Lowery v. Menu Foods Income Fund et al

Doc. 8

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In light of the likely imminent transfer of this case, MENU FOODS INCOME FUND,
MENU FOODS LIMITED PARTNERSHIP, MENU FOODS MIDWEST CORPORATION,
MENU FOODS SOUTH DAKOTA, INC., MENU FOODS, INC., and MENU FOODS
HOLDINGS, INC., request that the current stay of proceedings remain in place pending transfer
to the MDL, in order to serve the interests of judicial economy. Counsel for DIANE LOWERY,
individually and on behalf of a class of similarly situated persons, consented to this transfer.

By:

Dated: June 28, 2007

GORDON & REES LLP

CĂRRIE A. LUBINSKI (SBN: 1740)

GORDON & REES LLP Embarcadero Center West 275 Battery Street, Suite 2000 San Francisco, CA 94111 Telephone: (415) 986-5900 Facsimile: (415) 986-8054

Attorneys for Defendants, MENU FOODS INCOME FUND; MENU FOODS LIMITED PARTNERSHIP; MENU FOODS MIDWEST CORPORATION; MENU FOODS SOUTH DAKOTA, INC.; MENU FOODS, INC.; AND MENU FOODS HOLDINGS, INC.

MENU FOODS HOLDINGS, INC.

## EXHIBIT A

JUDICIAL PANEL ON MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION

JUN 1 9 2007

### RELEASED FOR PUBLICATION DOCKET NO. 1850

FILED CLERK'S OFFICE

#### BEFORE THE JUDICIAL PANEL ON MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION

#### IN RE PET FOOD PRODUCTS LIABILITY LITIGATION

BEFORE WM. TERRELL HODGES, CHAIRMAN, D. LOWELL JENSEN, J. FREDERICK MOTZ, ROBERT L. MILLER, JR.,\* KATHRYN H. VRATIL, DAVID R. HANSEN AND ANTHONY J. SCIRICA, JUDGES OF THE PANEL

#### TRANSFER ORDER

This litigation presently consists of thirteen actions listed on the attached Schedule A and pending in eight districts as follows: five actions in the Western District of Washington; two actions in the Western District of Arkansas; and one action each in the Central District of California, the District of Connecticut, the Southern District of Florida, the Northern District of Illinois, the District of New Jersey, and the Eastern District of Tennessee. Before the Panel are three motions, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1407, that taken together seek centralization for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings of all of these actions. All responding parties agree that centralization is appropriate, but differ regarding the most appropriate transferee district for this litigation. In favor of the District of New Jersey as transferee district are moving Central District of California and Southern District of Florida plaintiffs and plaintiffs in the District of Connecticut, the District of New Jersey, and three of the Western District of Washington actions before the Panel, as well as plaintiffs in fourteen potentially related actions. Plaintiffs in two of the five Western District of Washington actions move for centralization in the Western District of Washington; plaintiffs in the Eastern District of Tennessee action support centralization there; and plaintiffs in the other three Western District of Washington actions alternatively support centralization there. In favor of the Western District of Arkansas as transferee district are plaintiffs in the two Western District of Arkansas actions and the Northern District of Illinois action, and plaintiffs in six potentially related actions. Plaintiffs in two potentially related District of New Jersey actions alternatively support centralization in the Western District of Arkansas. Supporting the Northern District of Illinois as transferee district are all responding defendants, including Menu Foods, Inc., and its related entities, and plaintiffs in one potentially related action. In favor of the Central District of California as transferee district are plaintiffs in nine potentially related actions. Finally, plaintiff in a potentially related Northern District of Ohio action suggests centralization in the Northern District of Ohio.

On the basis of the papers filed and hearing session held, the Panel finds that the actions in this

Judge Miller did not participate in the decision of this matter.

The Panel has been notified of 97 potentially related actions pending in multiple federal districts. In light of the Panel's disposition of this docket, these actions will be treated as potential tag-along actions. See Rules 7.4 and 7.5, R.P.J.P.M.L., 199 F.R.D. 425, 435-36 (2001).

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litigation involve common questions of fact, and that centralization under Section 1407 in the District of New Jersey will serve the convenience of the parties and witnesses and promote the just and efficient conduct of the litigation. All actions stem from the recall of pet food products allegedly tainted by melamine found in wheat gluten imported from China and used in these products. Centralization under Section 1407 is necessary in order to eliminate duplicative discovery; avoid inconsistent pretrial rulings, especially with respect to class certification; and conserve the resources of the parties, their counsel and the judiciary.

