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CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE SL

APR 1 5 2011 99AM

DEPARTMENT 212

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW FOUNDATION,) on behalf of the General Public,

Plaintiff,

VS.

CHAMPION NUTRITION, INC.; CHEMI-SOURCE, INC., doing business as METABOLIC RESPONSE MODIFIERS; INTEGRATED SPORTS SCIENCE; IDEASPHERE, INC., operating as ISI BRANDS, INC.; NATURAL ORGANICS LABORATORIES; THE ISOPURE COMPANY, LLC, doing business as NATURE'S BEST; VITAL PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.; and DOES 1 through 200,

Defendants.

Case NEC = 10-505382

COMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE RELIEF AND CIVIL PENALTIES

(Based on Violations of California Health and Safety Code § 25249.6 et seq.)

IRST LEGAL SUPPORT SERVICE

22.

Plaintiff, ENVIRONMENTAL LAW FOUNDATION, by its attorneys, brings this action on behalf of the General Public on information and belief, and investigation of counsel, except those allegations which pertain to the named Plaintiff or to its attorneys which are alleged on personal knowledge, and hereby alleges as follows:

INTRODUCTION

- 1. This action seeks to remedy Defendants' continuing failure to warn thousands of individuals in California that they are being exposed to lead, a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer and/or reproductive toxicity, through the ingestion and use of Defendants' protein supplements. Defendants manufacture, package, distribute, market and/or sell protein supplements in the form of powders, liquids and ready to drink liquids, with whey as a primary protein ingredient (hereinafter "PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS").
- 2. There is no safe level of lead in the body, and children and fetuses are at greatest risk of harmful effects from exposure to lead. (See, e.g., Toxicological Profile for Lead, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (2007) at 10 ("No safe blood lead level in children has been determined."); 24, 25 ("Most importantly, no threshold for the effects of lead on IQ has been determined."); 222 ("Children and developing organisms in general, are more susceptible to lead toxicity than adults."); 364). Fetuses exposed to lead in the womb may be born prematurely and have lower weights at birth. Exposure in the womb and as an infant also slows mental development and causes lower intelligence later in childhood.
- 3. Infants are born with a lead body burden that reflects the burden of the mother. During gestation, lead from the maternal skeleton is transferred across the placenta to the fetus. Moreover, there is transfer of maternal blood lead load across the placenta to a developing fetus. Additional lead exposure may occur during breast feeding. This means that maternal ongoing exposure to lead during pregnancy, as well as lead stored in the mother's body from exposure prior to conception, can result in exposure to the fetus or nursing neonate. *Id.* at 118, 223, 137 & 172 (internal citations omitted).

4.	The American Academy of Pediatrics concurs that there is no "safe level" of lead for
childre	n. www.aap.org/advocacy/washing/News-Release_Press-Statements/01-05-08-EPA-
Lead.p	<u>df</u> .

- 5. On February 27, 1987, California Governor George Deukmejian declared lead a reproductive toxin subject to Proposition 65. Proposition 65 requires that consumers must be warned before they are exposed to chemicals/metals that cause birth defects and/or reproductive harm. (The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act, California Health and Safety Code § 25249.5 et seq., hereinafter referred to as "Proposition 65." All section references not otherwise identified refer to California Health and Safety Code).
- 6. Lead became subject to the warning requirement one year later and was therefore subject to the "clear and reasonable" warning requirements of Proposition 65 beginning on February 27, 1988. (27 California Code of Regulations ("CCR") § 25000, et seq.; § 25249.6 et seq.)
- 7. On October 1, 1992, the State of California officially listed "lead and lead compounds" on the Governor's list of chemicals known to cause cancer. Lead and lead compounds became subject to the warning requirement one year later and were therefore subject to the "clear and reasonable" warning requirements of Proposition 65 beginning on October 1, 1993 (27 CCR § 25000, et seq.; 25249.6 et seq.)
- 8. The ingestion of the PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS causes exposures to lead at levels requiring a "clear and reasonable warning" under Proposition 65, § 25249.6. Defendants have failed to provide these health hazard warnings as required by Proposition 65.
- 9. Plaintiff seeks the following relief through this action:
 - a. to prohibit the manufacture, packaging, distribution, marketing, or sale of PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS in California by Defendants without providing clear and reasonable warnings regarding the risks of cancer and/or reproductive toxicity posed by exposure to lead through the ingestion and use of Defendants' PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS;
 - to assess civil penalties in the amount of \$2,500 per day per violation to
 remedy Defendants' ongoing failure to provide clear and reasonable warnings
 to thousands of individuals that are being exposed, and continue to be

exposed, to lead through the ingestion of Defendants' PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS; and

to compel Defendants to provide clear and reasonable warnings regarding the risks posed by Defendants' PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS required by Proposition 65 to all past purchasers of the products in question.

