

## SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Parties**

This Settlement Agreement is entered into by and between CalSafe Research Center, Inc. ("CRC"), on the one hand, and Hartville Kitchen Foods, Inc. ("HKF") on the other hand, with CRC and HKF each individually referred to as a "Party" and collectively as the "Parties."

#### **1.2 General Allegations**

CRC alleges that HKF sells and/or distributes in California certain products, specified in Section 1.3 below, containing lead without a warning as required by Health and Safety Code §§ 25249.5 *et seq.* ("Proposition 65"). Lead is listed pursuant to Proposition 65 as a chemical known to cause cancer and birth defects or other reproductive harm. HKF denies these allegations.

#### **1.3 Product Descriptions**

The products covered by this Settlement Agreement are defined as, and expressly limited to "Hartville Kitchen, Sweet Garlic Dill Pickles (UPC# 025555491134)" and "Hartville Kitchen, Sweet Pickled Garlic (UPC# 025555491004)" (the "Products") that contain lead and that are manufactured, sold or distributed for sale in California by HKF.

#### **1.4 Notice of Violation**

On May 15, 2026, CRC served a 60-Day Notice of Violation ("the Notice") on HKF, the California Attorney General and the other requisite public enforcers, alleging that HKF and others violated Proposition 65 when they failed to warn consumers in California of the alleged exposures to lead from the Products.

To the best of the Parties' knowledge, no public enforcer has commenced and is diligently prosecuting an action to enforce the violations alleged in the Notice.

#### **1.5 No Admission**

HKF denies the material, factual and legal allegations in the Notice and maintains that all of the products it sold and/or distributed for sale in California, including the Products, have been, and are, in compliance with all laws. Nothing in this Settlement Agreement shall be construed as an admission by HKF or any of its officers, directors, shareholders, employees, agents, parent companies, subsidiaries, divisions, affiliates, franchisees, licensees, customers, suppliers, distributors, wholesalers, or retailers of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law or violation of law, nor shall compliance with this Settlement Agreement constitute or be construed as an admission by HKF or any of its officers, directors, shareholders, employees, agents, parent companies, subsidiaries, divisions, affiliates, franchisees, licensees, customers, suppliers, distributors, wholesalers, or retailers of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law or violation of law, such being specifically denied by HKF. This Section shall not, however, diminish or otherwise affect HKF's obligations, responsibilities, and duties 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

### 2.1 Clear and Reasonable Warnings

Beginning on the Effective Date, HKF shall be permanently enjoined from manufacturing for sale in the State of California, "Distributing into the State of California," or directly selling in the State of California, Products that expose a person to an exposure level of more than 0.5 micrograms of lead per serving, with serving size measured as thirty (30) grams — the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Reference Amount Customarily Consumed for "Pickles and pickled vegetables, all types" under 21 C.F.R. § 101.12(b), unless it meets the warning requirements under Section 2.2.

As used in this Settlement Agreement, the term "Distributing into the State of California" shall mean to directly ship the Products into California for sale in California or to sell the Products to a distributor that HKF knows or has reason to know will sell the Products in California.

### 2.2 General Warning Requirements

HKF agrees that each warning shall be prominently placed with such conspicuousness, as compared with other words, statements, designs, or devices, as to render it likely to be read and understood by an ordinary individual under customary conditions before purchase or use. Each warning shall be provided in a manner such that the consumer or user understands to which *specific* Product the warning applies, so as to minimize the risk of consumer confusion.

For the purposes of this Settlement Agreement, a clear and reasonable warning for the Products shall consist of a warning affixed to the packaging, label, tag, or directly to each of the Products sold or distributed in California by HKF that contains one of the following statements:

- 1) **WARNING:** Consuming this product can expose you to lead, which is 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).

HKF may, at its option, use the words "CA WARNING:" or "CALIFORNIA WARNING:" instead of the word "WARNING:".

- 2) **WARNING:** Risk of cancer and reproductive harm from exposure to lead. See [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food).

or

**WARNING:** Can expose you to lead, a carcinogen and reproductive toxicant. See [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food).

HKF may, at its option, use the words "CA WARNING:" or "CALIFORNIA WARNING:" instead of the word "WARNING:".

The warning shall be offset in a box with black outline.

For internet purchases, the warning must also be provided by including either the warning or a clearly marked hyperlink using the word "WARNING" or "CA WARNING" or "CALIFORNIA WARNING" on the Product display page, or by otherwise prominently displaying the warning to the purchaser prior to completing the purchase.

