price premium for "clean
4	label" foods. See https://www.lek.com/insights/ei/next-generation-mindful-food-consumption.
5 6	17. This consumer preference has led to an explosion in the category of "clean label"
7	foods and beverages. Leading analyst Allied Market Research estimated that the "natural foods
8	and drinks" category would grow by an estimated compound annual growth rate of 13.7 percent
9	from 2016 to 2023, reaching \$191 billion in annual sales by 2023. See
10	https://www.alliedmarketresearch.com/natural-food-and-drinks-market.
11	18. On or about August 16, 2022, Mr. Scheibe purchased Mutant GEEAR powder,
12	blue raspberry flavor, from Amazon.com (Order No. 113-8812061-2646630) for \$28.00
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14	inclusive of tax.
15	19. Mr. Scheibe is a student who has recently sought to lose weight and gain muscle.
16	He carefully reviews labels, including the Products' labels, to ensure that he consumes only
17	natural ingredients and avoids artificial flavors and ingredients.
18 19	<b>B.</b> Defendant's Use of Synthetic Flavorings and Deceptive Labels.
20	20. Defendant Mutant formulates, manufactures, and sells a dietary supplement called
21	"GEEAR." These dietary supplement powders purport to make workouts more effective and
22	efficient and to speed muscle recovery and growth.
23	21. The front label (or "principal display panel") of the Products prominently state
24	they contain "No Synthetic Flavors" with attention drawn to the claim through graphic elements.
25	This claim is repeated on the company's Amazon.com storefront, which Scheibe reviewed:
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	-4- CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT





26. Fruit flavors in a food are imparted by the interactions between sugars, acids, lipids, and various volatile compounds. The sweetness or tartness of a fruit flavor is determined 3 by the ratio between the sugars (mainly glucose and fructose) and acids, such as citric and malic 4 acid.

27. The quality and consumer acceptability of fruit flavors is based on their perceived 6 sweetness and tartness, which in turn is driven by the ratio between sugars and acids. Fruits such 7 as raspberries have their own natural ratio of sugars and acids. 8

9 28. The DL malic acid used in the Products is used to create, simulate, and/or reinforce 10 the sweet and tart taste that consumers associate with the fruit flavors stated on the labels.

11 29. Defendant uses the petrochemical-derived DL malic acid in its Products to create 12 a sweet and tart flavor but pretends otherwise, conflating natural and artificial flavorings, 13 misbranding the Products and deceiving consumers. 14

30. The ingredients on the Products' label are declared in a way that is misleading and 15 16 contrary to law, because Defendant designates the ingredient by its generic name, "malic acid," 17 instead of by its specific name, "DL malic acid."

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### **Requirements for Labelling**

19 Federal regulations promulgated pursuant to the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act 31. ("FDCA") require that a food's label accurately describe the nature of the food product and its characterizing flavors. 21 C.F.R. § 102.5(a).

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32. Artificial flavor is defined as "any substance, the function of which is to impart flavor, which is not derived from a spice, fruit or fruit juice, vegetable or vegetable juice, edible yeast, herb, bark, bud, root, leaf or similar plant material, meat, fish, poultry, eggs, dairy products, or fermentation products thereof." 21 C.F.R § 101.22(a)(1).

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1 33. Natural flavor is defined as "essential oil, oleoresin, essence or extractive, protein 2 hydrolysate, distillate, or any product of roasting, heating or enzymolysis, which contains the 3 flavoring constituents" from fruits or vegetables, "whose significant function in food is flavoring 4 rather than nutritional." 21 C.F.R § 101.22(a)(3). 5

Any recognizable primary flavor identified directly or indirectly on the front label 34. of a food product, whether by word, vignette, depiction of a fruit, or other means is referred to as a "characterizing flavor." 21 C.F.R. § 101.22.

Here, the Products' labels both state the characterizing flavors and reinforce the 35. 10 claim that this characterizing flavor is achieved by using only natural flavors through use of depictions of fruits.

36. If a food product's characterizing flavor is not created exclusively by the named 13 flavor ingredient, the product's front label must state that the product's flavor was simulated or 14 reinforced with either natural or artificial flavorings or both. If any artificial flavor is present 15 which "simulates, resembles or reinforces" the characterizing flavor, the front label must 16 17 prominently inform consumers that the product is "Artificially Flavored." 21 C.F.R. § 18 101.22(i)(2).

