## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

ROZALIYA RIPA, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated,

Case No.

Plaintiff,

Document 1

**CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT** 

v.

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

THE CAMPBELL'S COMPANY,

Defendant.

Plaintiff Rozaliya Ripa ("Plaintiff") brings this action on behalf of herself and all others similarly situated against Defendant The Campbell's Company ("Defendant" or "Campbell's"). Plaintiff makes the following allegations pursuant to the investigation of her counsel and based upon information and belief, except as to the allegations specifically pertaining to the Plaintiff, which are based on personal knowledge.

#### **NATURE OF THE ACTION**

- 1. Defendant formulates, manufactures, advertises, and sells Cape Cod Kettle Cooked Potato Chips in all of its various varieties (the "Products") throughout the United States, including in New York.
- 2. Defendant represents to consumers through its packaging that the Products contain "No Artificial Colors, Flavors or Preservatives" (the "Representations"). Defendant makes these claims in order to capitalize on consumers' preference for natural foods that do not contain synthetic ingredients.
- 3. Unbeknownst to consumers, however, Defendant's claims are false because the Products contain synthetic citric acid.
  - 4. Plaintiff has purchased the Products. Now, on behalf of herself and all others

similarly situated, she asserts claims for violations of New York General Business Law §§ 349 and 350, and for breach of express warranty.

### JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 5. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1332(d)(2)(a) because this case is a class action where the aggregate claims of all members of the proposed class are in excess of \$5,000,000.00 exclusive of interest and costs, there are over 100 members of the putative class, and at least one class member is a citizen of a state different than Defendant.
- 6. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because a substantial portion of the events that gave rise to Plaintiff's claims occurred in New York.
- 7. Venue is proper in this Court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2) because a substantial portion of the events that gave rise to Plaintiff's claims occurred in this District.

#### **PARTIES**

- 8. Plaintiff Rozaliya Ripa is a citizen of New York who resides in Brooklyn, New York. Ms. Ripa has purchased the Products for herself numerous times during the applicable statute of limitations. For example, in or around August 2025, she purchased Sea Salt & Vinegar Cape Cod Kettle Cooked Potato Chips from a Stop & Shop in Brooklyn, New York for approximately \$3.99. In purchasing the Products, Ms. Ripa relied on Defendant's false, misleading, and deceptive marketing of the Products as containing "No Artificial Colors, Flavors or Preservatives." Had Ms. Williams known that Defendant's representations were false and misleading, she would not have purchased the Products or would have only been willing to purchase the Products at a lesser price.
- 9. Defendant The Campbell's Company is corporation organized under the laws of New Jersey with its principal place of business located in Camden, New Jersey. Defendant

formulates, advertises, manufactures, and/or sells the Products throughout New York and the United States.

## **GENERAL ALLEGATIONS**

10. Defendant's labeling on the Products states that they contain "No Artificial Colors, Flavors or Preservatives":



- 11. Defendant's labeling puts forth a straightforward, material message: the Products contain only coloring, flavoring and preservative ingredients that are natural and not synthetic.
- 12. Defendant makes these natural claims in an effort to capitalize on the growing market for natural products. Health-conscious consumers are willing to pay a price premium for products labeled and advertised as natural because they believe that such products are safer and/or healthier to consume.

13. But, unfortunately for consumers, the Products contain an ingredient that is not natural: synthetic citric acid.

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- 14. Citric acid is a synthetic ingredient used to add flavor and as a preservative in foods. The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service has noted that natural citric acid is "no longer commercially available" because its use is not economically feasible. Instead, only synthetic citric acid is used in packaged foods, including the Products.
- 15. Synthetic citric acid is a major industrial chemical, produced at more than two million tons per year worldwide. In industry and domestic applications, synthetic citric acid is a chelating and buffering agent used in many cleaning products and as a starting material for synthesizing citrate esters, itaconic acid, acetonedicarboxylic acid and other compounds.
- 16. The manufacturing process for synthetic citric acid, like the kind found in the Products, utilizes synthetic industrial chemicals to render the ingredient from mold (*Aspergillus niger*), including n- octyl alcohol, isoparaffinic petroleum hydrocarbons, calcium hydroxide and sulfuric acid. 21 C.F.R. § 173.280(a) (describing the "[s]olvent extraction process for citric acid"). While "[r]esidues of n- octyl alcohol and synthetic isoparaffinic petroleum hydrocarbons are removed," some chemical residues remain. 21 C.F.R § 173.280(d) ("Current good manufacturing practice results in residues not exceeding 16 parts per million (ppm) n- octyl alcohol and 0.47 ppm synthetic isoparaffinic petroleum hydrocarbons in citric acid."). These trace synthetic chemicals remain in synthetic citric acid and, as a result, end up in finished foods, including the Products that Plaintiff purchased.
- 17. In light of these facts, the FDA has determined that citric acid is synthetic and not natural. For instance, in an August 16, 2001 Warning Letter sent to Oak Tree Farm Dairy, Inc., the FDA wrote that the label for "OAKTREE ALL NATURAL LEMONADE" was

