

# BENCHLINE

June 24, 2026

**Re: Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code § 25249.5 to § 25249.14 (“Proposition 65”) and Notice of Intent to Sue**

Dear WA Imports, Inc. d/b/a Hotaru Foods and the appropriate public enforcement agencies:

My firm represents WHEN Justice (“WHEN”) in this matter, and I submit this Notice of Violation and Notice of Intent to Sue (“Notice”) of Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.5 to 25249.14 (hereinafter “Proposition 65”), pursuant to Health & Safety Code § 25249.7, on its behalf. This letter serves as a Notice to WA Imports, Inc. d/b/a Hotaru Foods (“Alleged Violator(s)”) and the appropriate public enforcement agencies.

Also enclosed please find a Certificate of Merit<sup>1</sup>, Additional Supporting Information<sup>2</sup> thereto, and Certificate of Service<sup>3</sup> appended hereto as Attachment(s) A, B, and C, respectively.

WHEN is a California nonprofit public benefit corporation dedicated to building a cleaner, safer, and more just world by advocating for stronger health, environmental, and safety laws, regulations, and policies. Through impact litigation, education, and advocacy, WHEN mobilizes a community of passionate supporters to drive meaningful, long-lasting change.

**I. Notice of Intent to Sue Provided No Public Enforcement Actions against Alleged Violator(s)**

If a public enforcement agency has not commenced a diligent prosecution within sixty (60) days of this Notice, in addition to time allotted for method of service, WHEN intends to file a private enforcement action against Alleged Violator(s) in the public interest, pursuant to Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(d).

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<sup>1</sup> Attachment A has been provided to the Alleged Violator(s) and Attorney General.

<sup>2</sup> Attachment B has only been provided to the Attorney General.

<sup>3</sup> Attachment C has been provided to all recipients of this Notice.

## II. Proposition 65 Legal Background

Under Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.6, “[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,” subject to exceptions. Additionally, pursuant to Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.8, the State of California has published a list of chemicals known to the State to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity within the meaning of Proposition 65.<sup>4</sup> Listed chemicals relevant to this Notice include: lead<sup>5</sup> and lead compounds<sup>6</sup>.

For guidance, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment created a summary (“Summary”) of Proposition 65 which includes general information about Proposition 65. A true and correct copy of the Summary is appended hereto as Attachment D.<sup>7</sup>

## III. Alleged Violator(s) and Consumer Products with Listed Proposition 65 Chemicals

The names of Alleged Violator(s) encompassed within this Notice for violations of Proposition 65 are:

- WA Imports, Inc. d/b/a Hotaru Foods.

WHEN has identified violations of Proposition 65 by Alleged Violator(s) in regard to the products (“Covered Products”) identified below in Table 1. Alleged Violator(s) sell or otherwise provide consumer products directly to consumers by any means, including via the internet, in the State of California that contain listed chemicals without the required clear and reasonable warnings and/or in exceedance of allowable limits.

**Table 1**

| Covered Products                | Listed Chemical(s) | Uniform Product Code (“UPC”) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Matcha Milk Jam by Hotaru Foods | Lead               | 850004717899                 |

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<sup>4</sup> See the Proposition 65 list here: <https://oehha.ca.gov/proposition-65/proposition-65-list>.

<sup>5</sup> On February 27, 1987, the State of California officially listed lead as a chemical known to cause developmental toxicity, and male and female reproductive toxicity.

<sup>6</sup> On October 1, 1992, the State of California officially listed lead and lead compounds as chemicals known to cause cancer.

<sup>7</sup> Attachment A has only been provided to the Alleged Violator(s).

These violations have occurred and are continuing every day since at least November 17, 2025. Upon information and belief, the Covered Products identified in Table 1 have been in violation of Proposition 65 since the products were introduced into the State of California's marketplace and will continue every day until clear and reasonable warnings are produced and until these chemicals are either removed from, or reduced to allowable levels, in the Covered Products.

#### **IV. Route of Exposure**

Exposure is through ingestion by following the recommended use of the products.

#### **V. Preservation of Relevant Evidence**

Alleged Violator(s) are obliged to maintain and preserve all documents in their possession that relate in any way to the activities underlying the allegations in this Notice. Document and evidence preservation includes, but is not limited to, the suspension of any document deletion and/or destruction with respect to *all* documents in Alleged Violator(s)' possession, custody, or control. "Document" or "documents" includes, but is not limited to, all hard copy writings as defined in Cal. Evid. Code § 250 ("writing" means handwriting, typewriting, printing, photostating, photographing, photocopying, transmitting by electronic mail or facsimile, and every other means of recording upon any tangible thing, any form of communication or representation, including letters, words, pictures, sounds, or symbols, or combinations thereof, and any record thereby created, regardless of the manner in which the record has been stored") and all Electronically Stored Information ("ESI") as defined in Cal. Code Civ. Proc. § 2016.020 ("(d) 'Electronic' means relating to technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities" and "(e) 'Electronically stored information' means information that is stored in an electronic medium"). *See also Cedars-Sinai Medical Center v. Superior Court*, 18 Cal. 4th 1, 8, 954 P.2d 511, 515 (1998).

