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**BURSOR & FISHER, P.A.**

L. Timothy Fisher (State Bar No. 191626)  
1990 North California Boulevard, Suite 940  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
Telephone: (925) 300-4455  
Facsimile: (925) 407-2700  
E-Mail: ltfisher@bursor.com

**SALPETER GITKIN, LLP**

James P. Gitkin (*pro hac vice* pending)  
One East Broward Boulevard, Suite 1500  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301  
Telephone: (954) 467-8622  
Facsimile: (954) 467-8623  
E-Mail: jim@salpetergitkin.com

Attorneys for Plaintiff

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA  
SAN JOSE DIVISION

LUIS DIEGO ZAPATA FONSECA,  
individually and on behalf of all others similarly  
situated,

Plaintiff,

v.

GOYA FOODS INC.,

Defendant.

Case No.

**CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT**  
**JURY TRIAL DEMANDED**

1 Plaintiff Luis Diego Zapata Fonseca (“Plaintiff”) brings this action on behalf of himself and  
2 all others similarly situated against Defendant Goya Foods, Inc. (“Goya” or “Defendant”). Plaintiff  
3 makes the following allegations pursuant to the investigation of his counsel and based upon  
4 information and belief, except as to the allegations specifically pertaining to himself, which are  
5 based on personal knowledge.

6 **NATURE OF ACTION**

7 1. This is a class action lawsuit on behalf of purchasers of Goya octopus products (the  
8 “Octopus Products”) that Goya has labeled and sold as octopus when in reality the products  
9 contained jumbo squid, which is significantly cheaper and of a lower quality than octopus.

10 2. Independent DNA testing determined that Goya’s Octopus Products are actually  
11 jumbo squid and not octopus. Octopus and jumbo squid are both cephalopods, but are otherwise  
12 completely different species.



25 **Jumbo Squid**



**Octopus**

3. The scientific classification for jumbo squid is as follows:

|         |                 |
|---------|-----------------|
| Kingdom | Animalia        |
| Phylum  | Mollusca        |
| Class   | Cephalopoda     |
| Order   | Teuthida        |
| Family  | Ommastrephidae  |
| Genus   | Dosidicus       |
| Species | Dosidicus gigas |

4. The scientific classification Octopus is as follows:

|         |          |
|---------|----------|
| Kingdom | Animalia |
| Phylum  | Mollusca |

|         |                  |
|---------|------------------|
| Class   | Cephalopoda      |
| Order   | Octopoda         |
| Family  | Octopodidae      |
| Genus   | Octopus          |
| Species | Octopus vulgaris |

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5. In recent years, the cost of octopus has increased rapidly as octopus populations have dwindled around the world due to over-fishing. In 2005, the European Union imposed new restrictions on octopus fishing because the octopus might be at risk of “dying out ... if controls are not enforced to stop overfishing.” In 2010, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations reported that octopus populations “remain overexploited.” In 2014, the Monterey Bay Aquarium issued a report on the state of octopus stocks around the world. The report concluded that “octopus stocks are in poor shape.” In July, 2014, SeafoodSource.com reported that octopus supplies had fallen by 45 percent in approximately one year, causing a dramatic increase in the price of octopus.

6. At the same time that octopus populations have been declining, jumbo squid populations have been thriving. In 2010, Scientific American magazine reported that “[a]lthough many of the Pacific Ocean’s big species are floundering, one large creature of the deep seems to be flourishing. The Humboldt squid (*Dosidicus gigas*, also known as jumbo squid, owing to its sizable nature) has been steadily expanding its population and range.” On May 11, 2013, Stanford biologist William Gilly gave a TED talk in which he explained that the jumbo squid is thriving due to its ability to adapt to changing ocean conditions caused by global warming.

7. As a result of these developments, the cost of octopus has risen dramatically compared to the cost of squid. In addition, due to similarities in texture, squid can easily be substituted for octopus without the consumer being able to tell the difference particularly when sold in a sauce like garlic sauce or marinara sauce.

8. Goya sells four different Octopus Products at issue in this case: (1) Octopus in Garlic; (2) Octopus in Olive Oil; (3) Octopus in Pickled Sauce (Marinara); and (4) Octopus in Hot

1 Sauce. The word “Octopus” is prominently displayed on the label of each box in a large font as  
2 shown below. Nowhere on the box does it state that the Octopus Products contain squid instead of  
3 octopus.



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20 9. Plaintiff is informed and believes that Goya has intentionally replaced the octopus in  
21 its Octopus Products with squid as a cheap substitute to save money because it knew an ordinary  
22 consumer would have trouble distinguishing the difference.

23 10. Plaintiff asserts claims on behalf of himself and a nationwide class of purchasers of  
24 Goya octopus products for breach of express warranty, breach of the implied warranty of  
25 merchantability, breach of the implied warranty of fitness for a particular purpose, unjust  
26 enrichment, violation of California’s Consumers Legal Remedies Act (“CLRA”), violation of  
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1 California's Unfair Competition Law ("UCL"), violation of California's False Advertising Law  
2 ("FAL"), negligent misrepresentation, and fraud.

3 **PARTIES**

4 11. Plaintiff Luis Diego Zapata Fonseca is a citizen of California who resides in Salinas,  
5 California. While living in California and during the class period, Plaintiff purchased Goya  
6 Octopus Products from Amazon.com. Plaintiff purchased the Goya Octopus Products in reliance  
7 on the representation that they contained octopus, and he would not have purchased the Goya  
8 Octopus Products on the same terms if he had known that they contained squid instead of octopus.

9 12. Defendant Goya Foods, Inc. is a Delaware corporation with its principal place of  
10 business in Jersey City, New Jersey. Goya is a food manufacturer and distributor. Goya focuses  
11 primarily on serving Hispanic communities. Goya products are sold in stores across the United  
12 States including Target, K-Mart, Wal-Mart, CVS, and Wegmans. Goya products are also sold  
13 extensively online at Amazon.com.

14 13. Whenever reference is made in this Complaint to any representation, act, omission,  
15 or transaction of Goya, that allegation shall mean that Goya did the act, omission, or transaction  
16 through its officers, directors, employees, agents, and/or representatives while they were acting  
17 within the actual or ostensible scope of their authority.

18 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

19 14. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d)(2)(A)  
20 because this case is a class action where the aggregate claims of all members of the proposed class  
21 are in excess of \$5,000,000.00, exclusive of interest and costs, and most members of the proposed  
22 class are citizens of states different from Goya. This Court also has supplemental jurisdiction over  
23 state law claims pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367.

24 15. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391, this Court is the proper venue for this action because  
25 a substantial part of the events, omissions, and acts giving rise to the claims herein occurred in this  
26 District. Plaintiff is a citizen of California and resides in this District, and purchased Goya octopus  
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1 products in this District. Moreover, Goya distributed and sold the Octopus Products, which is the  
2 subject of the present complaint, in this District.

3 **CLASS REPRESENTATION ALLEGATIONS**

4 16. Plaintiff seeks to represent a class defined as all persons in the United States who  
5 purchased the Octopus Products (the “Class”). Excluded from the Class are persons who made  
6 such purchase for purpose of resale.

7 17. Plaintiff also seeks to represent a subclass of all Class members who purchased the  
8 Octopus Products in California (the “Subclass”).

9 18. Members of the Class and Subclass are so numerous that their individual joinder  
10 herein is impracticable. On information and belief, members of the Class and Subclass number in  
11 the millions. The precise number of Class members and their identities are unknown to Plaintiff at  
12 this time but may be determined through discovery. Class members may be notified of the  
13 pendency of this action by mail and/or publication through Goya’s distribution records and third  
14 party retailers and vendors.

15 19. Common questions of law and fact exist as to all Class members and predominate  
16 over questions affecting only individual Class members. Common legal and factual questions  
17 include, but are not limited to: whether Goya’s Octopus Products are squid rather than octopus;  
18 whether Goya warranted that its Octopus Products were octopus when in fact they were squid; and  
19 whether Goya committed statutory and common law fraud by doing so.

20 20. The claims of the named Plaintiff are typical of the claims of the Class in that the  
21 named Plaintiff purchased Goya Octopus Products in reliance on the representations and warranties  
22 described above and suffered a loss as a result of that purchase.

23 21. Plaintiff is an adequate representative of the Class and Subclass because his interests  
24 do not conflict with the interests of the Class members he seeks to represent, he has retained  
25 competent counsel experienced in prosecuting class actions, and he intends to prosecute this action  
26 vigorously. The interests of Class members will be fairly and adequately protected by Plaintiff and  
27 his counsel.



**COUNT II**

**Breach of the Implied Warranty of Merchantability**

28. Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference the allegations contained in all preceding paragraphs of this complaint.

29. Plaintiff brings this claim individually and on behalf of the proposed Class against Goya.

30. Goya, as the designer, manufacturer, marketer, distributor, and/or seller, impliedly warranted that the Octopus Products contained octopus.

31. Goya breached the warranty implied in the contract for the sale of its Octopus Products because it could not pass without objection in the trade under the contract description, the goods were not of fair average quality within the description, and the goods were unfit for their intended and ordinary purpose because the Octopus Products contained squid instead of octopus. As a result, Plaintiff and Class members did not receive the goods as impliedly warranted by Goya to be merchantable.

32. Plaintiff and Class members purchased the Octopus Products in reliance upon Goya's skill and judgment and the implied warranties of fitness for the purpose.

33. The Octopus Products were not altered by Plaintiff or Class members.

34. The Octopus Products were defective when it left the exclusive control of Goya.

35. Goya knew that the Octopus Products would be purchased and used without additional testing by Plaintiff and Class members.

36. The Octopus Products were defectively designed and unfit for their intended purpose, and Plaintiff and Class members did not receive the goods as warranted.

37. As a direct and proximate cause of Goya's breach of the implied warranty, Plaintiff and Class members have been injured and harmed because: (a) they would not have purchased the Octopus Products on the same terms if they had known the true facts that the Octopus Products contained squid instead of octopus; (b) they paid a price premium for the Octopus Products due to

1 Goya's promises that it contained octopus; and (c) Goya's Octopus Products did not have the  
2 characteristics, ingredients, uses or benefits, as promised.

3 **COUNT III**

4 **Breach of the Implied Warranty of Fitness for a Particular Purpose**

5 38. Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference the allegations contained in all preceding  
6 paragraphs of this complaint.

7 39. Plaintiff brings this claim individually and on behalf of the proposed Class against  
8 Goya.

9 40. Goya marketed, distributed, and/or sold the Octopus Products with implied  
10 warranties that they were fit for their intended purposes in that they contained octopus. At the time  
11 that the Octopus Products were sold, Goya knew or had reason to know that Plaintiff and Class  
12 members were relying on its skill and judgment to select or furnish a product that was suitable for  
13 sale.

14 41. Plaintiff and Class members purchased the Octopus Products in reliance upon  
15 Goya's implied warranties.

16 42. The Octopus Products were not altered by Plaintiff or Class members.

17 43. As a direct and proximate cause of Goya's breach of the implied warranty, Plaintiff  
18 and Class members have been injured and harmed because: (a) they would not have purchased the  
19 Octopus Products on the same terms if they had known the true facts that the Octopus Products  
20 contained squid instead of octopus; (b) they paid a price premium for the Octopus Products due to  
21 Goya's promises that it contained octopus; and (c) Goya's Octopus Products did not have the  
22 characteristics, ingredients, uses or benefits, as promised.

23 **COUNT IV**

24 **Unjust Enrichment**

25 44. Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference the allegations contained in all preceding  
26 paragraphs of this complaint.







1 which is known, or which by the exercise of reasonable care should be known, to be untrue or  
2 misleading.”

3 67. Goya committed acts of false advertising, as defined by §17500, by misrepresenting  
4 that its Octopus Products contained octopus when in fact they contained squid.

5 68. Goya knew or should have known, through the exercise of reasonable care that its  
6 representations about the Octopus Products were untrue and misleading.

7 69. Goya’s actions in violation of § 17500 were false and misleading such that the  
8 general public is and was likely to be deceived.

9 70. Plaintiff and the Subclass lost money or property as a result of Goya’s FAL  
10 violations because: (a) they would not have purchased the Octopus Products on the same terms if  
11 they had known the true facts that the Octopus Products contained squid instead of octopus; (b)  
12 they paid a price premium for the Octopus Products due to Goya’s promises that it contained  
13 octopus; and (c) Goya’s Octopus Products did not have the characteristics, ingredients, uses or  
14 benefits, as promised.

15 **COUNT VIII**

16 **Negligent Misrepresentation**

17 71. Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference the allegations contained in all preceding  
18 paragraphs of this complaint.

19 72. Plaintiff brings this claim individually and on behalf of the proposed Class against  
20 Goya.

21 73. As discussed above, Goya misrepresented that the Octopus Products contained  
22 octopus when in fact they contained squid. Goya had a duty to disclose this information.

23 74. At the time Goya made these representations, Goya knew or should have known that  
24 these representations were false or made them without knowledge of their truth or veracity.

25 75. At an absolute minimum, Goya negligently misrepresented and/or negligently  
26 omitted material facts about the Octopus Products.



- a. For an order certifying the nationwide Class and the Subclass under Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and naming Plaintiff as the representative of the Class and Subclass and Plaintiff's attorneys as Class Counsel to represent members of the Class and Subclass;
- b. For an order declaring that Goya's conduct violates the statutes referenced herein;
- c. For an order finding in favor of Plaintiff, the nationwide Class, and the Subclass on all counts asserted herein;
- d. For compensatory and punitive damages in amounts to be determined by the Court and/or jury;
- e. For prejudgment interest on all amounts awarded;
- f. For an order of restitution and all other forms of equitable monetary relief;
- g. For injunctive relief as pleaded or as the Court may deem proper; and
- h. For an order awarding Plaintiff, the Class, and the Subclass their reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses and costs of suit.

**DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY**

Plaintiff demands a trial by jury of all issues so triable.

Dated: May 11, 2016

**BURSOR & FISHER, P.A.**

By: /s/ L. Timothy Fisher  
L. Timothy Fisher

L. Timothy Fisher (State Bar No. 191626)  
1990 North California Boulevard, Suite 940  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
Telephone: (925) 300-4455  
Facsimile: (925) 407-2700  
E-Mail: ltfisher@bursor.com

**SALPETER GITKIN, LLP**

James P. Gitkin (*pro hac vice* pending)  
One East Broward Boulevard, Suite 1500  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301  
Telephone: (954) 467-8622  
Facsimile: (954) 467-8623  
E-Mail: jim@salpetergitkin.com

*Attorneys for Plaintiff*