Although several districts could be described as an appropriate transferee forum for this nationwide litigation, we are persuaded to select the District of New Jersey. Pretrial proceedings are advancing well there and about one-third of all pending actions are already in this district.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1407, the actions listed on the attached Schedule A and pending outside the District of New Jersey are transferred to the District of New Jersey and, with the consent of that court, assigned to the Honorable Noel L. Hillman for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings with the actions pending there and listed on Schedule A.

FOR THE PANEL:

Wm. Terrell Hodges

Chairman

#### SCHEDULE A

#### MDL-1850 -- In re Pet Food Products Liability Litigation

#### Western District of Arkansas

Charles Ray Sims, et al. v. Menu Foods Income Fund, et al., C.A. No. 5:07-5053 Richard Scott Widen, et al. v. Menu Foods, Inc., et al., C.A. No. 5:07-5055

#### Central District of California

Shirley Sexton v. Menu Foods Income Fund, et al., C.A. No. 2:07-1958

#### District of Connecticut

Lauri A. Osborne v. Menu Foods, Inc., C.A. No. 3:07-469

#### Southern District of Florida

Christina Troiano v. Menu Foods, Inc., et al., C.A. No. 0:07-60428

#### Northern District of Illinois

Dawn Majerczyk v. Menu Foods, Inc., C.A. No. 1:07-1543

#### District of New Jersey

Jared Workman, et al. v. Menu Foods Ltd., et al., C.A. No. 1:07-1338

#### Eastern District of Tennessee

Lizajean Holt, et al. v. Menu Foods, Inc., C.A. No. 3:07-94

#### Western District of Washington

Tom Whaley v. Menu Foods, Inc., et al., C.A. No. 2:07-411 Stacey Heller, et al. v. Menu Foods, C.A. No. 2:07-453 Audrey Kornelius, et al. v. Menu Foods, C.A. No. 2:07-454 Suzanne E. Johnson, et al. v. Menu Foods, C.A. No. 2:07-455 Michele Suggett, et al. v. Menu Foods, et al., C.A. No. 2:07-457

# EXHIBIT B

## BEFORE THE JUDICIAL PANEL ON MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION

MDL 1850

MAY 3 1 2007

FILED CLERK'S OFFICE

IN RE PET FOOD
PRODUCTS LIABILITY LITIGATION

MDL Docket No. 1850
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#### NOTICE OF POTENTIAL TAG ALONG ACTIONS

NOW COME the Defendants collectively referred to as "Menu Foods," by and through their attorneys, PRETZEL & STOUFFER, CHARTERED, and pursuant to Rule 7.4 of the Rules of Procedure of the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation, hereby submits the following list of potential tag along actions:

- 1. A. Gary Bruski, Individually and on behalf of all Other Similarly Situated v. Menu Foods, Inc., a Canadian Corporation; Nutro Products, Inc., a California Corpoaration; and Petsmart, Inc., an Arizona Corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois (Chicago)
  - C. 1:07-CV-02183
  - D. Judge Wayne Andersen
- 2. A. Diane Swarberg, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods Holding Inc., The lams company and Does 1 through 100, inclusive
  - B. United States District Court for the Southern District of California (San Diego)
  - C. 3:07-CV-00706
  - D. Judge John A. Houston

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- 3. A. Jayne Englander, an individual and Mitch Englander, an individual, on behalf of themselves, the general public, all others similarly situated, and as owners and guardians of Sparky and Bailey
  - B. United States District Court for the Central District of California WesternDivision (Los Angeles)
  - C. 2:07-CV-02964
  - D. Judge Christina A. Snyder
- 4. A. Sandra L. Gray, Individually and All Other Persons Similarly Situated; Nick Jackson, As Husband and All Other Person Similarly Situated and Deena Jackson, As Wife and All Other Persons Similarly Situated v. Menu Foods, Menu Foods Income Fund, Menu Foods Gen Par Limited, Menu Foods Limited Partnership, Menu Foods Operating Partnership, Menu Foods Midwest Corporation, Menu Foods South Dakota, Menu Foods, Inc., Menu Foods Holdings, Inc., Walmart Stores, Inc. And Xuzhou Anying Biologic Technology Development Co., Ltd.
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Arkansas (Fayetteville)
  - C. 5:07-CV-05065
  - D. Judge Robert T. Dawson
- 5. A. Ken Wahl, Shane Barbi, Sia Barbi, Jennifer Hart, Sheila R. Washington, Maria Mitchell, individually and on behalf of all individuals similarly situated v. Menu Foods Income Fund, Menu Foods Midwest Corporation, Menu Foods South Dakota Inc., Menu Foods Inc., Menu Foods Holdings Inc., Del Monte Foods Company, Nestle Purina Petcare Company, Hills Pet Nutrition, Nutro Products Inc., Petco Animal Supplies Stores Inc., Petco Animal Supplies Inc., Petco Southwest Inc., Petsmart Inc., and The IAMS Company
  - B. United States District Court for the Central District of California Western Division (Los Angeles)
  - C. 2:07-CV-02779
  - D. Judge George H. King

