

Charles C. Weller (SBN: 207034)
legal@cweller.com
CHARLES C. WELLER, APC
11412 Corley Court
San Diego, California 92126
Tel: 858.414.7465
Fax: 858.300.5137

Attorney for Plaintiff Armando Plascencia

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

ARMANDO PLASCENCIA, *individually*)
and on behalf of all those similarly situated,)
)
Plaintiff,)

No. _____

v.)

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

INSCIENCE SOLUTIONS LLC dba)
Upnourish, a Texas limited liability)
company,)

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

Defendant.)

Armando Plascencia (“Plaintiff”), individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated in the state of California, by and through undersigned counsel, hereby brings this action against InScience Solutions LLC dba Upnourish (“Upnourish” or “Defendant”), alleging that its Sport Plant Protein and Plant Based Complete Protein powders (“the Products”), which are manufactured, packaged, labeled, advertised, distributed, and sold by Defendant, is misbranded and falsely advertised because they feature deceptive protein claims on the front label without presenting a Recommended Daily Value of protein contained in each serving that is corrected for protein digestibility, and upon information and belief and investigation of counsel alleges as follows:

PARTIES

1. Plaintiff Armando Plascencia is and at all times relevant was a citizen of the state of California, domiciled in Alhambra, California.

2. Defendant InScience Solutions, LLC dba Upnourish is a Texas limited liability company with its principal place of business in Allen, Texas. On information and belief all decisions regarding formulation and labeling of the Products are made at this principal place of business and none of the members of the limited liability company are residents or citizens of the state of California.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

3. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to the Class Action Fairness Act, Pub. L. 109-2, 119 Stat. 4 (codified in scattered sections of Title 28 of the United States Code); specifically, under 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d), which provides for the original jurisdiction of the federal district courts over “any civil action in which the matter in controversy exceeds the sum or value of \$5,000,000, exclusive of interest and costs, and [that] is a class action in which . . . any member of a class of plaintiffs is a citizen of a State different from any defendant.” 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d)(2)(A).

4. Plaintiff seeks to represent Class members who are citizens of states and countries different from the Defendant.

5. The matter in controversy in this case exceeds \$5,000,000 in the aggregate, exclusive of interests and costs.

6. In addition, “the number of members of all proposed plaintiff classes in the aggregate” is greater than 100. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d)(5)(B).

7. In the alternative, the Court has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a). The amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000, exclusive of interest and costs.

8. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because this action arises out of and relates to Defendant’s contacts with this forum.

1 9. Those contacts include but are not limited to sales of the Products directly to
 2 commercial and individual consumers located in this district, including Plaintiff; shipping the
 3 Products to commercial and individual consumers in this district, including Plaintiff; knowingly
 4 directing advertising and marketing materials concerning the Products into this district through
 5 wires and mails, both directly and through electronic and print publications that are directed to
 6 commercial and individual consumers in this district; and operating an e-commerce web site
 7 that offers the Products for sale to commercial and individual consumers in this district, as well
 8 as offering the Products for sale through third-party e-commerce websites, through both of
 9 which commercial and individual consumers residing in this district have purchased the
 10 Products.

11 10. Defendant knowingly directs electronic activity and ships the Products into this
 12 district with the intent to engage in business interactions for profit, and it has in fact engaged in
 13 such interactions, including the sale of the Products to Plaintiff.

14 11. Defendant also sells the Products to retailers and wholesalers in this district for
 15 the purpose of making the Products available for purchase by individual consumers in this
 16 district.

17 12. Plaintiff's losses and those of other Class members were sustained in this district.

18 13. Venue is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2) because a substantial part of
 19 the events or omissions giving rise to Plaintiff's claims occurred within this district.

20 14. Venue is also proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(c)(2) because this Court
 21 maintains personal jurisdiction over Defendant.

22 **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

23 15. Millions of Americans consume specific amounts of protein in order to lose or
 24 maintain weight, build muscle, and meet fitness goals.¹ The past several decades have seen not
 25 only the rise of protein-centered diets such as the Atkins, paleo, or keto diets—which require
 26

27 ¹ Heather J. Leidy, "Increased Dietary Protein as a Dietary Strategy to Prevent and/or Treat
 28 Obesity," MO. MED. (Jan./Feb. 2014), *available at*
<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6179508/>.