WHEN may continue to investigate these Covered Products and other products that may reveal additional violations and result in successive notices of violation.

#### **VI. Conclusion**

Consistent with the public interest and community right to know goals of Proposition 65, and a desire to have these ongoing violations rectified, WHEN is interested in seeking a resolution of this matter that includes an enforceable written agreement by Alleged Violator(s) to: (1) reformulate the Covered Products so as to eliminate further exposures to the identified chemicals, or provide appropriate warnings on the labels of these Covered Products; (2) pay an appropriate civil penalty; and (3) provide clear and reasonable warnings compliant with Proposition 65, and its applicable regulations, to

all persons located in California who purchased the above products in the last three (3) years. Such a resolution will prevent further unwarned consumer exposures to the identified chemicals, as well as expensive and time-consuming litigation.

Please direct any inquiries or correspondence regarding this Notice to the below listed individual:

Jacqueline E. Biner, Esq.  
Benchline PLLC  
3540 Wilkinson Lane #8  
Lafayette, CA 94549  
jackie@benchline.law

Sincerely,



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Jacqueline E. Biner  
Founder & Managing Partner  
Benchline PLLC

Enclosures and/or Attachments:

1. Certificate of Merit (to Alleged Violator(s) and Attorney General);
  - a. Exhibit 1 to Certificate of Merit: Additional Supporting Information (to Attorney General);
2. Certificate of Service (to all recipients of this Notice); and
3. OEHHA Summary (to Alleged Violator(s)).


**CERTIFICATE OF MERIT**  
Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(d)

**Re: WA Imports, Inc. d/b/a Hotaru Foods's Notice of Proposition 65 violations**

I, Jacqueline E. Biner, hereby declare and certify:

1. This Certificate of Merit accompanies the attached sixty (60) day Notice in which it is alleged that the party(ies) identified in the Notice violated Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.6 by exposing individuals to chemical(s) known to the state of California to cause cancer and/or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable warning(s) to such individual(s).
2. I am an attorney for the noticing party.
3. I have consulted with one or more persons with relevant and appropriate experience and have assembled evidence attached to the copy of the notice for the California Attorney General as Exhibit 1 to this Certificate of Merit regarding the lack of warnings for the listed chemical(s) that is/are the subject of the Notice.
4. Based on the information obtained and on other information in my possession, I believe there is a reasonable and meritorious case for the private action. I understand that "reasonable and meritorious case for the private action" means that the information provides a credible basis that all elements of the plaintiff's case can be established and that the information did not prove that the alleged violator(s) will be able to establish any of the affirmative defenses set forth in the statute.
5. The copy of this Certificate of Merit served on the California Attorney General attaches to it factual information sufficient to establish the basis for this certificate, including the information identified in Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(h)(2) (i.e. the identity of the person(s) consulted with and relied on by the certifier and the facts, studies, and data reviewed by that person).

Dated: June 24, 2026

  
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Jacqueline E. Biner, Esq.

**PROOF OF SERVICE**

I, the undersigned, declare under penalty of perjury:

I am over the age of eighteen (18) years and not a party to this case. I am a resident of or employed in the county where the mailing occurred. My business address is 3540 Wilkinson Lane #8, Lafayette, CA 94549.

I. On June 24, 2026, I caused to be served the following:

1. **SIXTY (60) DAY NOTICE OF VIOLATION SENT IN COMPLIANCE WITH CAL. HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(d);**
2. **THE SAFE DRINKING WATER AND TOXIC ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1986 (“PROPOSITION 65”): A SUMMARY; AND**
3. **CERTIFICATE OF MERIT.**

by **Certified First Class Mail** through the United States Postal Service by placing true and correct copies of the above documents in a sealed envelope, individually addressed to each Alleged Violator listed below, and providing such envelope to a United States Postal Service representative:

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| WA Imports, Inc. d/b/a Hotaru Foods<br>11414 Maple Ave.<br>Hebron, IL 60034 |
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II. On June 24, 2026, I caused to be served true and correct copies of the following documents:

1. **SIXTY (60) DAY NOTICE OF VIOLATION SENT IN COMPLIANCE WITH CAL. HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(d); and**
2. **CERTIFICATE OF MERIT.**

via **Electronic Mail**, by sending true and correct copies of the above documents, addressed individually, to the recipients listed on the “Electronic Mail Service List” as contained on the Office of the Attorney General Website located at <https://oag.ca.gov/prop65/electronic-service> and listed below:

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|---|--|--|
| Ursula Jones Dickson, District Attorney<br>Alameda County | Robert K. Priscaro, District Attorney<br>Alpine County | Barbara Yook, District Attorney<br>Calaveras County<br>891 Mountain Ranch Road |
|---|--|--|

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|---|--|---|
| 7677 Oakport Street, Suite 650<br>Oakland, CA 94621<br><a href="mailto:CEPDProp65@acgov.org">CEPDProp65@acgov.org</a>   | P.O. Box 248<br>Markleville, CA 96120<br><a href="mailto:prop65enf@alpinecountyca.gov">prop65enf@alpinecountyca.gov</a>  | San Andreas, CA 95249<br><a href="mailto:Prop65Env@co.calaveras.ca.us">Prop65Env@co.calaveras.ca.us</a>   |
| Stacey Grassini, Deputy District Attorney<br>Contra Costa County<br>900 Ward Street<br>Martinez, CA 94553<br><a href="mailto:sgrassini@contracostada.org">sgrassini@contracostada.org</a>                     | James Clinchard, Assistant District Attorney<br>El Dorado County<br>778 Pacific Street<br>Placerville, CA 95667<br><a href="mailto:EDCDAPROP65@edcda.us">EDCDAPROP65@edcda.us</a>      | Lisa A. Smittcamp, District Attorney<br>Fresno County<br>2100 Tulare Street<br>Fresno, CA 93721<br><a href="mailto:consumerprotection@fresnocountyca.gov">consumerprotection@fresnocountyca.gov</a>               |
| Thomas L. Hardy, District Attorney<br>Inyo County<br>168 North Edwards Street<br>Independence, CA 93526<br><a href="mailto:inyoda@inyocounty.us">inyoda@inyocounty.us</a>                                     | Devin Chandler, Program Coordinator<br>Lassen County<br>2950 Riverside Drive<br>Susanville, CA 96130<br><a href="mailto:dchandler@co.lassen.ca.us">dchandler@co.lassen.ca.us</a>       | Lori E. Frugoli, District Attorney<br>Marin County<br>3501 Civic Center Drive<br>Room 145<br>San Rafael, CA 94903<br><a href="mailto:consumer@marincountyda.org">consumer@marincountyda.org</a>                   |
| Walter W. Wall, District Attorney<br>Mariposa County<br>P.O. Box 730<br>Mariposa, CA 95338<br><a href="mailto:mcda@mariposacounty.org">mcda@mariposacounty.org</a>  | Kimberly Lewis, District Attorney<br>Merced County<br>550 West Main Street<br>Merced, CA 95340<br><a href="mailto:Prop65@countyofmerced.com">Prop65@countyofmerced.com</a>             | Jeannine M. Pacioni, District Attorney<br>Monterey County<br>1200 Aguajito Road<br>Monterey, CA 93940<br><a href="mailto:Prop65DA@co.monterey.ca.us">Prop65DA@co.monterey.ca.us</a>                               |
| Allison Haley, District Attorney<br>Napa County<br>1127 First Street, Suite C<br>Napa, CA 94559<br><a href="mailto:CEPD@countyofnapa.org">CEPD@countyofnapa.org</a>   | Clifford H. Newell, District Attorney<br>Nevada County<br>201 Commercial Street<br>Nevada City, CA 95959<br><a href="mailto:DA.Prop65@co.nevada.ca.us">DA.Prop65@co.nevada.ca.us</a>   | Todd Spitzer, District Attorney<br>Orange County<br>300 N. Flower Street<br>Santa Ana, CA 92703<br><a href="mailto:Prop65notice@ocdapa.org">Prop65notice@ocdapa.org</a>   |
| Morgan Briggs Gire, District Attorney<br>Placer County<br>10810 Justice Center Drive<br>Roseville, CA 95678<br><a href="mailto:Prop65@placer.ca.gov">Prop65@placer.ca.gov</a>                                 | David Hollister, District Attorney<br>Plumas County<br>520 Main Street<br>Quincy, CA 95971<br><a href="mailto:davidhollister@countyofplumas.com">davidhollister@countyofplumas.com</a> | Paul E. Zellerbach, District Attorney<br>Riverside County<br>3072 Orange Street<br>Riverside, CA 92501<br><a href="mailto:Prop65@rivcoda.org">Prop65@rivcoda.org</a>  |
| Anne Marie Schubert, District Attorney<br>Sacramento County<br>901 G Street<br>Sacramento, CA 95814<br><a href="mailto:Prop65@sacda.org">Prop65@sacda.org</a>   | Summer Stephan, District Attorney<br>San Diego County<br>330 West Broadway<br>San Diego, CA 92101<br><a href="mailto:SanDiegoDAProp65@sdcda.org">SanDiegoDAProp65@sdcda.org</a>        | Mark Ankcorn, Deputy City Attorney<br>San Diego City Attorney<br>1200 Third Avenue<br>San Diego, CA 92101<br><a href="mailto:CityAttyProp65@sandiego.gov">CityAttyProp65@sandiego.gov</a>                         |
| Henry Lifton, Deputy City Attorney<br>San Francisco City Attorney<br>1390 Market Street, 7 <sup>th</sup> Floor<br>San Francisco, CA 94102<br><a href="mailto:Prop65@sfcityatty.org">Prop65@sfcityatty.org</a> | Brooke Jenkins, District Attorney<br>San Francisco County<br>350 Rhode Island Street<br>San Francisco, CA 94103<br><a href="mailto:Prop65@sfgov.org">Prop65@sfgov.org</a>              | Tori Verber Salazar, District Attorney<br>San Joaquin County<br>222 E. Weber Avenue, Room 202<br>Stockton, CA 95202<br><a href="mailto:DAConsumer.Environmental@sjcda.org">DAConsumer.Environmental@sjcda.org</a> |
| Eric J. Dobroth, Deputy District Attorney<br>San Luis Obispo County   | Christopher Dalbey, Deputy District Attorney<br>Santa Barbara County<br>1112 Santa Barbara St.   | Nora V. Frimann, City Attorney<br>Santa Clara City Attorney<br>200 E. Santa Clara Street<br>16 <sup>th</sup> Floor  |