19 37. A food product's label also must include a statement of the "presence or absence 20 of any characterizing ingredient(s) or component(s) . . . when the presence or absence of such 21 ingredient(s) or component(s) in the food has a material bearing on price or consumer 22 acceptance . . . and consumers may otherwise be misled about the presence or absence of the 23 24 ingredient(s) or component(s) in the food." 21 C.F.R. § 102.5.

38. Such statement must be in boldface print on the front display panel and of sufficient size for an average consumer to notice.

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1	39. California's Sherman Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Law, Cal. Health & Saf. Code §
2	109875, et seq., incorporates all food flavoring and additive regulations of the FDCA.
3	40. By changing the ratio between sugars and acids that is naturally found in fruits
4	such as raspberries, the DL malic acid used in the Products reinforces, simulates, or creates the
5 6	characterizing flavors, regardless of any other effect it may have or purpose for which it was
7	included.
8	41. DL malic acid is not a "natural flavor" as this term is defined by federal and state
9	regulations and is not derived from a fruit or vegetable or any other natural source. The Products
10	therefore contain artificial flavorings.
11	42. Because the Products contain artificial flavoring, California law requires the
12	Products to display both front- and back-label disclosures to inform consumers that the Products
13 14	are artificially flavored.
15	43. The Products have none of the required disclosures regarding the use of artificial
16	flavors.
17	44. Plaintiff reserves the right to amend this Complaint to add further products that
18	contain similar label misrepresentations as testing continues.
19	49. Labels are the chief means by which food product manufacturers convey critical
20 21	information to consumers, and consumers have been conditioned to rely on the accuracy of the
21	claims made on these labels. As the California Supreme Court stated in a case involving alleged
23	violations of the UCL and FAL, "Simply stated: labels matter. The marketing industry is based
24	on the premise that labels matter, that consumers will choose one product over another similar
25	product based on its label." Kwikset Corp. v. Superior Court, 51 Cal.4th 310, 328 (2011).
26	50. Plaintiff reviewed the label on the Products prior to his purchase, and reviewed
27	the natural flavoring claims being made there and. Consumers such as Plaintiff who viewed the
28	-9-
	CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

Products' labels reasonably understood Defendant's "No Synthetic Flavors" statements, as well as its failure to disclose the use of artificially derived malic acid, to mean that the Products contain only natural flavorings. This representation was also false.

51. Consumers including Plaintiff reasonably relied on Defendant's statements such that they would not have purchased the Products from Defendant if the truth about the Products was known, or would have only been willing to pay a substantially reduced price for the Products had they known that Defendant's representations were false and misleading.

9 52. In the alternative, because of its deceptive and false labelling statements,
10 Defendant was enabled to charge a premium for the Products relative to key competitors'
11 products, or relative to the average price charged in the marketplace.

53. Consumers including Plaintiff especially rely on label claims made by food
product manufacturers such as Mutant, as they cannot confirm or disprove those claims simply
by viewing or even consuming the Products.

16 54. Plaintiff suffered economic injury by Defendant's fraudulent and deceptive
17 conduct as stated herein, and there is a causal nexus between Defendant's deceptive conduct and
18 Plaintiff's injury.

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#### **CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

55. Plaintiff brings this action individually and as representative of all those similarly
situated pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23 on behalf of all consumers in the state
of California who purchased the Products within four years prior to the filing of this Complaint.
56. Excluded from the Class are Defendant and its affiliates, parents, subsidiaries,
employees, officers, agents, and directors. Also excluded are any judicial officers presiding over
this matter and the members of their immediate families and judicial staff.