1 adherents to carefully track “macros,” including protein—but also increased evidence that a
 2 protein-heavy diet can be critical to supporting muscle growth, making weight training more
 3 efficient, and helping with weight loss and maintenance. In fact, “several clinical trials” have
 4 found that a high-protein diet “not only reduces body weight (BW) but also enhances body
 5 composition by decreasing fat mass while preserving fat-free mass (FFM),” more than “both
 6 low-calorie and standard-calorie diets.”²

7
 8 16. Central to the tracking of protein consumption is accurate nutritional labeling of
 9 foods and dietary supplements. As noted by U.S. Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”)
 10 Commissioner Margaret Hamburg during an October 2009 media briefing, “[s]tudies show that
 11 consumers trust and believe the nutrition facts information and that many consumers use it to
 12 help them build a healthy diet.” Indeed, FDA recommends relying on Nutrition Facts Labels as
 13 primary “tool for monitoring consumption of protein.”³

14 17. Plaintiff Armando Plascencia is one of those millions of Americans. He tracks his
 15 protein intake and takes a daily protein powder supplement to ensure he gets enough protein in
 16 his diet. He does so in order to maintain his weight and meet fitness goals. As such, ensuring
 17 that he eats at least the Recommended Daily Value of high-quality protein—and more generally
 18 that he is able to accurately track his protein intake—is important to Mr. Plascencia.

19 18. As part of this effort and to assist in meeting his protein consumption goals,
 20 Plaintiff purchased the Sport Plant Protein from Amazon.com on or about April 25, 2025 (order
 21 113-6827297-9540232) and the Complete Plant Protein from Amazon.com on or about April
 22 28, 2025 (order 111-2921737-3793850). Plaintiff believes and on that basis avers that he has
 23 purchased the Products at other times within the putative Class period.

24
 25
 26 ² Jaecheol Moon & Gwanpyo Koh, “Clinical Evidence and Mechanisms of High-Protein Diet-
 Induced Weight Loss,” 29 J. OBESITY & METABOLIC SCI. 166-73 (2020), *available at*
 27 <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7539343/>.

28 ³ FDA, “Interactive Nutrition Fact Label – Protein,” *available at*
https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/InteractiveNutritionFactsLabel/assets/InteractiveNFLProtein_October2021.pdf.

1 **A. Protein Quality and PDCAAS.**

2 19. Amino acids are the building blocks of proteins, whether that protein is derived
3 from animals or plants. Both animal and plant proteins are composed of approximately 20 amino
4 acids, which are essential for the synthesis of body proteins and other important nitrogen-
5 containing compounds such as creatine, peptide hormones, and some neurotransmitters.

6 20. There are nine amino acids that are not created by the human body: histidine,
7 isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan, and valine, called
8 “essential amino acids.” Human beings must consume these amino acids by digesting meat,
9 animal products, plants, and other protein-rich foods that contain them.⁴

10 21. However, not all proteins are created equally. Various protein sources contain all
11 of the nine essential amino acids, while other protein types contain fewer of these amino acids.
12 Thus, the *quantity* of protein by itself does not tell the full story of protein from a human
13 nutritional standpoint. A protein’s *quality* is also critical because humans cannot fully digest or
14 utilize some proteins, while other proteins are missing essential amino acids.

15 22. Protein sources that contain all or almost all of the essential amino acids are
16 considered higher-quality proteins. These higher-quality proteins also tend to have a higher
17 “bioavailability,” a term connoting the digestibility or the absorptive quality of a protein, *i.e.*,
18 the ease with which the protein can be accessed and used by the human body in building muscle
19 and undertaking other tasks.⁵

20 23. Scientists have developed a measure of protein quality called the Protein
21 Digestibility Corrected Amino Acid Score, or PDCAAS. The relevant FDA regulations refer to
22 this as the “corrected amount of protein per serving.” 21 C.F.R. § 101.9(c)(7)(ii).

24 ⁴ M.J. Lopez & S.S. Mohiuddin, “Biochemistry, Essential Amino Acids.” In StatPearls
25 [Internet] (2025), available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK557845/>.

26 ⁵ See generally Claire Gaudichon & Juliane Calvez, “Determinants of amino acid
27 bioavailability from ingested protein in relation to gut health.” 24 CURR. OP. CLIN. NUTR. &
28 METABOLIC CARE 55 (2021), available at <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7752214/>; Stephan van Vliet, Nicholas Burd & Luc van Loon, “The Skeletal Muscle Anabolic Response to Plant- versus Animal-Based Protein Consumption.” 145 J. NUTR. 1981 (2015), available at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26224750/>.

1 24. The PDCAAS method combines a protein source's amino acid profile and its
2 percent digestibility into a discount factor ranging from 0.0 to 1.0 that, when multiplied by the
3 total protein quantity, shows how much protein in a product is actually available to support
4 human nutritional requirements.⁶ The regulations term this the "corrected amount of protein per
5 serving." 21 C.F.R. § 101.9(c)(7)(ii).