For Products that HKF provides for a downstream entity to sell on the internet, HKF shall include an instruction that the entity comply with the warning requirements of this section.

Where a consumer product sign, label or shelf tag used to provide a warning includes consumer information in language(s) other than English, the warning must also be provided in the other language(s) in addition to English.

(i) Changes in Warning Regulations or Statutes

In the event that the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment promulgates one or more regulations requiring or permitting warning text and/or methods of transmission different than those set forth above, HKF shall be entitled to use, at its discretion, such other warning text and/or method of transmission without being deemed in breach of this Settlement Agreement. If regulations or legislation are enacted or issued providing that a Proposition 65 warning for the Products is no longer required, a lack of warning will not thereafter be a breach of this Settlement Agreement.

**2.3 Grace Period for Existing Inventory of Products**

The injunctive requirements of Section 2 shall not apply to Products that are already in the stream of commerce as of the Effective Date, which Products are expressly subject to the releases provided in Section 4.1.

**3. MONETARY SETTLEMENT TERMS**

**3.1 Total Settlement Payment**

In full satisfaction of all potential civil penalties, attorneys' fees, and costs, HKF shall make a total settlement payment of Fourteen Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (**\$14,500.00**) ("Total Settlement Amount"). The Total Settlement Amount shall be apportioned into a Civil Penalty and Attorney's Fees and Costs as set forth in Sections 3.2 and 3.3 below.

**3.2 Civil Penalty Payment**

Pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(b)(2), and in settlement of all claims alleged in the Notice or referred to in this Settlement Agreement, HKF agrees to pay One Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Dollars (**\$1,450.00**) in civil penalties. The penalty payment will be allocated in accordance with California Health and Safety Code §§ 25249.12(c)(1) & (d), with 75% of the penalty amount paid to the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment ("OEHHA") and the remaining 25% of the penalty amount retained by CRC. Within ten (10) days of the Effective Date, HKF shall issue a check to "OEHHA" in the amount of One Thousand Eighty-Seven Dollars and Fifty Cents (**\$1,087.50**) and shall, pursuant to the instructions below, wire to CRC the amount of Three Hundred Sixty-Two Dollars and Fifty Cents (**\$362.50**).

All payments owed to OEHHA (EIN: 68-0284486) pursuant to this Section shall be delivered directly to OEHHA (Memo Line "Prop 65 Penalties") at the following addresses:

For United States Postal Delivery Service:

Mike Gyurics

Fiscal Operations Branch Chief  
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment  
P.O. Box 4010, MS 19B  
Sacramento, CA 95812-4010

For Non-United States Postal Delivery Service:

Mike Gyurics  
Fiscal Operations Branch Chief  
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment  
1001 I Street MS #19B  
Sacramento, CA 95814

All penalty payments owed to CRC shall be sent via wire to:

**Wire Instructions:**

Account Name: Manning Law, APC  
Bank Name: J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, N.A.  
Bank Address: 2967 Michelson Dr, Ste A, Irvine, CA 92612  
Wire Routing / ABA Number: 021000021  
Swift Code: CHASUS33  
Account Number: 579068902

For further benefit of: Civil Penalty Payment File No. P65-1776

**3.3 Attorney Fees and Costs**

The Parties reached an accord on the compensation due to CRC and its counsel under the private attorney general doctrine and principles of contract law. Under these legal principles, within ten (10) days of the Effective Date, HKF agrees to pay Thirteen Thousand and Fifty Dollars (\$13,050.00) to CRC and its counsel for all fees and costs incurred in investigating, bringing this matter to the attention of HKF, and negotiating a settlement.

The payment shall be sent via wire to:

**Wire Instructions:**

Account Name: Manning Law, APC  
Bank Name: J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, N.A.  
Bank Address: 2967 Michelson Dr, Ste A, Irvine, CA 92612  
Wire Routing / ABA Number: 021000021  
Swift Code: CHASUS33  
Account Number: 579068902  
For further benefit of: Attorney's Fees and Costs File No. P65-1776

**3.4 Tax Documentation**

HKF agrees to provide a completed IRS 1099 form for its payments to CRC and Manning Law, and CRC and Manning Law agree to provide IRS W-9 forms for each of the payees under this Settlement Agreement. The Parties acknowledge that HKF cannot issue any settlement payments pursuant to Section 3 above until after HKF receives the requisite W-9 forms from CRC's counsel.