1 57. Plaintiff reserves the right to alter the Class definition, and to amend this 2 Complaint to add Subclasses, as necessary to the full extent permitted by applicable law. 3 58. Certification of Plaintiff's claims for class-wide treatment is appropriate because 4 Plaintiff can prove the elements of the claims on a class-wide basis using the same evidence as 5 individual Class members would use to prove those elements in individual actions alleging the 6 same claims. 7 59. Numerosity – Rule 23(a)(1): The size of the Class is so large that joinder of all 8 9 Class members is impracticable. Plaintiff believes and avers there are thousands of Class 10 members geographically dispersed throughout the state. 11 Existence and Predominance of Common Questions of Law and Fact - Rule 60. 12 23(a)(2), (b)(3): There are questions of law and fact common to the Class. These questions 13 predominate over any questions that affect only individual Class members. Common legal and 14 factual questions and issues include but are not limited to: 15 a. Whether the marketing, advertising, packaging, labeling, and other 16 17 promotional materials for Defendant's Products is misleading and deceptive; 18 b. Whether a reasonable consumer would understand Defendant's "No Synthetic 19 Flavors" claims to indicate that the Products contained only natural flavorings, 20 and reasonably relied upon those representations; 21 c. Whether Defendant was unjustly enriched at the expense of the Plaintiff and 22 Class members; 23 24 the proper amount of damages and disgorgement or restitution; d. 25 the proper scope of injunctive relief; and e. 26 f. the proper amount of attorneys' fees. 27 28 -11-CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

61. Defendant engaged in a common course of conduct in contravention of the laws
Plaintiff seeks to enforce individually and on behalf of the Class. Similar or identical violations
of law, business practices, and injuries are involved. Individual questions, if any, pale by
comparison, in both quality and quantity, to the numerous common questions that predominate
this action. The common questions will yield common answers that will substantially advance
the resolution of the case.

8 62. In short, these common questions of fact and law predominate over questions that
9 affect only individual Class members.

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- 63. **Typicality Rule 23(a)(3)**: Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the Class members because they are based on the same underlying facts, events, and circumstances relating to Defendant's conduct.
- 64. Specifically, all Class members, including Plaintiff, were harmed in the same way
  due to Defendant's uniform misconduct described herein; all Class members suffered similar
  economic injury due to Defendant's misrepresentations; and Plaintiff seeks the same relief as
  the Class members.
- 18 65. There are no defenses available to Defendant that are unique to the named
  19 Plaintiff.
- 66. Adequacy of Representation Rule 23(a)(4): Plaintiff is a fair and adequate
  representative of the Class because Plaintiff's interests do not conflict with the Class members'
  interests. Plaintiff will prosecute this action vigorously and is highly motivated to seek redress
  against Defendant.
- Furthermore, Plaintiff has selected competent counsel who are experienced in
  class action and other complex litigation. Plaintiff and Plaintiff's counsel are committed to
  prosecuting this action vigorously on behalf of the Class and have the resources to do so.

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68. **Superiority – Rule 23(b)(3)**: The class action mechanism is superior to other available means for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy for at least the following reasons

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5	a. the damages individual Class members suffered are small compared to the
6	burden and expense of individual prosecution of the complex and extensive
7	litigation needed to address Defendant's conduct such that it would be
8	virtually impossible for the Class members individually to redress the wrongs
9	done to them. In fact, they would have little incentive to do so given the
10	amount of damage each member has suffered when weighed against the costs
11	and burdens of litigation;
12	b. the class procedure presents fewer management difficulties than individual
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14	litigation and provides the benefits of single adjudication, economies of scale,
15	and supervision by a single Court;
16	c. the prosecution of separate actions by individual Class members would create
17	a risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications, which would establish
18	incompatible standards of conduct for Defendant; and
19	d. the prosecution of separate actions by individual Class members would create
20	a risk of adjudications with respect to them that would be dispositive of the
21	a risk of adjudications with respect to them that would be dispositive of the
22	interests of other Class members or would substantively impair or impede their
23	ability to protect their interests.
24	69. Unless the Class is certified, Defendant will retain monies received as a result of
25	its unlawful and deceptive conduct alleged herein.
26	70. Unless a class-wide injunction is issued, Defendant will likely continue to
27	advertise, market, promote, and sell its Products in an unlawful and misleading manner, as
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1	described throughout this Complaint, and members of the Class will continue to be misled,
2	harmed, and denied their rights under the law.
3	71. Ascertainability. To the extent ascertainability is required, the Class members are
4	readily ascertainable from Defendant's records and/or its agents' records of retail and online
5 6	sales, as well as through public notice.
7	72. Defendant has acted on grounds applicable to the Class as a whole, thereby
8	making appropriate final injunctive and declaratory relief concerning the Class as a whole.
9	COUNT 1
10	VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA BUSINESS & PROFESSIONS CODE SECTION 17200 et seq. — "UNFAIR" CONDUCT
11	73. Plaintiff realleges the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein and, to the
12	extent necessary, pleads this cause of action in the alternative.
13 14	74. Plaintiff has standing to pursue this claim as Plaintiff has suffered injury in fact as
15	a result of Defendant's actions as set forth herein.
16	75. Defendant's actions as alleged in this Complaint constitute "unfair" conduct
17	within the meaning of California Business and Professions Code Section 17200, et seq.
18	76. Defendant's business practices, as alleged herein, are "unfair" because it fails to
19	disclose accurately the synthetic flavoring used in the Products.
20	77. As a result of this "unfair" conduct, Plaintiff expended money and engaged in
21 22	activities it would not otherwise have spent or conducted.
22	78. Defendant's wrongful business practices alleged herein constituted, and continue
24	to constitute, a continuing course of unfair competition since it continues to market and sell its
25	products in a manner that offends public policy and/or in a fashion that is immoral, unethical,
26	oppressive, unscrupulous and/or substantially injurious to its customers.
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	-14- CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