6 25. Proteins have a range of PDCAAS. Animal-derived proteins such as cow's milk,
7 eggs, and whey have PDCAAS at or near 1.0. Soy also has a PDCAAS that is close to 1.0, while
8 other plant-derived proteins have PDCAAS scores below 1.0—often much lower than 1.0—
9 such as 0.7 for peas, 0.61 for brown rice, and 0.42 for wheat.⁷

10 26. A PDCAAS of 1.0 signifies that the protein is a complete protein with optimal
11 digestibility. A PDCAAS of 0.5 means that only half of the protein in that product is actually
12 available to support human protein needs. If a product with a PDCAAS of 0.5 contained 10
13 grams total protein per serving, the "corrected" amount of protein as described in 21 C.F.R. §
14 101.9(c)(7)(ii) would be only 5 grams per serving. Thus, protein products can vary widely in
15 their ability to support human protein needs—even between two similar products with the same
16 total amount of protein.

17 **B. PDCAAS and Food Labeling**

18 27. Because the PDCAAS method makes the differences in bioavailability among
19 different types of proteins apparent to consumers, the method has a critical role to play in
20 nutritional labeling under relevant FDA regulations.

21 28. The FDA and other federal bodies set "Recommended Daily Values" for nutrients
22 such as protein, which is the amount of that nutrient that the FDA recommends that a normal
23

24 ⁶ Gertjan Schaafsma, "The protein digestibility-corrected amino acid score," 130 J. NUTR.
25 1865S-67S (2000), available at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/10867064/>.

26 ⁷ *Id.* See also Joyce Boye, Ramani Wijesinha-Bettoni & Barbara Burlingame, "Protein quality
27 evaluation twenty years after the introduction of the protein digestibility corrected amino acid
28 score method," 108 BR. J. NUTR. S183-S211 (2021), available at
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/british-journal-of-nutrition/article/protein-quality-evaluation-twenty-years-after-the-introduction-of-the-protein-digestibility-corrected-amino-acid-score-method/51E5092761DA6004F1B081B204AAAB99>.

1 adult (or some other specified demographic) should consume every day to preserve their health
2 and eat a balanced and nutrition diet. In the Nutrition Facts panel of foods (or the “Supplement
3 Facts” panel of a dietary supplement), food manufacturers report the percentage of the
4 Recommended Daily Value (“%DRV”) provided by a serving of the food or supplement. *See*
5 FDA, “Daily Value on the Nutrition and Supplement Facts Labels,” *available at*
6 [https://www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-facts-label/daily-value-nutrition-and-supplement-facts-](https://www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-facts-label/daily-value-nutrition-and-supplement-facts-labels)
7 [labels.](https://www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-facts-label/daily-value-nutrition-and-supplement-facts-labels)

8 29. A manufacturer is not required (as a general matter) to report a %DRV for a food’s
9 protein content in the Nutrition or Supplement Facts panels. A manufacturer can simply leave
10 the %DRV of protein blank—and many manufacturers do.

11 30. But FDA regulations state that if a Nutrition Facts or Supplement Facts panel
12 expresses the protein content of a food in terms of %DRV, that disclosure must conform to and
13 incorporate the PDCAAS method. That is, the %DRV then must be “equal to the actual amount
14 of protein (gram) per serving multiplied by the amino acid score corrected for protein
15 digestibility,” which “shall be determined by methods given in sections 5.4.1, 7.2.1, and 8.00 in
16 ‘Report of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Protein Quality Evaluation.’” 21 C.F.R.
17 § 101.9(c)(7)(ii). *See also* Food Labeling: Nutrient Content Claims, General Principles,
18 Petitions, Definition of Terms; Definitions of Nutrient Content Claims for the Fat, Fatty Acid,
19 and Cholesterol Content of Food, 58 Fed. Reg. 2302, 2344 (Jan. 6, 1993) (when a nutritional
20 label presents %DRV of protein it “must represent the corrected amount of protein based on its
21 PDCAAS”).

22 31. These regulations are grounded in a recognition that 10 grams of pea or rice
23 protein per serving does not offer the same %DRV of protein per serving as 10 grams of whey
24 protein, because of whey protein’s 1.0 PDCAAS versus the much lower PDCAAS of pea and
25 rice proteins. If the %DRV of a food containing such proteins is reported, it must be “corrected”
26 by applying the PDCAAS of the proteins in the manner set forth in 21 C.F.R. § 101.9(c)(7)(ii).
27
28

32. There is a second instance in which manufacturers are required to report a PDCAAS-corrected %DRV in nutritional panels. Some foods or supplements make a “protein claim,” which is a claim outside of the Nutrition Facts or Supplement Facts panel that “characterize[s] the amount of protein in the products.” *Nacarino v. Kashi Company*, 77 F.4th 1201, 1205 (9th Cir. 2023). These are often front label claims that a food contains “40 grams protein per serving,” or the like.