PARTIES

- 10. Plaintiff ENVIRONMENTAL LAW FOUNDATION ("ELF") is a California nonprofit organization founded on Earth Day in 1991, committed to the enforcement of environmental, toxics, and community right-to-know laws. ELF has a longstanding interest in reducing health hazards to the public posed by lead, and particularly to protect those with the least choice and greatest vulnerability to toxic risks: children, inner city dwellers, and workers. ELF is dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of human health and the environment, and has been enforcing Proposition 65 and other laws that protect consumers, communities and the environment for nearly twenty years. ELF brings this action pursuant to § 25249.7(d) in the interest of the general public.
- 11. Defendant CHAMPION NUTRITION, INC., a Florida corporation with its principal place of business located at 1301 Sawgrass Corporate Parkway, Sunrise, FL 33323 (hereinafter "CHAMPION NUTRITION"), is a person in the course of doing business within the meaning of § 25249.11. CHAMPION NUTRITION sells, manufactures, packages, distributes or markets PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS for sale or use in California that expose individuals to lead, including but not limited to Champion Nutrition Heavyweight Gainer 900 Vanilla Shake. These activities are currently occurring or have occurred at times relevant to this Complaint.
- 12. Defendant CHEMI-SOURCE, INC., doing business as METABOLIC RESPONSE MODIFIERS, a California Corporation with its principal place of business located at 2665 Vista Pacific Drive, Oceanside, CA 92056 (hereinafter "MRM") is a person in the course of doing business within the meaning of § 25249.11. MRM sells, manufactures, packages, distributes or markets PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS for sale or use in California that expose individuals to lead, including but not limited to MRM All Natural Gainer French Vanilla. These activities are currently occurring or have occurred at times relevant to this Complaint.

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- Defendant INTEGRATED SPORTS SCIENCE, a North Carolina Corporation with its 13. principal place of business located at 5400 W.T. Harris Blvd., Suite L, Charlotte, NC 28269 (hereinafter "ISS") is a person in the course of doing business within the meaning of § 25249.11. ISS sells, manufactures, packages, distributes or markets PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS for sale or use in California that expose individuals to lead, including but not limited to OhYeah! Total Protein System Vanilla Crème. These activities are currently occurring or have occurred at times relevant to this Complaint.
- 14. Defendant IdeaSphere, Inc., operating as ISI Brands, Inc., a Delaware Corporation with its principal place of business located at 600 East Quality Drive, American Fork, UT 84003 (hereinafter "ISI") is a person in the course of doing business within the meaning of § 25249.11. ISI sells, manufactures, packages, distributes or markets PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS for sale or use in California that expose individuals to lead, including but not limited to TWINLAB 100% Whey Protein Fuel Vanilla Slam. These activities are currently occurring or have occurred at times relevant to this Complaint.
- 15. Defendant THE ISOPURE COMPANY, LLC, doing business as NATURE'S BEST, a Delaware Corporation with its principal place of business located at 195 Engineers Road, Hauppauge, NY 11788 (hereinafter "ISOPURE") is a person in the course of doing business within the meaning of § 25249.11. ISOPURE sells, manufactures, packages, distributes or markets PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS for sale or use in California that expose individuals to lead, including but not limited to Nature's Best Perfect Zero Carb Isopure Creamy Vanilla. These activities are currently occurring or have occurred at times relevant to this Complaint.
- Defendant NATURAL ORGANICS LABORATORIES, a New York Corporation with 16. its principal place of business located at 9500 New Horizons Boulevard, Amityville, NY 11701 (hereinafter "NATURAL ORGANICS") is a person in the course of doing business within the meaning of § 25249.11. NATURAL ORGANICS sells, manufactures, packages, distributes or markets PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS for sale or use in California that expose individuals to lead, including but not limited to Nature's Plus Spiru-Tein Whey High Protein Energy Meal Vanilla. These activities are currently occurring or have occurred at times relevant to this Complaint.

17. Defendant VITAL PHARMACEUTICALS, INC., a Florida Corporation with its principal place of business located at 1600 North Park Drive, Weston, FL 33326 (hereinafter "VITAL PHARMACEUTICALS") is a person in the course of doing business within the meaning of § 25249.11. VITAL PHARMACEUTICALS sells, manufactures, packages, distributes or markets PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS for sale or use in California that expose individuals to lead, including but not limited to VPX Protein Rush Vanilla Dream. These activities are currently occurring or have occurred at times relevant to this Complaint.