1	79. Defendant publicly disseminated untrue or misleading representations regarding
2	the flavoring label claims of its Products, which it knew, or in the exercise of reasonable care
3	should have known, were untrue or misleading.
4	80. Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Section 17203, Plaintiff seeks an order
5	of this court enjoining Defendant from continuing to engage in "unfair" business practices and
6 7	any other act prohibited by law, including those acts set forth in this Complaint, and further seek
8	all other relief allowable under Business and Professions Code Section 17200, et seq.
9	COUNT 2
10	VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA BUSINESS & PROFESSIONS CODE SECTION 17200 et seq. — "FRAUDULENT" CONDUCT
11	81. Plaintiff realleges the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein and, to the
12	extent necessary, plead this cause of action in the alternative.
13 14	82. Plaintiff has standing to pursue this claim as Plaintiff has suffered injury in fact as
14	a result of Defendant's actions as set forth above.
16	83. Defendant's actions as alleged in this Complaint constitute "fraudulent" conduct
17	within the meaning of California Business and Professions Code Section 17200 et seq.
18	84. Defendant's business practices, as alleged herein, are "fraudulent" because it fails
19	to disclose accurately the synthetic flavoring used in the Products.
20	85. As a result of this "fraudulent" conduct, Plaintiff expended money and engaged in
21	activities it would not otherwise have spent or conducted.
22	86. Defendant's wrongful business practices alleged herein constituted, and continue
23	
24 25	to constitute, a continuing course of unfair competition since it continues to market and sell its
26	products in a manner that offends public policy and/or in a fashion that is immoral, unethical,
27	oppressive, unscrupulous and/or substantially injurious to its customers.
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	-15-
	CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

1	87. Defendant publicly disseminated untrue or misleading representations regarding
2	the flavoring label claims of its Products, which it knew, or in the exercise of reasonable care
3	should have known, were untrue or misleading.
4	88. Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Section 17203, Plaintiff seeks an
5	order of this Court enjoining Defendant from continuing to engage in "fraudulent" business
6 7	practices and any other act prohibited by law, including those acts set forth in this Complaint,
8	and further seeks all other relief allowable under Business and Professions Code Section 17200,
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10	et seq.
11	COUNT 3 VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA BUSINESS & PROFESSIONS CODE
12	SECTION 17200 <i>et seq.</i> — "UNLAWFUL" CONDUCT
13	89. Plaintiff reallege the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein and, to the
14	extent necessary, pleads this cause of action in the alternative.
15	90. Plaintiff has standing to pursue this claim as Plaintiff has suffered injury in fact as
16	a result of Defendant's actions as set forth above.
17	91. Defendant's actions as alleged in this Complaint constitute "unlawful" conduct
18	within the meaning of California Business and Professions Code Section 17200, et seq.
19	92. Defendant's business practices, as alleged herein, are "unlawful" because it fails
20	disclose accurately the synthetic flavoring used in the Products.
21 22	93. As a result of this "unlawful" conduct, Plaintiff expended money and engaged in
22	activities he would not otherwise have spent or conducted.
24	94. Defendant's business practices alleged herein constituted, and continue to
25	constitute, a continuing course of unfair competition since it continues to market and sell its
26	products in a manner that offends public policy and/or in a fashion that is immoral, unethical,
27	oppressive, unscrupulous and/or substantially injurious to its customers.
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	-16- CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT
	CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