33. When a food makes a protein claim outside of the Nutrition Facts or Supplement Facts panel, the food manufacturer no longer has a choice whether or not to report a PDCAAS-corrected %DRV. In that instance, the manufacturer ***must*** disclose the PDCAAS-corrected %DRV in the panel. *See* 21 C.F.R. § 101.9(c)(7)(i). *See also Nacarino*, 77 F.4th at 1209 (“[I]f a product label includes a protein claim *outside* the [Nutrition Facts panel], section 101.9(c)(7)(i)’s trigger provision requires the manufacturer to also include the PDCAAS-corrected percent daily value *inside* the NFP”) (emphasis in original); 1211 (“The text and structure of the FDA regulations demonstrate that Defendants’ protein claims could be misleading if ... the products did not display the quality-adjusted percent daily value in the NFP.”).

34. FDA has stated in guidance to the public that “Food manufacturers may *voluntarily* list the %D[R]V of protein per serving on the Nutrition Facts label, but they are *required* to list the %D[R]V of protein if a statement is made on the package labeling about the health effects or the amount of protein (for example, ‘high’ or ‘low’) contained in the food.”⁸

35. The reason for this requirement—that a food making a protein claim must display a PDCAAS-corrected %DRV in the Nutrition Facts panel—is to allow “consumers to readily identify foods of low protein quality.” Food Labeling: Mandatory Status of Nutrition Labeling and Nutrient Content Revision, Format for Nutrition Label, 58 Fed. Reg. 2,079, 2,102 (1993).

⁸ FDA, “Interactive Nutrition Fact Label – Protein,” *available at* https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/InteractiveNutritionFactsLabel/assets/InteractiveNFLProtein_October2021.pdf (emphases in original)

1 FDA's regulations recognize this requirement as "an important part of nutrition labeling." *Id.* at
2 2,103.

3 36. The regulations set forth FDA's expert conclusion that (1) when manufacturers
4 tout an amount of protein on the front label, that amount is likely to be material to purchasing
5 decisions, even though reasonable consumers may not know the total amount of protein they
6 need to ingest on a daily basis to meet their Recommended Daily Value, and (2) not all proteins
7 are the same in their ability to meet human nutritional requirements, so a simple statement about
8 the number of grams does not actually inform consumers about how much usable protein they
9 are receiving or how many servings they might need to consume meet their consumption goals.

10 37. Reporting of an accurate %DRV is especially important to the class of "protein-
11 conscious consumers" who purchase protein-fortified products such as the Products, especially
12 those who count protein macros or who otherwise track their protein intake. *Nacarino*, 77 F.4th
13 at 1212. Consumers rely on nutritional labeling to make informed decisions regarding the
14 amount of a food or supplement they must consume to achieve their protein consumption goals,
15 and to contextualize protein claims made on front label or otherwise outside of the nutritional
16 panels.

17 38. A protein claim on a food or supplement is deceptive and misleading to consumers
18 if it is not accompanied by a PDCAAS-corrected %DRV disclosure in the Nutrition Facts or
19 Supplement Facts panel, because it gives reasonable consumers the impression that all of the
20 protein in a product is high-quality protein that is bioavailable to consumers.

21 39. Upnourish makes a protein claim on the Products' front label (or "principal
22 display panel") that the Products contain 30 grams of protein per serving (Sport Plant Based
23 Protein) or 21 grams per serving (Complete Plant Based Protein):
24
25
26
27
28



40. The Products use pea, fava, rice, and mung bean as their protein sources. The PDCAAS of such proteins is significantly less than 1.0.

41. Because of the protein claim on the front label, Upnourish is required under 21 C.F.R. § 101.9(c)(7) to report a PDCAAS-corrected %DRV in the Nutrition or Supplements Facts panels of the Products.