#### **4. CLAIMS COVERED AND RELEASED**

##### **4.1 CRC's Release of HKF**

CRC, acting on its own behalf and not on behalf of the public, fully releases and discharges HKF and its respective officers, directors, shareholders, employees, agents, parent companies, subsidiaries, divisions, affiliates, franchisees, licensees, customers, suppliers, distributors (the "HKF Releasees") and all entities to which HKF Releasees directly or indirectly distribute or sell the Products, and any other distributors, wholesalers, customers, retailers, franchisees, licensors, and licensees, (collectively, the "Released Parties" and individually, a "Released Party"). CRC, on behalf of itself and its officers, directors, shareholders, employees, agents, parent companies, subsidiaries and divisions hereby fully releases and discharges the Released Parties from any and all claims, actions, causes of action, suits, demands, liabilities, damages, penalties, fees, costs, and expenses asserted, or that could have been asserted based on or related to the handling, use, sale, distribution or consumption of the Products in California, as to any alleged violation of Proposition 65 or its implementing regulations in relation to the Products, including without limitation any failure to provide Proposition 65 warnings on the Products with respect to exposures to lead.

##### **4.2 HKF's Release of CRC**

HKF on behalf of its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors and assigns hereby waives any and all claims against CRC and its attorneys and other representatives, for any and all actions taken, or statements made by CRC and 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.

##### **4.3 California Civil Code Section 1542**

It is possible that other claims not known to the Parties, arising out of the Notice or relating to the Products, will develop or be discovered. CRC on behalf of itself only, and HKF on behalf of itself only, acknowledge that this Settlement Agreement is expressly intended to cover and include all such claims up through and including the Effective Date, including all rights of action therefor. CRC and HKF acknowledge that the claims released in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 above may include unknown claims, and nevertheless waive California Civil Code section 1542 as to any such unknown claims. California Civil Code section 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.

#### **5. SEVERABILITY**

In the event that any of the provisions of this Settlement Agreement are held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unenforceable, the validity of the remaining enforceable provisions shall not be adversely affected.

#### **6. GOVERNING LAW**

The terms of this Settlement Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of California, without regard to its conflicts of law principles.

**7. NOTICE**

When any Party is entitled to receive any notice under this Settlement Agreement, the notice shall be sent by first class mail or electronic mail to the address set forth in this paragraph. Any Party may modify the person and address to whom the notice is to be sent by sending the other Party notice by certified mail, return receipt requested. Said change shall take effect on the date the return receipt is signed by the Party receiving the change.

Notices shall be sent to:

For CRC

Michael J. Manning  
Manning Law, APC  
26100 Towne Centre Drive  
Foothill Ranch, CA 92610  
Tel: Office (949) 200-8757 Fax: (866) 843-8309  
p65@manninglawoffice.com

For HKF

**8. COUNTERPARTS: FACSIMILE SIGNATURES**

This Settlement Agreement may be executed in counterparts and by facsimile or portable document format (PDF) signature, each of which shall be deemed an original, and all of which, when taken together, shall constitute one and the same document. Signatures by scanned and emailed image or facsimile transmission shall have the same force and effect as an original signature and as an electronic record adopted and executed by a Party with the intent to sign the electronic record pursuant to Civil Code §§ 1633.1 *et seq.*

**9. COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE §25249.7(f)**

CRC and its attorneys agree to comply with the reporting form requirements referenced in California Health and Safety Code §25249.7(f).

**10. MODIFICATION**

The Settlement Agreement may be modified only by written agreement of the Parties.

**11. ENTIRE AGREEMENT**

This Settlement Agreement contains the sole and entire agreement and understanding of the Parties and any and all prior negotiations and understandings related hereto shall be deemed to have been merged within it. No representations or terms of agreement other than those contained herein exist or have been made by any Party with respect to the other Party or the subject matter hereof. No representations, oral or otherwise, express or implied, other than those specifically referred to in this Settlement Agreement have been made by, or relied on, any Party.

**12. INTERPRETATION**

No inference, assumption or presumption shall be drawn, and no provision of this Settlement Agreement shall be construed against any Party, based upon the fact that one of the Parties and/or their

counsel prepared or drafted any portion of this Settlement Agreement. The Parties waive the provisions of Civil Code § 1654. It is conclusively presumed that the Parties participated equally in the drafting of this Settlement Agreement.

**13. 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: 8/12/2026

By:    
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CalSafe Research Center, Inc.

AGREED TO:

Date: 8/12/26

By:  ZACH CORBENTZ COO

Hartville Kitchen Foods, Inc.