1	95. Defendant publicly disseminated untrue or misleading representations regarding
2	the flavoring label claims of its Products, which it knew, or in the exercise of reasonable care
3	should have known, were untrue or misleading.
4	96. Pursuant to Business and Professions Code Section 17203, Plaintiff seeks an order
5	of this court enjoining Defendant from continuing to engage in "unlawful" business practices
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7	and any other act prohibited by law, including those acts set forth in this Complaint, and further
8	seeks all other relief allowable under Business and Professions Code Section 17200, et seq.
9	COUNT 4 VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA BUSINESS &
10	PROFESSIONS CODE SECTION 17500 et seq.
11	97. Plaintiff realleges the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein and, to the
12	extent necessary, pleads this cause of action in the alternative.
13	98. Plaintiff has standing to pursue this claim as Plaintiff has suffered injury in fact as
14	a result of Defendant's actions as set forth above.
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16	99. Defendant engaged in advertising and marketing to the public and offered for sale
17	advertising services on a nationwide basis, including in California.
18	100. Defendant engaged in the advertising and marketing alleged herein with the intent
19	to directly or indirectly induce the sale of the Products to consumers.
20	101. Defendant's advertisements and marketing representations regarding the
21	characteristics of the Products were false, misleading, and deceptive as set forth above.
22	102. At the time it made and disseminated the statements alleged herein, Defendant
23	knew or should have known that the statements were untrue or misleading, and acted in violation
24 25	
	of Business and Professions Code Section 17500, et seq.
26	103. Plaintiff seeks injunctive relief and all other relief allowable under Business and
27	Professions Code Section 17500, et seq.
28	-17-
	CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

1	COUNT 5
2	VIOLATION OF THE CONSUMER LEGAL REMEDIES ACT, CAL. CIV. CODE § 1750 <i>ET SEQ</i> .
3	45. Plaintiff realleges the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein and, to the
4	extent necessary, pleads this cause of action in the alternative.
5	46. Plaintiff is a "consumer" within the meaning of the Consumer Legal Remedies
6 7	Act ("CLRA"), Cal. Civ. Code § 1761(d).
8	47. The sale of Defendant's Products to Plaintiff and Class members was a
9	"transaction" within the meaning of the CLRA, Cal. Civ. Code § 1761(e).
10	48. The Products purchased by Plaintiff and Class members are "goods" within the
11	meaning of the CLRA, Cal. Civ. Code § 1761(a).
12	49. As alleged herein, Defendant's business practices are a violation of the CLRA
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14	because Defendant deceptively failed to reveal facts that are material in light of the flavoring
15	representations that were made by Defendant on the labels of its Products.
16	50. Defendant's ongoing failure to provide material facts about its Products on its
17	labels violates the following subsections of Cal. Civ. Code § 1770(a) in these respects:
18	a. Defendant's acts and practices constitute misrepresentations that its Products have
19	characteristics, benefits, or uses which they do not have;
20	b. Defendant misrepresented that its Products are of a particular standard, quality,
21 22	and/or grade, when they are of another;
22	c. Defendant's acts and practices constitute the advertisement of goods, without the
24	intent to sell them as advertised;
25	d. Defendant's acts and practices fail to represent that transactions involving its
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27	Products involve actions that are prohibited by law, particularly the use of
28	misleading nutritional labelling; and
	-18- CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

1 e. Defendant's acts and practices constitute representations that its Products have 2 been supplied in accordance with previous representations when they were not. 3 51. By reason of the foregoing, Plaintiff and the Class have been irreparably harmed, 4 entitling them to injunctive relief, disgorgement, and restitution. 5 52. Pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code § 1782, Plaintiff notified Defendant in writing of the 6 particular violations of the CLRA described herein and demanded Defendant rectify the actions 7 described above by providing complete monetary relief, agreeing to be bound by their legal 8 9 obligations and to give notice to all affected customers of their intent to do so. Plaintiff sent this 10 notice by certified mail to Defendant, at least 30 days before the filing of this Complaint. 11 53. Pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code §§ 1770 and 1780, Plaintiff and the Class are entitled 12 to recover actual damages sustained as a result of Defendant's violations of the CLRA. Such 13 damages include, without limitation, monetary losses and actual, punitive, and consequential 14 damages, in an amount to be proven at trial. 15 16 54. Pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code §§ 1770 and 1780, Plaintiff is entitled to enjoin 17 publication of misleading and deceptive nutritional labels on Defendant's Products and to 18 recover reasonable attorneys' fees and costs. 19 COUNT 6 20 **UNJUST ENRICHMENT** 21 55. Plaintiff realleges the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein and, to the 22 extent necessary, pleads this cause of action in the alternative. 23 56. Defendant, through its marketing and labeling of the Products, misrepresented and 24 deceived consumers regarding the flavoring in the Products. 25 57. Defendant did so for the purpose of enriching itself and it in fact enriched itself 26 by doing so. 27 28 -19-CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