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| County Government Center<br>Annex, 4th Floor<br>San Luis Obispo, CA 93408<br><a href="mailto:edobroth@co.slo.ca.us">edobroth@co.slo.ca.us</a>                                  | Santa Barbara, CA 93101<br><a href="mailto:DAProp65@co.santa-barbara.ca.us">DAProp65@co.santa-barbara.ca.us</a>   | San Jose, CA 96113<br><a href="mailto:Proposition65notices@sanjoseca.gov">Proposition65notices@sanjoseca.gov</a>   |
| Bud Porter, Supervising Deputy<br>District Attorney<br>Santa Clara County<br>70 W Hedding St<br>San Jose, CA 95110<br><a href="mailto:EPU@da.sccgov.org">EPU@da.sccgov.org</a> | Jeffrey S. Rosell, District Attorney<br>Santa Cruz County<br>701 Ocean Street<br>Santa Cruz, CA 95060<br><a href="mailto:Prop65DA@santacruzcounty.us">Prop65DA@santacruzcounty.us</a> | Carla Rodriguez, District<br>Attorney<br>Sonoma County<br>600 Administration Drive, Room<br>212J<br>Santa Rosa, CA 95403<br><a href="mailto:ECLD@sonoma-county.org">ECLD@sonoma-county.org</a> |
| Tim Ward, District Attorney<br>Tulare County<br>221 S. Mooney Boulevard<br>Visalia, CA 95370<br><a href="mailto:damail@tularecounty.ca.gov">damail@tularecounty.ca.gov</a>     | Gregory D. Totten, District<br>Attorney<br>Ventura County<br>800 S. Victoria Avenue<br>Ventura, CA 93009<br><a href="mailto:daspecialops@ventura.org">daspecialops@ventura.org</a>    | Jeff W. Reisig, District Attorney<br>Yolo County<br>301 Second Street<br>Woodland, CA 95695<br><a href="mailto:cfepd@yolocounty.org">cfepd@yolocounty.org</a>                                  |

III. On June 24, 2026, I caused to be served true and correct copies of the following documents:

1. **SIXTY (60) DAY NOTICE OF VIOLATION SENT IN COMPLIANCE WITH CAL. HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(d);**
2. **CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; AND**
3. **CERTIFICATE OF MERIT ATTACHMENTS**

by **Electronic Upload**, by uploading true and correct copies of the documents, addressed to the California Attorney General at their website address, listed under the "Electronic Upload Service List," located at <https://oag.ca.gov/prop65/add-60-day-notice>, the office of which is physically located at:

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| Office of the California Attorney General<br>Prop 65 Enforcement Reporting<br>1515 Clay Street, Suite 2000<br>Oakland, CA 94612-0550 |
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Executed on June 24, 2026, at Lafayette, California.



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Jacqueline E. Biner, Esq.