"inappropriate" because "natural" means "nothing artificial or synthetic" and the product contained citric acid. Likewise, in an August 29, 2001 Warning Letter to the Hirzel Canning Company, the FDA wrote that chopped tomatoes should not be labeled "ALL NATURAL" because they contained citric acid.

- 18. Consumption of synthetic citric acid has been associated with adverse health effects including inflammation related to asthma, juvenile idiopathic arthritis, autistic spectrum disorder and fibromyalgia.
- 19. Defendant has profited enormously from its false and misleading representations. The purpose of this action is to require Defendant to change its labeling claims and to provide consumers with monetary relief for its deceptive and misleading product claims.

### **CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

- 20. Plaintiff seeks to represent a class defined as all persons in the United States who, during the maximum period of time permitted by law, purchased the Products for personal, family, or household consumption, and not for resale (the "Nationwide Class").
- 21. Plaintiff also seeks to represent a subclass defined as all person in New York who purchased the Products (the "New York Subclass") (collectively with the Nationwide Class, the "Classes").
- 22. Numerosity Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(1). Members of the Classes are so numerous that their individual joinder herein is impracticable. On information and belief, members of the Class number in the millions. The precise number of Class members and their identities are unknown to Plaintiff at this time but may be determined through discovery. Class members may be notified of the pendency of this action by mail and/or publication through the distribution records of Defendant and third-party retailers and vendors.

23. Commonality and Predominance (Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(2) and 23(b)(3)).

There is a well-defined community of interest in the questions of law and fact involved in this case. Common questions of law and fact that exist as to all Class members and predominate over questions affecting only individual Class members include, but are not limited to:

(a) the true nature and presence of synthetic ingredients in the Products;

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- (b) whether Defendant's marketing, advertising, packaging, labeling, and other promotional materials for the Products are deceptive and misleading;
- (c) whether Plaintiff and members of the Classes have suffered damages as a result of Defendant's actions, and the amount thereof;
- (d) whether Defendant has been unjustly enriched as a result of the unlawful, fraudulent, and unfair conduct alleged in this Complaint such that it would be inequitable for Defendant to retain the benefits conferred upon Defendant by Plaintiff and the Classes; and
- (e) whether Plaintiff and members of the Classes are entitled to attorneys' fees and costs.
- 24. **Typicality (Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(3)).** The claims of the named Plaintiff are typical of the claims of the Class in that the named Plaintiff was exposed to Defendant's false and misleading marketing, purchased Defendant's Products, and suffered a loss as a result of those purchases.
- 25. Adequacy (Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a)(4)). Plaintiff is an adequate representative of the Classes because her interests do not conflict with the interests of the Class members she seeks to represent, she has retained competent counsel experienced in prosecuting class actions, and she intends to prosecute this action vigorously. The interests of Class members will be fairly and adequately protected by Plaintiff and her counsel.
- 26. **Superiority (Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(b)(3)).** The class mechanism is superior to other available means for the fair and efficient adjudication of the claims of Class members. Even if every member of the Classes could afford to pursue individual litigation, the court system could

not. Individualized litigation would be unduly burdensome to the courts in which individual litigation of numerous cases would proceed. Individualized litigation would also increase the delay and expense to all parties and would present the potential for varying, inconsistent, or contradictory judgments—magnifying the delay and expense to all parties and to the court system resulting from multiple trials of the same factual issues. In contrast, the maintenance of this action as a class action, with respect to some or all of the issues presented herein, presents far fewer management difficulties and provides the benefits of single adjudication, economy of scale, and comprehensive supervision by a single court on the issue of Defendant's liability. Class treatment of the liability issues would ensure that all claims and claimants are before this Court for consistent adjudication of the liability issues. Plaintiff anticipates no difficulty in the management of this action as a class action.