42. It does not. Instead, the Nutrition or Supplement Facts panels on the Products reports a %DRV of 42 percent and 60 percent, as shown here:

Supplement Facts

Serving Size 2 Scoops (47 g)
Servings per Container 20

Amount per Serving		% DV†
Calories	160	
Total Fat	4.5 g	6%
Saturated Fat	1 g	5%
Total Carbohydrate	8 g	3%
Sugars	<1 g	
Includes 0 g Added Sugars		
Calcium	60 mg	60%
Phosphorus	310 mg	5%
Iron	9 mg	50%
Potassium	270 mg	6%
Sodium	460 mg	21%
Chromium (as Chromium histidinate, chromium picolinate)	500 mcg	1425%
Velositol® Amylopectin Chromium Complex	1000 mg	
OPTIZIOME® P3 HYDROLYZER™	300 mg	
Organic Turmeric Root Powder	160 mg	
Organic Greens, Fruits and Vegetable	250 mg	
Organic barley grass, organic kale, organic wheat grass, organic green cabbage, organic spinach, organic zucchini, organic blueberry, organic cranberry, organic acai berry, organic alfalfa, organic amla berry, organic bilberry, organic blackberry, organic blackcurrant, organic broccoli, organic cucumbers, organic elderberry, organic mulberry, organic raspberry, organic pumpkin, organic raspberry, organic strawberry, organic sweet potato, organic tart cherry, organic wild cherry, organic apple, organic banana, organic beet root, organic dragon fruit, organic orange, organic papaya, organic peach, organic pomegranate, organic tomato, organic watermelon, organic asparagus, organic carrot, organic chaga mushroom, organic chlorella, organic cinnamon, organic eggplant, organic green bell pepper, organic olive leaf, organic kiwi, organic lemon, organic lettuce, organic maitake mushroom, organic mango, organic matcha, organic orange bell pepper, organic pear, organic pineapple, organic red bell pepper, organic red grape, organic shiitake mushroom, organic white button mushroom, organic white grape, organic garlic, organic ginger, organic green onion, organic red onion.		
Tart Cherry (Fruit) Powder	250 mg	
Bacillus Coagulans	2 Billion CFU	

† Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet
*** Daily Value (DV) Not Established.

NUTRITION FACTS

15 servings per container

Serving size

2 Scoops (43g)

Amount Per Serving

Calories

160

Total Fat 5g

% Daily Value*

Saturated Fat 3.6g

6%

Sodium 45mg

18%

Total Carbohydrate 7g

2%

Dietary Fiber 3g

3%

Total Sugars 0g

11%

Protein 21g

42%

Vit. D 10mcg 50%

Vit. B12 2.4mcg 100%

Calcium 144mg 15%

Biotin 15mcg 50%

Iron 2.8mg 15%

Pantothenic Acid 2.5mg 50%

Potassium 145mg 4%

Phosphorus 75mg 6%

Vit. A 450mcg RAE 50%

Iodine 75mcg 50%

Vit. C 45mg 50%

Magnesium 147mg 35%

Vit. E 7.5mg 50%

Zinc 5.5mg 50%

Thiamin 0.6mg 50%

Selenium 27.5mcg 50%

Riboflavin 0.65mg 50%

Copper 0.45mg 50%

Niacin 8mg NE 50%

Manganese 1.15mg 50%

Vit. B6 0.85mg 50%

Chromium 17.5mcg 50%

Folate 200mcg DFE 50%

Molybdenum 22.5mcg 50%

(120mcg Folic Acid)

*Not a significant source of trans fat, cholesterol and added sugars.

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

43. The protein claim on the principal display panel of the Products is deceptive and misleading to reasonable consumers because that claim is not clarified and contextualized by the disclosure of the quality-adjusted percent daily value in the Supplement or Nutrition Facts panels.

44. Likewise, the statement of grams protein per serving in the Supplement or Nutrition Facts panels of the Products is deceptive and misleading to consumers because that panel does not report a PDCAAS-adjusted %DRV.

C. Plaintiff Reasonably Relied on Defendant's Labelling Statements.

45. Labels are the chief means by which food product manufacturers convey critical information to consumers, and consumers have been conditioned to rely on the accuracy of the claims made on these labels.

1 46. Consumers including Plaintiffs especially rely on label claims made by food
2 product manufacturers such as Defendant, as they cannot confirm or disprove those claims
3 simply by viewing or even consuming the Products.

4 47. Further, federal law and corresponding state law and regulations both reflect and
5 create reasonable consumer expectations concerning the contents of foods and beverages. That
6 is, consumers have been conditioned to rely on the %DRV disclosures in a Nutrition Facts or
7 Supplement Facts panel when determining how much of a food product they need to consume
8 to obtain a specific amount of protein in their diet.

9 48. Plaintiff reviewed the front label and Supplement Facts panel on the Products prior
10 to his purchase, as well as the other statements described herein, and reviewed the statements
11 regarding protein being made in those places. Consumers such as Plaintiff who viewed the
12 Products' labels reasonably understood the Products to contain 21 or 30 grams of fully
13 bioavailable, high-quality protein. This representation was false.