- 18. The true names and capacities of Defendants sued herein under California Code of Civil Procedure § 474 as DOES 1 through 200, inclusive, are presently unknown to Plaintiff, who therefore sues these Defendants by such fictitious names. Plaintiff will seek to amend this Complaint and include these Doe Defendants' true names and capacities when they are ascertained. Each of the fictitiously named Defendants is a person in the course of doing business within the meaning of § 25249.11. DOES 1 through 200 sell, manufacture, package, distribute or market PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS for sale or use in California that expose individuals to lead.
- 19. Each of the Defendants herein has employed ten (10) or more persons at all times relevant to this action.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 20. The Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to § 25249.7, which allows enforcement in any court of competent jurisdiction, and pursuant to California Constitution Article VI, Section 10, because this case is a cause not given by statute to other trial courts.
- 21. This Court has jurisdiction over Defendants named herein because Defendants either are located in this State or are foreign corporations authorized to do business in California and registered with the California Secretary of State; or who do sufficient business in California, have sufficient minimum contacts with California, or otherwise intentionally avail themselves of the markets within California through the sale, promotion, marketing and distribution of their products in California to render the exercise of jurisdiction by the California courts permissible under traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

22. Venue is proper in this Court because the products at issue are promoted, available for sale, sold and used in this County; a substantial portion of the transactions complained of herein occurred here; contracts relating to the purchase of this product were entered into, made and were to be performed in this County; and/or Defendants have received substantial compensation from the sale of the product at issue in this County by doing business here.

23. On August 6, 2010 and August 19, 2010 ELF sent 60-Day Notices of Proposition 65 violations to the requisite public enforcement agencies and to Defendants. These notices were issued pursuant to, and in compliance with, the requirements of § 25249.7(d) and the statute's implementing regulations regarding the notice of the violations to be given to certain public enforcement agencies and to the violator. The notices given included, *inter alia*, the following information: the name, address, and telephone number of the noticing individual; the name of the alleged violator; the statute violated; the approximate time period during which violations occurred; and descriptions of the violations, including the chemical involved, the routes of toxic exposure, and the specific products and type of products causing the violations. The named Defendants and the California Attorney General were provided copies of the 60-Day Notice by mail. Additionally, the named Defendants were each provided with a copy of a document entitled "The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65): A Summary," which is also known as Appendix A to Title 27 of CCR § 25903.

24. ELF also sent a Certificate of Merit for each of the Notices to the California Attorney
General, the District Attorneys of every county in California, the City Attorneys of every
California city with a population greater than 750,000, and to the named Defendants. In
compliance with § 25249.7(d) and 11 CCR § 3101, each of the Certificates certified that ELF's
counsel: (1) has consulted with one or more persons with relevant and appropriate experience or
expertise who reviewed facts, studies or other data regarding the exposures to Lead alleged in
each of the Notices; and (2) based on the information obtained through such consultations,
believes that there is a reasonable and meritorious case for a citizen enforcement action based on
the facts alleged in each of the Notices. In compliance with § 25249.7(d) and 11 CCR § 3102,
each of the Certificates served on the Attorney General included factual information – provided
on a confidential basis – sufficient to establish the basis for the Certificate.

25. None of these public prosecutors has commenced and is diligently prosecuting an action against the violations at issue herein, although the notice period provided in § 25249.7 has elapsed since such notice was provided.

STATUTORY AND REGULATORY BACKGROUND

- 26. Proposition 65 is an initiative statute passed by a vote of the People in 1986.
- 27. Proposition 65 provides the circumstances under which persons must be warned before they are exposed to chemicals/metals that cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm. Section 25249.6 states the warning requirement:

"No person in the course of doing business shall knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable warning to such individual, except as provided in Section 25249.10."

- 28. An exposure to a chemical in a consumer product is one "which results from a person's acquisition, purchase, storage, consumption, or other reasonably foreseeable use of a consumer good, or any exposure that results from receiving a consumer service." 27 CCR § 25601(b).
- 29. Proposition 65 establishes a procedure by which the Governor lists chemicals known to the state to cause reproductive toxicity and/or cancer. See § 25249.8. Pursuant to this authority, on February 27, 1987 lead was placed on the list of reproductive toxins. Lead is specifically identified as a reproductive toxicant under three subcategories: "developmental reproductive toxicity," which means harm to the developing fetus; "female reproductive toxicity," which means harm to the female reproductive system; and "male reproductive toxicity," which means harm to the male reproductive system. 27 CCR § 27001(c).
- 30. The warning requirement under Proposition 65 for a given chemical goes into effect one year after the Governor places that chemical on the list. § 25249.10(b). Therefore, lead became subject to the clear and reasonable warning requirement regarding reproductive toxicants under Proposition 65 on February 27, 1988.
- 31. On October 1, 1992, the State of California officially listed "lead and lead compounds" as chemicals known to cause cancer. On October 1, 1993, one year after being so listed, lead and

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lead compounds became subject to the clear and reasonable warning requirement regarding carcinogens under Proposition 65. 27 CCR § 27001(b); § 25249.10(b).

