

# SETTLEMENT AND RELEASE AGREEMENT

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Clean Product Advocates, LLC and Mutual Trading Co., Inc.

This Settlement Agreement is entered into by and between Clean Products Advocates, LLC ("CPA"), on the one hand, and Mutual Trading Co., Inc. ("MTC"), on the other hand, with CPA and MTC collectively referred to as the "Parties."

### 1.2. General Allegations

CPA alleges that MTC manufactured, distributed or offered for sale in the State of California "Tanota Takoyaki Wheat Cakes with Octopus" containing Cadmium, and that such sales have not included warnings pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, California Health & Safety Code sections 25249.6 *et seq.* and its implementing regulations ("Proposition 65"). California has identified and listed Cadmium under Proposition 65 as a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects or other reproductive harm.

### 1.3. Product Description

The products that are covered by this Settlement Agreement are defined as Tanota Takoyaki Wheat Cakes with Octopus that MTC has manufactured, imported, sold, offered for sale or distributed in California. All such items shall be referred to herein as the "Products."

### 1.4. Notice of Violation

On July 6 2022 CPA served Mutual Trading Co., Inc.; North American Food Dist. Co.; Weee! Inc. DBA Saywee.com; Weee! Inc. and the requisite public enforcement agencies eligible to initiate Proposition 65 actions on behalf of the People of the State of California with a document entitled "60-Day Notice of Violation" ("Notice") that provided MTC and such public enforcers with notice that MTC was allegedly in violation of California Health & Safety Code section 25249.6 for failing to warn consumers and customers that the Products exposed users in California to Cadmium. To the best of the Parties' knowledge, no public enforcer has commenced or is diligently prosecuting the allegations set forth in the Notice.

### 1.5. No Admission

The Parties enter into this Settlement Agreement to settle disputed claims between them as set forth herein and in the Notice concerning MTC's compliance with Proposition 65. MTC denies the material factual and legal allegations contained in CPA's Notice and maintains that all products that it has manufactured or imported for sale and distribution in California, including the Products, have been and are in compliance with Proposition 65 or any other statutory,

regulatory, common law or equitable doctrine. Nothing in this Settlement Agreement shall be construed as an admission by MTC of any fact, finding, issue of law, or violation of law; nor shall compliance with this Settlement Agreement constitute or be construed as an admission by MTC of any fact, binding, conclusion, issue of law, or violation of law, such being specifically denied by MTC on its behalf. However, nothing in this section shall diminish or otherwise affect the obligations, responsibilities, and duties of MTC under this Settlement Agreement.

### **1.6. Effective Date**

For purposes of this Settlement Agreement, the term "Effective Date" shall mean the date this Settlement Agreement is fully executed.

## **2. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF: REFORMULATION AND WARNINGS**

As of the Effective Date, MTC, at its sole discretion, agrees to either (a) cease selling, offering for sale or distributing the Products in California, (b) manufacture, import, or otherwise source for authorized sale in California only Reformulated Products, as defined pursuant to Section 2.1 below, or (c) provide a clear and reasonable Proposition 65 warning to accompany the Products pursuant to Section 2.2 below.

### **2.1. Reformulation Standards**

The Products shall be deemed to comply with Proposition 65 with regard to Cadmium and be exempt from any Proposition 65 warning requirements for Cadmium in the Products does not exceed 4.1 micrograms of Cadmium per day ("Reformulated Products"). Products that were supplied or contracted to be supplied to third parties by MTC prior to 6 months after the Effective Date shall be deemed exempted from the requirements of this Section 2 and shall be permitted to be sold through as previously manufactured, packaged and labeled.

For the Purpose of this Agreement, the amount of Cadmium a person is exposed to from the Covered Product shall be calculated using the following formula: micrograms of Cadmium per gram of product, multiplied by grams of product per serving of the product (using the largest serving size appearing on the product label), multiplied by servings of the product per day (using the largest number of servings in recommended dosage appearing on the product label), which equals micrograms of Cadmium exposure per day.

### **2.2. Warning Option**

Products that do not meet the warning exemption standard set forth in Section 2.1 above shall be accompanied by a warning as described in Section 2.3 below. This warning requirement shall only be required as to Products that are manufactured, distributed, marketed, imported, sold, shipped for sale or offered for sale to consumers by MTC in the State of California. No Proposition 65 warning shall be required for any Products that are supplied or contracted to be supplied to third parties by MTC prior to 6 months after the Effective Date, and all such Products are hereby deemed to be exempt from Proposition 65 enforcement.