14 49. Consumers including Plaintiff reasonably relied on these label statements such
15 that they would not have purchased the Products from Defendant if the truth about the Products
16 was known, or would have only been willing to pay a substantially reduced price for the Products
17 had they known that Defendant's representations were false and misleading.

18 50. In the alternative, because of its deceptive and false labelling statements,
19 Defendant was enabled to charge a premium for the Products relative to key competitors'
20 products, or relative to the average price charged in the marketplace.

21 51. In addition to being unlawful under the FDA regulations cited herein, Defendant's
22 prominent protein claim on the front of the package, in the absence of any statement of the
23 corrected amount of protein per serving expressed as a %DRV in the Supplement Facts panel,
24 is also likely to mislead reasonable consumers. Unless they are told otherwise, consumers
25 reasonably expect that Defendant's Products will actually provide the full amount of
26 bioavailable protein per serving claimed on the front of the package and stated in the protein
27 quantity section of the Supplement Facts panel, *i.e.*, that the Products contain high quality
28

1 proteins. But Defendant's Products do not. Instead, they consist of low-quality proteins that are
2 not fully bioavailable.

3 52. Had Defendant included a statement of the corrected amount of protein per serving
4 in the Supplement Facts panel, as it was required to do under federal and state law, that
5 disclosure would have revealed that far less than 21 or 30 grams of the protein in the Products
6 is useable by the human body, and that the Products contain lower quality proteins.

7 53. That information was material to reasonable consumers, especially the class of
8 protein-conscious consumers who are the target market of the Products. The absence of this
9 information also allowed Defendant to charge a price premium to consumers including Plaintiff.

10 54. Plaintiff suffered economic injury by Defendant's fraudulent and deceptive
11 conduct as stated herein, and there is a causal nexus between Defendant's deceptive conduct and
12 Plaintiff's injury.

13 55. All flavors of the Products make the same protein claims described herein and sell
14 for roughly the same price. Plaintiff is therefore an adequate representative of the Class despite
15 not having purchased all flavors of the Products.

16 **CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

17 56. Plaintiff brings this action individually and as representative of all those similarly
18 situated pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23 on behalf of all consumers in the state
19 of California who purchased the Products within four years prior to the filing of this Complaint.

20 57. Excluded from the Class are Defendant and its affiliates, parents, subsidiaries,
21 employees, officers, agents, and directors. Also excluded are any judicial officers presiding over
22 this matter and the members of their immediate families and judicial staff.

23 58. Plaintiff reserves the right to alter the Class definition, and to amend this
24 Complaint to add additional Subclasses, as necessary to the full extent permitted by applicable
25 law.

26 59. Certification of Plaintiff's claims for class-wide treatment is appropriate because
27 Plaintiff can prove the elements of the claims on a class-wide basis using the same evidence as
28

1 individual Class members would use to prove those elements in individual actions alleging the
2 same claims.

3 60. **Numerosity – Rule 23(a)(1):** The size of the Class is so large that joinder of all
4 Class members is impracticable. Plaintiff believes and avers there are thousands of Class
5 members geographically dispersed throughout the state of California.

6 61. **Existence and Predominance of Common Questions of Law and Fact – Rule**
7 **23(a)(2), (b)(3):** There are questions of law and fact common to the Class. These questions
8 predominate over any questions that affect only individual Class members. Common legal and
9 factual questions and issues include but are not limited to:

- 10 a. Whether the marketing, advertising, packaging, labeling, and other promotional
11 materials for Defendant's Products is misleading and deceptive;
12 b. Whether a reasonable consumer would understand Defendant's protein claim to
13 indicate that the Products contain 21 or 30 grams of fully bioavailable high-quality
14 protein, and reasonably relied upon that representation;
15 c. Whether Defendant was unjustly enriched at the expense of the Plaintiff and Class
16 members;
17 d. Whether Defendant breached an express warranty;
18 e. the proper amount of damages;
19 f. the proper scope of injunctive relief; and
20 g. the proper amount of attorneys' fees.

21 62. Defendant engaged in a common course of conduct in contravention of the laws
22 Plaintiff seeks to enforce individually and on behalf of the Class. Similar or identical violations
23 of law, business practices, and injuries are involved. Individual questions, if any, pale by
24 comparison, in both quality and quantity, to the numerous common questions that predominate
25 this action. The common questions will yield common answers that will substantially advance
26 the resolution of the case.

1 63. In short, these common questions of fact and law predominate over questions that
2 affect only individual Class members.