1	58. Consumers conferred a benefit on Defendant by purchasing the Products,
2	including an effective premium above their true value. Defendant appreciated, accepted, and
3	retained the benefit to the detriment of consumers.
4	59. Defendant continues to possess monies paid by consumers to which Defendant is
5	not entitled.
6	60. Under the circumstances it would be inequitable for Defendant to retain the benefit
7 8	conferred upon it and Defendant's retention of the benefit violates fundamental principles of
9	justice, equity, and good conscience.
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11	61. Plaintiff seeks disgorgement of Defendant's ill-gotten gains and restitution of
12	Defendant's wrongful profits, revenue, and benefits, to the extent, and in the amount, deemed
13	appropriate by the Court, and such other relief as the Court deems just and proper to remedy
14	Defendant's unjust enrichment.
15	62. Plaintiff has standing to pursue this claim as Plaintiff has suffered injury in fact as
16	a result of Defendant's actions as set forth above.
10	a result of Defendant's actions as set form above.
17	COUNT 7
17 18	COUNT 7 BREACH OF EXPRESS WARRANTY
17 18 19	COUNT 7 BREACH OF EXPRESS WARRANTY 63. Plaintiff realleges the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein and, to the
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between Defendant and Plaintiff and the Class, which creates an express warranty that the
Products would conform to those affirmations of fact, representations, promises, and
descriptions.

- 67. The Products do not conform to the express warranty that the Products contain
  "No Synthetic Flavors" or "No Artificial Flavors," because they are flavored by and contain
  ingredients that are unnatural and synthetic, *i.e.*, DL malic acid.
- 68. As a direct and proximate cause of Defendant's breach of express warranty,
  Plaintiff and Class members have been injured and harmed because: (a) they would not have
  purchased the Products on the same terms if they knew the truth about the Products' unnatural
  ingredients; (b) they paid a price premium based on Defendant's express warranties; and (c) the
  Products do not have the characteristics, uses, or benefits that were promised.
  - WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully request the Court grant the following relief against Defendant:

**PRAYER FOR RELIEF** 

- a. Certifying the Class;
- b. Declaring that Defendant violated the CLRA, UCL, and FAL;
- c. Awarding actual and other damages as permitted by law, and/or ordering an accounting by Defendant for any and all profits derived by Defendant from the unlawful, unfair, and/or fraudulent conduct and/or business practices alleged herein;
- d. Ordering an awarding of injunctive relief as permitted by law or equity, including enjoining Defendant from continuing the unlawful practices as set forth herein, and ordering Defendant to engage in a corrective advertising campaign;
  - e. Ordering Defendant to pay attorneys' fees and litigation costs to Plaintiff;

-21-CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

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## Case 3:23-cv-00220-JLS-AHG Document 1 Filed 02/06/23 PageID.22 Page 22 of 22

1	f. Ordering Defendant to pay both pre- and post-judgment interest on any amounts
2	awarded; and
3	g. Such other relief as the Court may deem just and proper.
4	TRIAL BY JURY IS DEMANDED ON ANY COUNTS SO TRIABLE.
5	
6	<u>/s/ Charles C. Weller</u> Charles C. Weller (Cal. SBN: 207034) Attorney for Plaintiff
7	CHARLES C. WELLER, APC
8	11412 Corley Court San Diego, California 92126 Tel: 858.414.7465
9	Tel: 858.414.7465 Fax: 858.300.5137
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	-22- CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

# **ClassAction.org**

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable <u>class action lawsuit database</u>