### **2.3. Warning Language**

(a) Where required to meet the criteria set forth in Section 2.2, MTC shall display the following warning statement on the packaging label of the Products that do not meet the warning exemption standard set forth in Section 2.1 above:

**WARNING:** Consuming this product can expose you to chemicals including Cadmium, which [is] are known to the State of California to cause cancer and birth defects or other reproductive harm. For more information go to [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food)

MTC may include the names of additional chemicals in the warning if they are present in the Products at a level that MTC reasonably believes would require a Proposition 65 warning.

(b) The requirements for warnings, set forth in subsection (a) above, are imposed pursuant to the terms of this Settlement Agreement. The Parties recognize that these are not the exclusive methods of providing a warning under Proposition 65 and its implementing regulations. MTC shall be deemed to be in compliance with the warning requirements of this Settlement Agreement by either adhering to this Section 2.3 or by complying with the Proposition 65 warning requirements adopted by the State of California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (“OEHHA”) as of or after the Effective Date.

(c) If Proposition 65 warnings for Cadmium should no longer be required, MTC shall have no further obligations pursuant to this Settlement Agreement.

### **3. PENALTIES PURSUANT TO HEALTH & SAFETY CODE SECTION 25249.7(b)**

In full satisfaction of all potential civil penalties and attorney’s fees, costs and any other expenses incurred by CPA or its counsel. MTC shall pay the total Settlement amount of Twenty Seven Thousand Dollars (\$27,000) (The “Settlement Amount”) as set forth below.

#### **3.1 Civil Penalties to Health & Safety Code 25249.7(b):**

Two Thousand Dollars of the Settlement Amount shall be considered a “civil penalty” pursuant to California Health and Safety Code. MTC shall issue two separate checks within ten (10) days of the Effective Date for a total amount of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2000) as follows, and all payments shall be delivered to the addresses listed below.

**3.1 (a)** One Check made payable to the State of California’s Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (“OEHHA”) in the amount of One Thousand and Five Hundred Dollars (\$1500), representing 75% of the total civil penalty; and

**3.1 (b)** One check payable to “Clean Product Advocates, LLC” in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500), representing 25% of the total civil penalty.

### **3.2 Attorney's Fees and Costs:**

Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) of the total Settlement Amount shall be paid to Cliffwood Law Firm, PC within ten (10) days of the Effective Date, as CPA's attorneys, for reasonable investigation fees, and costs, attorney's fees, and any other cost incurred as a result of investigating and bringing this matter to MTC's attention.

## **4. PAYMENT PROCEDURES**

**4.1** All Payments owed to OEHHHA, pursuant to section 3.1(a) shall be delivered directly to OEHHHA (Memo line "Prop 65 Penalties NOV #2022-01484") at the following address:

Attn: Mike Gyurics  
Fiscal Operations Branch Chief  
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment  
P.O. Box 4010  
Sacramento, CA 95812-4010

**4.2** All Payments owed to CPA, pursuant to Section 3.1(b) shall be delivered to:

c/o CPA  
Attn: Elham Shabatian  
Cliffwood Law Firm, PC  
12100 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 800  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

**4.3** All Payments owed to Cliffwood Law Firm, PC pursuant to Section 4.3, shall be delivered to:

Cliffwood Law firm, PC  
Attn: Elham Shabatian  
12100 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 800  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

## **4.4 PROOF OF PAYMENT**

A copy of each check payable to OEHHHA, shall be mailed to Cliffwood Law firm, PC, simultaneous with payment to Cliffwood Law Firm, PC at the address set forth above, as proof of payment to OEHHHA.

## **5. RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS**

### **5.1. Release of MTC, Downstream Customers and Upstream Vendors**

In further consideration of the promises and agreements herein contained, and for the payments to be made pursuant to Sections 3 and 4 above, CPA, on behalf of itself and its respective owners, principals, shareholders, officers, directors, employees, parents, subsidiaries its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors and/or assignees (collectively, "Releasers"), hereby waives all rights to institute or participate in, directly or indirectly, any form of legal action and fully releases all claims relating to the Products, including, without limitation, all actions, and causes of action, in law or in equity, suits, liabilities, demands, obligations, damages, costs, fines, penalties, losses or expenses (including, but not limited to, investigation fees, expert fees and attorneys' fees) of any nature whatsoever, whether known or unknown, fixed or contingent (collectively "Claims"), against (a) MTC (b) each of MTC's downstream distributors in the stream of commerce (including but not limited to North American Food Dist. Co.; Weee! Inc. DBA Saywee.com; Weee! Inc. and any other upstream or downstream entities in the distribution chain for the Products, including, but not limited to, manufacturers, wholesalers, vendors, licensors, licensees, auctioneers, retailers, franchisees, dealers, shareholders, cooperative members, customers, owners, purchasers, third-party re-sellers, and users, (c) MTC's parent companies, corporate affiliates, subsidiaries, affiliates, doing business as entities ("DBAs"), successor companies, and their respective officers, directors, attorneys, representatives, shareholders, agents, and employees, and sister and parent entities, and (d) the employees, shareholders, officers, directors, members, managers, equity owners, insurers, attorneys, predecessors, successors and assigns of any of the entities identified in subsection (a) and (c), above (collectively "Releasees"). CPA also, on behalf of itself, its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors, and/or assignees and *not* in its representative capacity, provides a general release herein which shall be effective as a full and final accord and satisfaction, as a bar to all actions, causes of action, obligations, costs, expenses, attorneys' fees, damages, losses, claims, liabilities and demands of any nature, character or kind, known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected, against MTC and the Releasees.