3 64. **Typicality – Rule 23(a)(3):** Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the Class
4 members because they are based on the same underlying facts, events, and circumstances
5 relating to Defendant's conduct.

6 65. Specifically, all Class members, including Plaintiff, were harmed in the same way
7 due to Defendant's uniform misconduct described herein; all Class members suffered similar
8 economic injury due to Defendant's misrepresentations; and Plaintiff seeks the same relief as
9 the Class members.

10 66. There are no defenses available to Defendant that are unique to the named
11 Plaintiff.

12 67. **Adequacy of Representation – Rule 23(a)(4):** Plaintiff is a fair and adequate
13 representative of the Class because Plaintiff's interests do not conflict with the Class members'
14 interests. Plaintiff will prosecute this action vigorously and is highly motivated to seek redress
15 against Defendant.

16 68. Furthermore, Plaintiff has selected competent counsel who are experienced in
17 class action and other complex litigation. Plaintiff and Plaintiff's counsel are committed to
18 prosecuting this action vigorously on behalf of the Class and have the resources to do so.

19 69. **Superiority – Rule 23(b)(3):** The class action mechanism is superior to other
20 available means for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy for at least the
21 following reasons:

- 22 a. the damages individual Class members suffered are small compared to the burden
23 and expense of individual prosecution of the complex and extensive litigation
24 needed to address Defendant's conduct such that it would be virtually impossible
25 for the Class members individually to redress the wrongs done to them. In fact,
26 they would have little incentive to do so given the amount of damage each member
27 has suffered when weighed against the costs and burdens of litigation;
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- b. the class procedure presents fewer management difficulties than individual litigation and provides the benefits of single adjudication, economies of scale, and supervision by a single Court;
- c. the prosecution of separate actions by individual Class members would create a risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications, which would establish incompatible standards of conduct for Defendant; and
- d. the prosecution of separate actions by individual Class members would create a risk of adjudications with respect to them that would be dispositive of the interests of other Class members or would substantively impair or impede their ability to protect their interests.

70. Unless the Class is certified, Defendant will retain monies received as a result of its unlawful and deceptive conduct alleged herein.

71. Unless a class-wide injunction is issued, Defendant will likely continue to advertise, market, promote, and sell its Products in an unlawful and misleading manner, as described throughout this Complaint, and members of the Class will continue to be misled, harmed, and denied their rights under the law. Defendant continues to mislabel the Products in the manner described herein and sell them to the consuming public. Defendant would like to purchase the Products and other products sold by Defendant in the future, but cannot currently do so because he cannot rely on the Products' labelling, given the deceptions regarding protein quality found there. An injunction prohibiting future deceptive labelling is therefore warranted and would provide Plaintiff and the Class relief.

72. Furthermore, Plaintiff has not merely alleged an "informational" injury, but has also alleged that Defendant has been enabled to charge a price premium for the Products. Plaintiff has therefore alleged that compliance with federal and state regulations regarding the accurate reporting of protein content and quality in the Products would cause a decrease in the price of the Products at which Plaintiff and members of the Class would be willing to buy the

1 Products. As a result, Plaintiff has alleged more than simply an interest in Defendant telling the
2 truth on its labels, but an economic injury that further supports prospective injunctive relief.

3 73. **Ascertainability.** To the extent ascertainability is required, the Class members are
4 readily ascertainable from Defendant's records and/or its agents' records of retail and online
5 sales, as well as through public notice.

6 74. Defendant has acted on grounds applicable to the Class as a whole, thereby
7 making appropriate final injunctive and declaratory relief concerning the Class as a whole.

8
9 **COUNT 1**
10 **VIOLATION OF THE CONSUMER LEGAL REMEDIES ACT**
11 **CAL. CIV. CODE § 1750 *et seq.***

12 75. Plaintiff realleges the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein and, to the
13 extent necessary, pleads this cause of action in the alternative.

14 76. Plaintiff is a "consumer" within the meaning of the Consumer Legal Remedies
15 Act ("CLRA"), Cal. Civ. Code § 1761(d).

16 77. The sale of Defendant's Products to Plaintiff and Class members was a
17 "transaction" within the meaning of the CLRA, Cal. Civ. Code § 1761(e).

18 78. The Products purchased by Plaintiff and Class members are "goods" within the
19 meaning of the CLRA, Cal. Civ. Code § 1761(a).

20 79. As alleged herein, Defendant's business practices are a violation of the CLRA
21 because Defendant deceptively failed to reveal facts that are material in light of the protein
22 claims that were made by Defendant on the principal display panel of its Products.