## **CAUSES OF ACTION** COUNT I

## Violation of the New York General Business Law § 349 (On behalf of the New York Subclass)

- 27. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges herein all paragraphs alleged above.
- 28. Plaintiff brings this cause of action on behalf of herself and members of the New York Subclass against Defendant.
- 29. Plaintiff and New York Subclass members are "persons" within the meaning of the GBL § 349(h).
- 30. Defendant is a "person, firm, corporation or association or agent or employee thereof" within the meaning of GBL § 349(b).
- 31. Under GBL § 349, "[d]eceptive acts or practices in the conduct of any business, trade or commerce are unlawful."

- Document 1
- 32. Defendant made false and misleading statements by marketing the Products as containing "No Artificial Colors, Flavors or Preservatives" when the Products in fact contain synthetic citric acid.
- 33. In doing so, Defendant engaged in deceptive acts or practices in violation of GBL § 349.
- 34. Defendant's deceptive acts or practices were materially misleading. Defendant's conduct was likely to and did deceive reasonable consumers, including Plaintiff, about the quality of its Products, as discussed throughout.
- 35. Plaintiff and New York Subclass members were unaware of, and lacked a reasonable means of discovering, the material facts that Defendant withheld.
  - 36. Defendant's actions set forth above occurred in the conduct of trade or commerce.
  - 37. The foregoing deceptive acts and practices were directed at consumers.
- 38. Defendant's misleading conduct concerns widely purchased consumer products and affects the public interest. Defendant's conduct includes unfair and misleading acts or practices that have the capacity to deceive consumers and are harmful to the public at large. Defendant's conduct is misleading in a material way because they fundamentally misrepresent the production and quality of the Products.
- 39. Plaintiff and New York Subclass members suffered ascertainable loss as a direct and proximate result of Defendant's GBL violations in that: (i) they would not have purchased the Products had they known the truth; and (ii) they overpaid for the Products on account of the misrepresentations and omissions, as described herein. As a result, Plaintiff and New York Subclass members have been damaged either in the full amount of the purchase price of the Products or in the difference in value between the Products as warranted and the Products as

actually sold.

40. On behalf of herself and other members of the New York Subclass, Plaintiff seeks to enjoin Defendant's unlawful acts and practices described herein, to recover actual damages or \$50, whichever is greater, reasonable attorney's fees and costs, and any other just and proper relief available under GBL § 349.

## **COUNT II**

## Violation of the New York General Business Law § 350 (On behalf of the New York Subclass)

- Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges herein all paragraphs alleged 41. above.
- 42. Plaintiff brings this cause of action on behalf of herself and members of the New York Subclass against Defendant.
- 43. GBL § 350 provides that "[f]alse advertising in the conduct of any business, trade or commerce or in the furnishing of any service in this state is hereby declared unlawful."
- 44. Defendant's labeling and advertisement of the Products was false and misleading in a material way. Specifically, Defendant advertised the Products as containing "No Artificial Colors, Flavors or Preservatives" when the Products in fact contain synthetic citric acid.
- 45. This misrepresentation was consumer-oriented and was likely to mislead a reasonable consumer acting reasonably under the circumstances.
- 46. This misrepresentation has resulted in consumer injury or harm to the public interest.
- 47. As a result of this misrepresentation, Plaintiff and New York Subclass members have suffered economic injury because: (i) they would not have purchased the Product had they known the truth; and (ii) they overpaid for the Products on account of the misrepresentations and

omissions, as described herein. As a result, Plaintiff and New York Subclass members have been damaged either in the full amount of the purchase price of the Products or in the difference in value between the Products as warranted and the Products as actually sold.

48. By reason of the foregoing and as a result of Defendant's conduct, Plaintiff and New York Subclass members seek to enjoin the unlawful acts and practices described herein, to recover their actual damages or five hundred dollars, whichever is greater, three times actual damages, reasonable attorneys' fees and costs, and any other just and proper relief available under GBL § 350.

