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Attorneys for Plaintiff
Environmental Health Advocates, Inc.

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

CGC-25-626787

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATES,
INC.,

Plaintiff,

v.

SOFRITO FOODS LLC, an Illinois limited
liability company; and DOES 1 through 100,
inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.:

**COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES
AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**

(Health & Safety Code § 25249.6 et seq.)

**ELECTRONICALLY
FILED**
*Superior Court of California,
County of San Francisco*

07/01/2025
Clerk of the Court
BY: SHENEQUA GLADNEY
Deputy Clerk

I.
INTRODUCTION

1. This Complaint is a representative action brought by Environmental Health Advocates, Inc. (“Plaintiff”) in the public interest of the citizens of the State of California (“the People”). Plaintiff seeks to remedy Defendants’ failure to inform the People of exposure to lead, a known carcinogen and reproductive/developmental toxin. Defendants expose consumers to lead by manufacturing, importing, selling, and/or distributing lentils including, but not limited to, Fillo’s Peruvian Lentil Sofrito (“Products”). Defendants know and intend that customers will ingest Products containing lead.

2. Under California’s Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, California Health and Safety Code, section 25249.6 et seq. (“Proposition 65”), “[n]o 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. . . .” (Health & Safety Code, § 25249.6.)

3. California identified and listed lead as a chemical known to cause cancer as early as October 1, 1992, and as a chemical known to cause developmental/reproductive toxicity on February 27, 1987.

4. Defendants failed to sufficiently warn consumers and individuals in California about potential exposure to lead in connection with Defendants’ manufacture, import, sale, or distribution of Products. This is a violation of Proposition 65.

5. Plaintiff seeks injunctive relief compelling Defendants to sufficiently warn consumers in California before exposing them to lead in Products. (Health & Safety Code, § 25249.7(a).) Plaintiff also seeks civil penalties against Defendants for violations of Proposition 65 along with attorney’s fees and costs. (Health & Safety Code, § 25249.7(b).)

II.
PARTIES

6. Plaintiff ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATES, INC. (“Plaintiff”) is a corporation in the State of California dedicated to protecting the health of California citizens through the elimination or reduction of toxic exposure from consumer products. It brings this action in the public interest pursuant to Health and Safety Code, section 25249.7.

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7. Defendant Sofrito Foods LLC ("Sofrito Foods") is a limited liability company organized and existing under the laws of Illinois. Sofrito Foods is registered to do business in California, and does business in the County of San Francisco, within the meaning of Health and Safety Code, section 25249.11. Sofrito Foods manufactures, imports, sells, or distributes the Products in California and San Francisco County.

8. Plaintiff does not know the true names and/or capacities, whether individual, partners, or corporate, of the Defendants sued herein as DOES 1 through 100, inclusive, and for that reason sues said Defendants under fictitious names pursuant to Cal. Civ. Proc. § 474. Plaintiff will seek leave to amend this Complaint when the true names and capacities of these Defendants have been ascertained. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that these Defendants are responsible in whole or in part for the remedies and penalties sought herein.

9. At all times mentioned, Defendants were the agents, alter egos, servants, joint venturers, joint employers, or employees for each other. Defendants acted with the consent of the other Co-Defendants and acted within the course, purpose, and scope of their agency, service, or employment. All conduct was ratified by Defendants, and each of them.

III. VENUE AND JURISDICTION

10. California Constitution Article VI, Section 10 grants the Superior Court original jurisdiction in all cases except those given by statute to other trial courts. The Health and Safety Code statute upon which this action is based does not give jurisdiction to any other court. As such, this Court has jurisdiction.

11. Venue is proper in San Francisco County Superior Court pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure, sections 394, 395, and 395.5. Wrongful conduct occurred and continues to occur in this County. Defendants conducted and continue to conduct business in this County as it relates to Products.

12. Defendants have sufficient minimum contacts in the State of California or otherwise purposefully avail themselves of the California market. Exercising jurisdiction over Defendants would be consistent with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

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(Violation of Proposition 65 – Against all Defendants)

21. The appropriate public enforcement agencies provided with the Notice failed to commence and diligently prosecute a cause of action against Defendants.

22. Individuals exposed to lead contained in Products through direct ingestion resulting from reasonably foreseeable use of the Products have suffered and continue to suffer irreparable harm. There is no other plain, speedy, or adequate remedy at law.

23. Defendants are liable for a maximum civil penalty of \$2,500 per day for each violation of Proposition 65 pursuant to Health and Safety Code, section 252497(b). Injunctive relief is also appropriate pursuant to Health and Safety Code, section 25249.7(a).

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Wherefore, Plaintiff prays for judgment against Defendants as follows:

1. Civil penalties in the amount of \$2,500 per day for each violation. Plaintiff alleges that damages total a minimum of \$1,000,000;

2. A preliminary and permanent injunction against Defendants from manufacturing, importing, selling, and/or distributing Products in California without providing a clear and reasonable warning as required by Proposition 65 and related Regulations;

3. Reasonable attorney's fees and costs of suit; and

4. Such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

Respectfully submitted:

Dated: July 1, 2025

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