### **5.2 MTC's Release of CPA**

MTC, on behalf of itself, its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors and/or assignees, hereby waives any and all claims against CPA, its attorneys and other representatives, for any and all actions taken or statements made (or those that could have been taken or made) by CPA and/or its attorneys and other representatives, whether in the course of investigating claims or otherwise seeking to enforce Proposition 65 against it in this matter or with respect to the Products.

### **5.3 California Civil Code § 1542.**

It is possible that other claims not known to the Parties arising out of the facts alleged in the Notice and relating to the Products will develop or be discovered. CPA on behalf of itself only, on one hand, and MTC, on the other hand, acknowledge that this Agreement is expressly intended to cover and include all such claims up through the Effective Date, including all rights of action therefor. The Parties acknowledge that the claims released in §§ 5.1 and 5.2, above, may include unknown claims, and nevertheless waive California Civil Code § 1542 as to any such unknown claims. California Civil Code § 1542 reads as follows:

A GENERAL RELEASE DOES NOT EXTEND TO CLAIMS THAT THE CREDITOR OR RELEASING PARTY DOES NOT KNOW OR SUSPECT TO EXIST IN HIS OR HER FAVOR AT THE TIME OF EXECUTING THE RELEASE AND THAT, IF KNOWN BY HIM OR HER, WOULD HAVE MATERIALLY AFFECTED HIS OR HER SETTLEMENT WITH THE DEBTOR OR RELEASED PARTY.

CPA and MTC each acknowledge and understand the significance and consequences of this specific waiver of California Civil Code § 1542.

### **6. GOVERNING LAW**

The terms of this Settlement Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of California and apply within the State of California. In the event that Proposition 65 is repealed or is otherwise rendered inapplicable by reason of law generally, or as to the Products, then MTC shall have no further obligations pursuant to this Settlement Agreement.

### **7. NOTICES**

Unless specified herein, all correspondence and notices required to be provided pursuant to this Settlement Agreement shall be in writing and personally delivered or sent by:

(i) electronic mail; or (ii) overnight courier on any party by the other party at the following addresses:

**For Mutual Trading Co., Inc.**

Letitia D. Moore Esq.  
Holland & Knight LLP  
50 California Street, Suite 2800  
San Francisco, CA 94111

**For Clean Product Advocates, LLC:**

Elham Shabatian Esq.  
Cliffwood Law Firm, PC  
12100 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 800  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Any party, from time to time, may specify in writing to the other party a change of address or electronic mail to which all notices and other communications shall be sent.

## **8. COUNTERPARTS; FACSIMILE/E-SIGNATURES**

This Settlement Agreement may be executed in counterparts and by facsimile or e- signatures, each of which shall be deemed an original, and all of which, when taken together, shall constitute one and the same document.

## **9. ENTIRE AGREEMENT**

This Settlement Agreement contains the sole and entire agreement and understanding of the Parties with respect to the entire subject matter hereof, and all related prior discussions.

## **10. MODIFICATION**

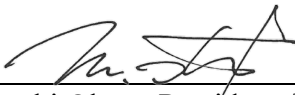
This Settlement Agreement may be modified only by a written agreement signed by the Parties.

## **11. AUTHORIZATION**


The undersigned are authorized to execute this Settlement Agreement on behalf of their respective Parties and have read, understood and agree to all of the terms and conditions of this Settlement Agreement.

### **Agreed to:**

Date: March 13, 2023

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Masatoshi Ohata, President / CEO  
Mutual Trading Co., Inc.

Date: March 3, 2023

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Elham Shabatian, Esq.  
Cliffwood Law Firm, PC  
Attorney for  
Clean Product Advocates, LLC