FACTS

- Defendants manufacture, sell, and/or distribute a variety of PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS 32. labeled, marketed and intended for human consumption, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraphs 11 - 17, supra. These PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS are manufactured, distributed and/or sold in California for the purpose of distribution and retail sale in California.
- The PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS at issue in this Complaint contain lead which results in 33. human exposure to the lead upon its consumption.
- Plaintiff is informed and believes and therefore alleges that one or more of the PROTEIN 34. SUPPLEMENTS have been sold to and/or ingested by individuals in California without clear and reasonable warnings since at least August 6, 2009. The PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS continue to be offered for sale in California without the requisite warning information.
- Under Proposition 65, an exposure is "knowing" where the party responsible for such 35. exposure has:

"knowledge of the fact that a discharge of, release of, or exposure to a chemical listed pursuant to Section 25249.8(a) of the Act is occurring. No knowledge that the discharge, release or exposure is unlawful is required."

- 27 CCR § 25102(n). This knowledge may be actual or constructive. See, e.g., Final Statement of Reasons Revised (November 4, 1988) for former 22 CCR § 12201.
- Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that the Defendants knew, and/or reasonably should have known, that the foreseeable use of their PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS results in exposure to lead, and that the levels of lead exceed the lead exposure levels which trigger warning requirements under Proposition 65.
- Defendants know and intend that individuals will ingest the PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS, 37. thus exposing them to lead.
- 38. Nevertheless, and in violation of § 25249.6 et seq., Defendants have not provided clear and reasonable warnings to inform the public that their PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS expose

consumers to lead, a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer and reproductive toxicity.

- 39. Defendants have, in the course of doing business, knowingly and intentionally exposed individuals to a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer and reproductive toxicity without first providing a clear and reasonable warning as required by § 25249.6 and § 25249.11(f). As a direct result of Defendants' acts and omissions, the general public in California is being regularly, unlawfully, and involuntarily exposed to lead, a known reproductive toxin and carcinogen.
- 40. The PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS continue to be offered for sale in California without a clear and reasonable warning.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

(Violations of California Health and Safety Code § 25249.6 et seq.) (Against All Defendants)

- 41. Plaintiff incorporates by reference ¶¶ 1 through 40 as if fully set forth herein.
- 42. The People of the State of California have declared in Proposition 65 their right "[t]o be informed about exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects and other reproductive harm." Proposition 65, Section 1(b) of the Initiative Measure.
- 43. To carry out those statutory purposes, Proposition 65 requires that a clear and reasonable warning be given by persons who, in the course of doing business, knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer and reproductive harm.
- 44. Proposition 65 provides that any person "violating or threatening to violate" the statute may be enjoined in any court of competent jurisdiction. § 25249.7. "Threaten to violate" is defined to mean "to create a condition in which there is a substantial probability that a violation will occur." § 25249.11(e).
- 45. Violators of Proposition 65 are liable for civil penalties of up to \$2500.00 per day per violation, recoverable in a civil action. § 25249.7(b).
- 46. Defendants have engaged and continue to engage in conduct which violates § 25249.6. This conduct includes the manufacturing, packaging, distributing and selling of PROTEIN

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1	Defendants from importing, manufacturing, packaging, distributing, marketing or selling the
2	PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS in California without first providing a clear and reasonable warning
3	that the users of the PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS are exposed, within the meaning of Proposition
4	65, to lead;
5	B. an assessment of civil penalties, pursuant to § 25249.7(b), against each Defendant in the
6	amount of \$2500 per day for each violation of Proposition 65;
7	C. that Defendants be ordered to identify and locate each individual who purchased their
8	PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS and to provide a warning to each person that the PROTEIN
9	SUPPLEMENTS have exposed, or will expose, that person to chemicals known to cause cancer
10	and reproductive harm;
11	D. that the Court, pursuant to § 25249.7(a), order Defendants to take any other action this
12	Court may deem necessary and proper;
13	E. an award to Plaintiff of its reasonably attorneys' fees and costs of suit pursuant to
14	California Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5 as Plaintiff shall specify in further application to the
15	Court; and,
16	F. such other and further relief as may be just and proper.
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19	DATED: November 12, 2010 BARON & BUDD, P.C.
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