#### **COUNT III**

## **Breach of Express Warranty** (On behalf of the Nationwide Class and the New York Subclass)

- 49. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as though fully set forth herein.
- 50. Plaintiff brings this claim individually and on behalf of the members of the Classes against Defendant.
- Defendant, as the producer, marketer, distributor, and/or seller, expressly 51. warranted that the Products as containing "No Artificial Colors, Flavors or Preservatives."
- 52. Defendant's representations and warranties were part of the description of the goods and the bargain upon which the Products were offered for sale and purchased by Plaintiff and members of the Classes.
- 53. However, the Products do not conform to Defendant's representations and warranties because the Products contain synthetic citric acid. By falsely representing the Products in this way, Defendant breached express warranties.
  - 54. As a direct and proximate cause of Defendant's breach of express warranty,

Plaintiff and members of the Classes have been injured and harmed in an amount to be proven at trial. Had Plaintiff and members of the Classes known the Products in fact contained a synthetic ingredient, they would not have purchased the Products, or only would have been willing to pay substantially less for them.

55. Prior to filing the initial complaint in this action, Defendant were served via certified mail with a pre-suit notice letter on behalf of Plaintiff that complied in all respects with U.C.C. §§ 2-313 and 2-607.

#### PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE Plaintiff, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, seeks judgment against Defendant, as follows:

- For an order certifying the Nationwide Class and the New York Subclass under (a) Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, naming Plaintiff as representative of the Nationwide Class and the New York Subclass, and naming Plaintiff's attorneys as Class Counsel to represent the Nationwide Class and New York Subclass:
- (b) For an order finding in favor of Plaintiff and the Classes on all counts asserted herein:
- For an order finding in favor of Plaintiff, the Nationwide Class, and the New York (c) Subclass on all counts asserted herein;
- For compensatory, statutory, and punitive damages in amounts to be determined (d) by the Court and/or jury;
- For prejudgment interest on all amounts awarded; (e)
- For an order of restitution and all other forms of equitable monetary relief; (f)
- For an order enjoining Defendant from continuing the illegal practices detailed (g) herein and compelling Defendant to undertake a corrective advertising campaign; and
- (h) For an order awarding Plaintiff and the Classes their reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses and costs of suit.

## **DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY**

Pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 38(b), Plaintiff demands a trial by jury of any and all issues in this action so triable as of right.

Dated: October 23, 2025 **ARISOHN LLC** 

> By: /s/ Joshua D. Arisohn Joshua D. Arisohn

Joshua D. Arisohn 94 Blakeslee Rd. Litchfield, CT 06759 Telephone: (646) 837-7150 Email: josh@arisohnllc.com