23 80. Defendant's ongoing failure to provide material facts about its Products on its
24 labels violates the following subsections of Cal. Civ. Code § 1770(a) in these respects:

- 25 a. Defendant's acts and practices constitute misrepresentations that its Products have
26 characteristics, benefits, or uses which they do not have;
27 b. Defendant misrepresented that its Products are of a particular standard, quality,
28 and/or grade, when they are of another;

- 1 c. Defendant's acts and practices constitute the advertisement of goods, without the
2 intent to sell them as advertised;
- 3 d. Defendant's acts and practices fail to represent that transactions involving its
4 Products involve actions that are prohibited by law, particularly the use of
5 misleading nutritional labelling; and
- 6 e. Defendant's acts and practices constitute representations that its Products have
7 been supplied in accordance with previous representations when they were not.

8 81. By reason of the foregoing, Plaintiff and the Class have been irreparably harmed,
9 entitling them to injunctive relief.

10 82. Pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code § 1782, Plaintiff notified Defendant in writing of the
11 particular violations of the CLRA described herein and demanded Defendant rectify the actions
12 described above by providing complete monetary relief, agreeing to be bound by its legal
13 obligations and to give notice to all affected customers of their intent to do so. Plaintiff sent this
14 notice by certified mail to Defendant, at least 30 days before the filing of this Complaint.

15 83. Pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code §§ 1770 and 1780, Plaintiff is entitled to enjoin
16 publication of misleading and deceptive nutritional labels on Defendant's Products and to
17 recover reasonable attorneys' fees and costs.

18 **COUNT 2**
19 **UNJUST ENRICHMENT**

20 84. Plaintiff realleges the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein and, to the
21 extent necessary, pleads this cause of action in the alternative in the event that Plaintiff has an
22 inadequate remedy at law.

23 85. Under California law, a claim for unjust enrichment "describe[s] the theory
24 underlying a claim that a defendant has been unjustly conferred a benefit 'through mistake,
25 fraud, coercion, or request.'" *Astiana v. Hain Celestial Grp., Inc.* (9th Cir. 2015) 783 F.3d 753,
26 762 (quoting 55 Cal. Jur. 3d Restitution § 2). Thus, when a plaintiff alleges unjust enrichment,
27 the Court should "construe the cause of action as a quasi-contract claim seeking restitution."
28 *Rutherford Holdings, LLC v. Plaza Del Rey* (2014) 223 Cal.App.4th 221, 225. Courts in

1 California have allowed unjust enrichment and CLRA claims to proceed in the alternative. *See*
2 *Scheibe v. Livwell Prods., LLC*, No. 23-cv-216, 2023 WL 4414580, at *8 (S.D. Cal. 2023).

3 86. Defendant, through its marketing and labeling of the Products, misrepresented and
4 deceived consumers by misrepresenting that the Products provided 21 or 30 grams of fully
5 bioavailable protein.

6 87. Defendant did so for the purpose of enriching itself and it in fact enriched itself
7 by doing so.

8 88. Consumers conferred a benefit on Defendant by purchasing the Products,
9 including an effective premium above their true value. Defendant appreciated, accepted, and
10 retained the benefit to the detriment of consumers.

11 89. Defendant continues to possess monies paid by consumers to which Defendant is
12 not entitled.

13 90. Under the circumstances it would be inequitable for Defendant to retain the benefit
14 conferred upon it and Defendant's retention of the benefit violates fundamental principles of
15 justice, equity, and good conscience.

16 91. Plaintiff seeks disgorgement of Defendant's ill-gotten gains and restitution of
17 Defendant's wrongful profits, revenue, and benefits, to the extent, and in the amount, deemed
18 appropriate by the Court, and such other relief as the Court deems just and proper to remedy
19 Defendant's unjust enrichment.

20 92. Plaintiff has standing to pursue this claim as Plaintiff has suffered injury in fact as
21 a result of Defendant's actions as set forth above.

22 **COUNT 3**
23 **BREACH OF IMPLIED WARRANTY**

24 93. Plaintiff realleges the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein and, to the
25 extent necessary, pleads this cause of action in the alternative.

26 94. Defendant, as the designer, manufacturer, marketer, distributor, and/or seller,
27 impliedly warranted that the Products contained 21 or 30 grams of fully bioavailable protein.
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2 TRIAL BY JURY IS DEMANDED ON ANY COUNTS SO TRIABLE.
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5 Respectfully submitted,
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7 /s/ Charles C. Weller
8 Charles C. Weller (Cal. SBN: 207034)
9 Attorney for Plaintiff
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June 18, 2025