- 6. Robert Payne and Steve Bartilucci v. Menu Foods, Inc., a New Jersey Α. Corporation; Petco Animal Supplies, Inc., a Delaware Corporation; Safeway, Inc., a Delaware Corporation, The Proctor & Gamble Company, an Ohio Corporation; and DOES 1 through 50
  - B. United States District Court for the Southern District of California (San Diego)
  - C. 3:07-CV-00705
  - D. Judge John A. Houston
  - 7. Judy McGuriman, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Α. Menu Foods Limited, a Canadian business entity trading as Menu Foods; Menu Foods, Inc., a New Jersey corporation trading as Menu Foods
    - B. United States District Court for the District of New Jersey (Camden)
    - C. 1:07-CV-02205
    - D. Judge Noel L. Hillman
  - 8. Α. Olivia Guercioni, Individually, and on behalf of others that are similarly situated v. Menu Foods Limited, doing business as Menu Foods; Menu Foods Inc.; Menu Foods Midwest Corporation; JOHN DOES 1-10; and ABC CORPS 1-15
    - В. United States District Court for the District of New Jersey (Camden)
    - C. 1:07-CV-02202
    - D. Judge Noel L. Hillman
  - 9. Α. Kelly Finestone, on behalf of herself, similarly situated consumers, and the general public v. Menu Foods, Inc., a Canadian Corporation; The IAMS Company, an Ohio Corporation; Petco Animal Supplies Inc., a Delaware Corporation; DOES 1 through 500 inclusive; and Chemnutra Inc., sued and served herein as DOE No. 3
    - B. United States District Court for the Central District of California - Western Division (Los Angeles)

- C. 2:07-CV-02338
- D. Judge Christina A. Synder
- 10. A. Loren Byers and Camilla Brankov, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods Income Fund; Menu Foods, Inc., a New Jersey Corporation; Menu Foods Midwest Corp., a Delaware Corporation; Menu Foods Limited; Menu Foods Operating Limited Partnership; Menu Foods South Dakota Corp., and DOES 1-50
  - B. United States District Court for the District of New Jersey (Camden)
  - C. 1:07-CV-01747
  - D. Judge Noel L. Hillman
- 11. A. Heather Amro, on behalf of herself and all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods Income Fund; Menu Foods, Inc., a New Jersey Corporation; Menu Foods Holdings, Inc.; Menu Foods Midwest Corporation, a Delaware Corporation; Chemnutra, Inc., a Delaware Corporation; Chemnutra LLC; The Proctor & Gamble Company, an Ohio Corporation; and The IAMS Company
  - B. United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois (Chicago)
  - C. 1:07-CV-02162
  - D. Judge Wayne Andersen
- 12. A. George Birney and Audrey Birney v. Menu Foods, Inc.
  - B. United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida (Orlando)
  - C. 6:07-CV-00803
  - D. Judge Anne C. Conway
- 13. A. Hayley Ford, individually, for class members, and on behalf of other members of the public similarly situated and Shannon J. Kramer, individually, for class members, and on behalf of other members of the public similarly situated v. Menu

Foods Income Fund, Menu Foods Midwest Corporation, Menu Foods South Dakota, Inc., Menu Foods, Inc., Menu Foods Holdings, Inc., Del Monte Foods Company, Nestle Purina Petcare Company, Hills Pet Nutrition, Nutro Products, Inc., Wal-Mart Stores, Petco Animal Supplies, Inc., Petco Southwest, Inc., Petco Animal Supplies Stores, Inc., The IAMS Company, Fry's Food Centers, Smith's Food and Drug Centers, Inc., Kroger co., Chemnutra, Inc., and Petsmart

- B. United States District Court for the Southern District of California (San Diego)
- C. 3:07-CV-00734
- D. Judge John A. Houston
- 14. A. Laura Migliore v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00575
  - D. Judge Robert S. Lasnik
  - 15. A. Gail Moran v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
    - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
    - C. 2:07-CV-00576
    - D. Judge John C. Coughenour
- 16. A. Sheryl Puett v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00577
  - D. Judge Robert s. Lanik
- 17. A. Mark Cashman, Individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated and Ciro Aiello, Individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu

United States District Court for the Southern District of New York (Foley Square) В.

The Iams Company, Chemnutra Inc. and John Does No. 1 through 100

- C. 1:07-CV-03236
- D. Judge Jed S. Rakoff
- 18. Megan Connerton and Kimberly Mello v. Menu Foods Midwest Corporation, Α. Menu Foods Income Fund, Menu Foods Limited, Menu Foods Inc., Menu Foods Holdings, Inc., The Iams Company, Nutro Products, Inc., Target Corporation, ChemNutra Inc. and Xuzhou Anying Biologic Technology Development Company Ltd.
  - B. United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts (Boston)
  - C. 1:07-CV-10797
  - D. Judge Douglas P. Woodlock
- 19. A. Sonja Foxe, on behalf of herself and all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, Inc., Menu Foods Income Fund, Safeway Inc. And John Does 1 through 100
  - В. United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois (Chicago)
  - C. 1:07-CV-02237
  - D. Judge Wayne Andersen
- 20. Α. Wendy Krosschell, on behalf of herself and all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods Income Fund, Menu Foods, Inc., Menu Foods Holdings, Inc., Menu Foods Midwest Corporation, ChemNutra LLC and ChemNutra Inc.
  - B. United States District Court for the District of Minnesota
  - C. 0:07-CV-02108
  - D. Judge Ann D. Montgomery

- 21. A. Daniel Ray Reeves, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00634
  - D. Judge John C. Coughenour
- 22. A. Nancy Guthire, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Tacoma)
  - C. 3:07-CV-05205
  - D. Judge Robert J. Bryan
- 23. A. Jeff Rusiecki, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Tacoma)
  - C. 3:07-CV-05204
  - D. Judge Robert J. Bryan
- 24. A. Penny J. Roberts and Donald Gilbert Iverson v. Menu Foods Income Fund; Menu Foods, Inc.; Menu Foods Holdings, Inc.; Menu Foods Midwest Corporation; Chemnutra Inc.; and Chemnutra LLC
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin (Madison)
  - C. 07-CV-0248
  - D. Judge Barbara B. Crabb
- 25. A. Sheree A. Robinson, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v.

Menu Foods, a foreign corporation

- B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
- C. 2:07-CV-00666
- D. Judge Robert S. Lasnik
- 26. A. Phyllis A. Ullman, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00667
  - D. Judge Marsha J. Pechman
- 27. A. Megan Whitt, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00670
  - D. Judge Ricardo S. Martinez
- 28. A. Elizabeth Palmer, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00668
  - D. Judge James L. Robart
- 29. A. Jason Labbate, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)

- C. 2:07-CV-00669
- D. Judge Monica J. Benton
- 30. A. Margaret Picus v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.; Menu Foods Inc.; Del Monte Foods Company; Sunshine Mills, Inc.; and ChenNutra Inc.
  - B. United States District Court for the District of Nevada (Las Vegas)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00686
  - D. Judge Roger L. Hunt
- 31. A. Lerae Dineen, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00686
  - D. Judge Marsha J. Pechman
- 32. A. Deborah A. Mullen, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00689
  - D. Judge James L. Robart
- 33. A. Helen Percy, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00690
  - D. Judge Robert S. Lasnik

- 34. A. Sandra Shingle, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00687
  - D. Judge Marsha J. Pechman
- 35. A. GaryThomas, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00688
  - D. Judge Thomas S. Zilly
- 36. A. Linda Weitz, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00684
  - D. Judge Ricardo S. Martinez
- 37. A. Richard Schwinger, Individually and all other Persons Similarly Situated v. Menu Foods; Menu Foods Income Fund; Menu Foods Gen Par Limited; Menu Foods Limited Partnership; Menu Foods Operating Partnership; Menu Foods Midwest Corp; Menu Foods South Dakota; Menu Foods, Inc.; Menu Foods Holdings, Inc.; Wal-Mart Stores Inc.; and Del Monte Foods, Inc.
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri (Joplin)
  - C. 3:07-CV-05041
  - D. Judge Sarah W. Hays

- 38. A. Tony Boyer, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00746
  - D. Judge Robert S. Lasnik
- 39. A. Norman Brenton, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00747
  - D. Judge John C. Coughenour
- 40. A. Teresa Eilers, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00749
  - D. Judge Thomas S. Zilly
- 41. A. Paula Monk, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
  - C. 2:07-CV-00745
  - D. Judge John C. Coughenour
- 42. A. Lynda Nagel, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, a foreign corporation

- B. United States District Court for the Western District of Washington (Seattle)
- C. 2:07-CV-00748
- D. Judge James L. Robart
- 43. A. Sarah Cavin, individually and all other Persons Similarly Situated v. Menu Foods; Menu Foods Income Fund; Menu Foods Gen Par Limited; Menu Foods Limited Partnership; Menu Foods Operating Partnership; Menu Foods Midwest Corp.; Menu Foods South Dakota; Menu Foods Holdings, Inc.; Menu Foods, Inc.; and Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
  - B. United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi (Western)
  - C. 5:07-CV-00105
  - D. Judge David C. Bramlette, III
- 44. A. Dixie Keller, on behalf of herself and all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods Limited; Menu Foods Inc.; Menu Foods Midwest Corporation; Menu Foods Income Fund; Menu Foods South Dakota, Inc.; Menu Foods Holdings, Inc. And Does 1-100
  - B. United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania (Harrisburg)
  - C. 1:07-CV-00929
  - D. Judge Sylvia H. Rambo
- 45. A. Diane Lowery, individually and on behalf of a class of similarly situated persons v. Menu Foods Income Fund; Menu Foods Limited Partnership; Menu Foods Midwest Corp.; Menu Foods South Dakota; Menu Foods, Inc.; and Menu Foods Holdings, Inc.
  - B. United States District Court for the Northern District of California (San Francisco)
  - C. 3:07-CV-02665
  - D. Judge Elizabeth D. Laporte

- 46. A. John Colliard, as an individual consumer, and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Menu Foods, Inc., a New Jersey corporation and Chemnutra, Inc., a Delaware corporation
  - B. United States District Court for the Southern District of California (San Diego)
  - C. 3:07-CV-00951
  - D. Judge Irma E. Gonzalez

JUDICIAL PANEL ON MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION

MAY 3 1 2007

FILED CLERK'S OFFICE

### BEFORE THE JUDICIAL PANEL ON MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION

IN RE PET FOOD
PRODUCTS LIABILITY LITIGATION

MDL Docket No. 1850
)
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#### **CERTIFICATION OF SERVICE**

The undersigned certifies that Defendant's: Notice of Potential Tag-Along Actions was filed with the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation this 31<sup>st</sup> Day of May, 2007. Notice of this filing was sent to the parties as listed on the attached Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation-Panel Attorney Service List by U.S. Mail from One South Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois.

Edward B. Ruff (IL Bar No. 61/2)

Pretzel & Stouffer, Chartered

One South Wacker Drive - Suite 2500

Chicago, Illinois 60606

Telephone: (312) 346-1973

Fax: (312) 346-8242

Attorney for Menu Foods

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(Panel Attorney Service List for MDL 1.850 Continued)

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#### ATTORNEY - FIRM

#### REPRESENTED PARTY(S)

Karp, Adam P. Animal Law Offices 114 West Magnolia Street Suite 425 Bellingham, WA 98225

⇒ Phone: (360) 392-3936 James, Don; Suggett, Michelu

Myers, Michael David Myers & Co., P.L.L.C. 1809 Seventh Avenue Suite 700 Seattle, WA 98101

> Phone: (206) 398-1188 Fax: (206) 400-1112 Whalcy, Tom

Newman, Bruce E. Newman, Creed & Associates 99 North Street, Route 6 P.O. Box 575 Bristol, CT 66011

Phone: (860) 583-5200 Fax: (860) 582-0012
 Osborne, Lauri A.; Sokolwski, Todd\*

Rottinghaus, Daniel L. Berding & Weil 3240 Stone Valley Road West Alamo, CA 94507

>> Phone: (925) 838-2090 Fax: (925) 820-5592 Swarberg, Diage\*

Ruff, III, Edward B. Pretzel & Stouffer, Chtd. One South Wacker Orivo Suite 2500 Chicago, IL 60506-4673

Phone: (312) 346-1973 Fax: (312) 346-8242

Menu Foods \*; Menu Foods Gen Par Lid \*; Menu Foods Holding, Inc \*; Menu Foods Income Fund \*; Menu Foods Ltd.\*; Menu Foods Ltd. Partnership \*; Menu Foods Mid vist Corp. \*; Menu Foods Operating Partnership \*; Menu Foods South Dakota Inc. \*; Menu Food ; Inc. \*

Savet, Sherrie R.
Berger & Montague, P.C.
1622 Locust Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

>> Phone: (215) 875-3071 Fax: (215) 875-5715 Cohen, Mark\*; Cohen, Mona\*; Workman, Jared\*

Wei-Mart Stores, Inc., C/O Registered Agent Corporation Trust Co. 1209 Orange Street Wilmington, DE 19801-1120

Wal-Mert Stores, Inc.

Wexler, Kenneth A. Wexler Toriseva Wallace, LLP One North LuSaille Street Suite 2000 Chicago, IL 60602

⇒ Phone: (312) 346-2222 Fax: (312) 346-0022 Sexton, Shirley\*

Note: Please refer to the report title page for complete report scope and key,

Case 3:07-cv-02665-SC Document 8 05/24/07

Filed 06/29/2007

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Page 1

Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation - Panel Attorney Service List

Docket: 1850 - In re Pet Food Products Liability Litigation Status: Pending on //

Transferec District:

Judge;

Printed on 05/24/2007

ATTORNEY - FIRM

REPRESENTED PARTY(S)

Berman, Stevs W.

Hagens Berman Sobol Shapire, LLP

1301 Fifth Avenue

Suite 2900

Scattle, WA 98101

> Phone: (206) 623-7292 Fax: (206) 623-0594

Heller, Stacey\*; Johnson, Suzanne E.\*; Klemann, Craig R.\*; Kornelin :, Audrey\*; Mitchell, Cocily\*;

Mitchell, Terrence"; Rapp, David"; Robinson, Toincue"; Smith, Burt and

Blim, John

Blim & Edelson, LLC

53 West Jackson Blvd.

Suite 1642

Chicago, IL 60604

=> Phone: (312) 913-9400 Fax: (312) 913-9401 Majerczyk, Dawn\*

Craft, Perry A. Craff & Sheppard, PLC

The Shiloh Bullding

214 Conterview Drive

Suno 223

Breatwood, TN 37027

> Phone: (615) 309-1707 Fax: (615) 309-1717

Holt, Lizajcan\*; Lefebvre, Donna\*; Leonard, Kinn\*; Leroy, Debra\*

Davidson, Smart A.

Lerach Coughlia Stois Geller Rudman & Robbins, LLP

120 East Palmetto Park Road

Suite 500

Boca Raton, FL 33432-4809

>> Phone: (561) 750-3000 Fax: (561) 750-3364

Trojano, Christian\*

Bukanuba,

One Proctor & Camble Plaza C-2

Cincinnati, OH 45202

Enkombe

Hatfield, Jason Matthew

Lundy & Davis, LLP

300 North College Avenue

Suite 309

Fayetteville, AR 72701

- Phone: (479) 527-3921 Fax: (479) 587-9196 Email: jhatlield@lunc rdavis.com Sims, Charles Ray"; Sims, Pamela®

Hutchinson, Jeremy Y.

Patton, Roberts, McWilliams & Capshaw, LLP

Stephens Building

111 Center Street

Suite 1315 Little Rock, AR 72201 -> Phone: (501) 372-3480 Fax: (501) 372-3488 Widen, Burbaran; Widen, Richard Scotts

Ireland, D. Jeffrey

Faruki, Incland & Cox, P.L.L.

500 Courthouse Plaza, S.W.

10 North Ludiow Street

Daylon, OH 45402

⇒ Phone: (937) 227-3710 Fax: (937) 227-3749 Email: djireland@ficif il·.com Iams Co.\*

Note: Please refer to the report title page for complete report scope and key.