Attorney for Plaintiff

## Revised 02.13.2025; Effects 62.14:225-cv-05921 Document 100 V Filed \$10/27/25 Page 1 of 2 Page ID #: 13

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS				DEFENDANTS					
Rozaliya Ripa				The Campbell's Company					
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Kings				County of Residence of First Listed Defendant					
(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)				(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)  NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.					
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name,	Address, and Telephone Number	·)		Attorneys (If Known)	Of EARLD II	WOEVED.			
Arisohn LLC, 94	Blakeslee Rd., Litcl	nfield, CT 06759							
_	II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)  III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff  (For Diversity Cases Only)  and One Box for Defendant)								
1 U.S. Government Plaintiff			Citize	en of This State P'	<b>FF DEF</b> ] 1	Incorporated or Pri of Business In T		<b>PTF</b>	DEF 4
2 U.S. Government Defendant	X 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenshi)	p of Parties in Item III)	Citize	n of Another State	2 2	Incorporated and P of Business In A		5	<b>X</b> 5
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120 Marine 130 Miller Act 140 Negotiable Instrument 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment 151 Medicare Act 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excludes Veterans) 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits 160 Stockholders' Suits	315 Airplane Product Liability 320 Assault, Libel &	X 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability  367 Health Care/ Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability  368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability  PERSONAL PROPERT  370 Other Fraud  371 Truth in Lending	TY	of Property 21 USC 881 0 Other LABOR 0 Fair Labor Standards Act	28 INTI PROP 820 Coj 830 Pat 835 Pat Net 840 Tra 880 Det	ent - Abbreviated w Drug Application	480 Consui	Reapportion and Bankin erce tation teer Influer t Organiza mer Credit SC 1681 or	nment ng nced and attions r 1692)
190 Other Contract 195 Contract Product Liability 196 Franchise	Product Liability  360 Other Personal Injury  362 Personal Injury - Medical Malpractice	380 Other Personal Property Damage 385 Property Damage Product Liability	74	0 Labor/Management Relations 0 Railway Labor Act 1 Family and Medical Leave Act	861 HIA 862 Bla 863 DIV 864 SSI	AL SECURITY A (1395ff) ack Lung (923) WC/DIWW (405(g)) ID Title XVI	Protect 490 Cable/9 850 Securit Excha	tion Act Sat TV ties/Comm nge Statutory A	nodities/
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V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" in One Box Only)    1 Original Proceeding   2 Removed from State Court   3 Remanded from Appellate Court   4 Reinstated or Reopened   5 Transferred from Another District (specify)   6 Multidistrict Litigation - County   6 Multidistrict Litigation - County   7 Transferred from Another District (specify)   7 Transferred from Another District									
Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity):  28 U.S.C. §1332(d)(2)(a)  Brief description of cause: Consumer protection and warranty claims based on false labeling of product									
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT: CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P.				EMAND \$ 5,000,000+		CHECK YES only i	if demanded in	n complai	
VIII. RELATED CASI IF ANY	(See instructions):	JUDGE			DOCK	ET NUMBER			
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10/23/2025		/s/ Joshua D. Arisohn	1						
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY  RECEIPT # AM	MOUNT	APPLYING IFP		JUDGE		MAG. JUD	OGE		

CERTIFICATION	OF	<b>ARRITRATION</b>	FLIGIBILITY

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		<b>√</b>	monetary damages sought a	re in excess of \$150,000.00	exclusive of interest and	costs,	
		<b>√</b>	the complaint seeks injunctiv	e relief, or			
			the matter is otherwise inelig	ible for the following reason:	:		
			DISCLOS	URE STATEMENT - FEDER	RAL RULES CIVIL PROCE	EDURE 7.1	
<b>I</b> de	ntify any pa	rent	corporation and any publicly h	eld corporation that owns 10	0% or more or its stocks. A	add an additional page if ne	eded.
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			RELATE	D CASE STATEMENT (Sec	tion VIII on the Front of t	his Form)	
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	If you	answ	er "Yes" to any of the question	ns below, this case will be de	esignated as a Central Islip	case and you must select	
1.	Is the act	on b	eing removed from a state cou	urt that is located in Nassau	or Suffolk County?		□ <sub>Yes</sub> ☑ <sub>No</sub>
2.	2. Is the action—not involving real property—being brought against United States, its officers or its employees AND the ☐ Yes ✓ No majority of the plaintiffs reside in Nassau or Suffolk County?						☐ Yes 🗹 No
3.	If you ans	were	ed "No" to all parts of Question	s 1 and 2:			
	a.		a substantial part of the event nty?	s or omissions giving rise to	claim or claims occur in N	lassau or Suffolk	☐ Yes ☑ No
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Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

# UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Eastern District of New York							
Rozaliya Ripa	) ) )						
Plaintiff(s) v. The Campbell's Company	Civil Action No.						
Defendant(s)	) ) )						
SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION							
To: (Defendant's name and address) The Campbell's Compar One Campbell Place Camden, New Jersey 08							
	you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you						
P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an a	ficer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. inswer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of tion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney,						
If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.							
	BRENNA B. MAHONEY CLERK OF COURT						
Date							

AO 440 (Rev. 06/12) Summons in a Civil Action (Page 2)

Civil Action No.

#### PROOF OF SERVICE

(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (1))

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was re	ceived by me on (date)	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·						
	☐ I personally served	the summons on the individual	at (place)					
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	☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with (name)							
	, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,							
	on (date), and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or							
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	designated by law to a	accept service of process on beh	alf of (name of organization)					
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	My fees are \$	for travel and \$	for services, for a total of \$	0.00				
	I declare under penalty	y of perjury that this information	is true.					
Date:								
Date.			Server's signature					
			Printed name and title					
			Server's address					

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc: