

SFA 8931 no summons

FILED ENTERED
LODGED RECEIVED

APR 26 2007 DB

AT SEATTLE
CLERK U.S. DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON DEPUTY

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

DANIEL RAY REEVES, individually and on
behalf of all others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

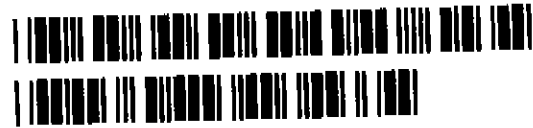
v.

MENU FOODS, a foreign corporation,

Defendant.

CV 07-0634 JCC
No.

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT



07-CV-00634-CMP

Plaintiff Daniel Ray Reeves ("Plaintiff"), by and through his undersigned attorneys, bring this civil action for damages on behalf of himself and all others similarly situated against the above-named Defendant and complain and allege as follows:

I. NATURE OF ACTION

1. Plaintiff brings this action as a Class Action under Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure on behalf of all persons who purchased any dog or cat food that was produced by defendant Menu Foods and/or has had a dog or cat become ill or die as a result of eating the food.

2. The Defendant is a producer of, *inter alia*, dog and cat food. Menu Foods produces dog and cat food sold under familiar brand names such as Iams, Eukanuba and Science Diet. Menu Foods distributes its dog and cat food throughout the United States to retailers such as Wal-Mart, Kroger and Safeway.

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT - I
Case No.



HAGENS BERMAN
SOBOL SHAPIRO LLP

1301 11th Avenue, Suite 2900 • Seattle, WA 98101

TELEPHONE (206) 423-7292 • FACSIMILE (206) 423-0594

ORIGINAL

1 3. Dog and cat food that the Defendant produced caused an unknown number of
2 dogs and cats to become ill, and many of them to die.

3 4. To date, Menu Foods has recalled 50 brands of dog food and 40 brands of cat
4 food that have sickened and killed dogs and cats. All recalled food to date is of the "cuts and
5 gravy wet" style.

6 5. As a result of the Defendant's actions, Plaintiff and other Class members have
7 suffered economic damage.

8 **II. PARTIES**

9 6. Plaintiff Daniel Ray Reeves has at all material times been a resident of Federal
10 Way, Washington. Mr.Reeves had a pet that became sick and died after eating Defendant's pet
11 food.

12 7. Defendant Menu Foods is, upon information and belief, a corporation organized
13 under the laws of Canada that transacts business in Washington State.

14 **III. JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

15 8. Subject-matter jurisdiction is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a)(1) because the
16 Plaintiffs and Defendant are citizens of different states and the amount in controversy exceeds
17 \$75,000.00. This Court has supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law claims under 28 U.S.C.
18 § 1367.

19 9. Venue is proper in this judicial district under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(a) because the
20 Defendant systematically and continuously sold its product within this district and Defendant
21 transacts business within this district.

22 **IV. CLASS ACTION ALLEGATION**

23 10. Plaintiffs bring this suit as a class action under Rules 23(a), (b)(1), (b)(2) and
24 (b)(3) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, on behalf of themselves and a Plaintiff Class (the
25 "Class") composed of all persons who purchased any dog or cat food that was produced by the
26

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT - 2
Case No.



HAGENS BERMAN
SOBOL SHAPIRO LLP
1301 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 2900 • SEATTLE, WA 98101
TELEPHONE (206) 623 7292 • FACSIMILE (206) 623-0394

1 Defendant and/or has had a dog or cat become ill or die as a result of eating the food. Plaintiff
2 reserves the right to modify this class definition before moving for class certification.

3 11. The Class is ascertainable and there is a well-defined community of interest
4 among the members of the Class.

5 12. Membership in the Class is so numerous as to make it impractical to bring all
6 Class members before the Court. The identity and exact number of Class members is unknown
7 but is estimated to be at least in the hundreds, if not thousands considering the fact that Menu
8 Foods has identified 50 dog foods and 40 cat foods that may be causing harm to pets.

9 13. Plaintiff's claims are typical of those of other Class members, all of whom have
10 suffered harm due to Defendant's uniform course of conduct.

11 14. Plaintiff is a member of the Class.

12 15. There are numerous and substantial questions of law and fact common to all of
13 the members of the Class that control this litigation and predominate over any questions affecting
14 only individual members of the Class. The common issues include, but are not limited to, the
15 following:

16 (a) Was the Defendant's dog and cat food materially defective, and unfit for
17 use as dog or cat food?

18 (b) Whether Defendant breached any contract, implied contract or warranties
19 related to the sale of the dog and cat food?

20 (c) Did the Defendant's dog and cat food cause Plaintiff's and other Class
21 members' pets to become ill?

22 (d) Were Plaintiff and other Class members damaged, and, if so, what is the
23 proper measure thereof?

24 (e) The appropriate form of injunctive, declaratory and other relief.

25 16. The prosecution of separate actions by members of the Class would create a risk
26 of establishing incompatible standards of conduct for the Defendant – for example, one court

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT - 3
Case No.



HAGENS BERMAN
SOBOL SHAPIRO LLP

1301 First Avenue, Suite 2900 • Seattle, WA 98101

TELEPHONE (206) 623-7292 • FACSIMILE (206) 623-0594

1 might decide that the Defendant is obligated under the law to pay damages to Class members,
2 and another might decide that the Defendant is not so obligated. Individual actions may, as a
3 practical matter, be dispositive of the interests of the Class.

4 17. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the Class in that he has
5 no interests that are antagonistic to other members of the Class and has retained counsel
6 competent in the prosecution of class actions to represent himself and the Class.

7 18. A class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient
8 adjudication of this controversy. Given (i) the substantive complexity of this litigation; (ii) the
9 size of individual Class members' claims; and (iii) the limited resources of the Class members,
10 few, if any, Class members could afford to seek legal redress individually for the wrongs
11 Defendant has committed against them.

12 19. Without a class action, the Class will continue to suffer damage, Defendant's
13 violations of the law or laws will continue without remedy, and Defendant will continue to enjoy
14 the fruits and proceeds of its unlawful misconduct.

15 20. *This action will foster an orderly and expeditious administration of Class claims,*
16 *economies of time, effort and expense, and uniformity of decision.*

17 21. Inferences and presumptions of materiality and reliance are available to obtain
18 class-wide determinations of those elements within the Class claims, as are accepted
19 methodologies for class-wide proof of damages; alternatively, upon adjudication of Defendant's
20 common liability, the Court can efficiently determine the claims of the individual Class
21 members.

22 22. This action presents no difficulty that would impede the Court's management of it
23 as a class action, and a class action is the best (if not the only) available means by which
24 members of the Class can seek legal redress for the harm caused them by Defendant.

25 23. In the absence of a class action, Defendant would be unjustly enriched because it
26 would be able to retain the benefits and fruits of its wrongful conduct.

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT - 4
Case No.



HAGENS BERMAN
SOBOL SHAPIRO LLP

1301 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 2900 • SEATTLE, WA 98101

TELEPHONE (206) 423-7292 • FACSIMILE (206) 423-0594

1 24. The Claims in this case are also properly certifiable under applicable law.

2 **V. STATEMENT OF FACTS**

3 25. Plaintiff Daniel Ray Reeves was the owner of a male dog named Irish.

4 26. Mr. Reeves purchased Natures Choice from Pet Smart for Irish to consume.

5 27. Irish became extremely ill during the week of March 12, 2007. Mr. Reeves took
6 Irish to a veterinarian, who informed him that Irish had suffered kidney failure, also known as
7 acute renal failure. Irish had to be euthanized as his kidneys would no longer function.

8 28. In March 2007, Menu Foods recalled 50 brands of cuts and gravy wet-style dog
9 food and 40 brands of cuts and gravy wet-style cat food that had caused dogs and pets to become
10 ill. One common symptom in the sick animals was kidney failure.

11 29. The Natures Choicc food from Pet Smart that Irish consumed for several years
12 before his death is one of the brands that Menu Foods recalled.

13 30. As a result of Defendant's acts and omissions Plaintiff and other Class members
14 have suffered economic damage.

15 **VI. BREACH OF CONTRACT**

16 31. Plaintiff realleges all prior allegations as though fully stated herein.

17 32. Plaintiff and Class members purchased pet food produced by the Defendant based
18 on the understanding that the food was safe for their pets to consume.

19 33. The pet food produced by the Defendant was not safe for pets to consume and
20 caused dogs and cats to become ill. The unsafe nature of the pet food constituted a breach of
21 contract.

22 34. As a result of the breach Plaintiff and Class members suffered damages that may
23 fairly and reasonably be considered as arising naturally from the breach or may reasonably be
24 supposed to have been in the contemplation of the parties, at the time they made the contract, as
25 the probable result of the breach of it.



VII. UNJUST ENRICHMENT

35. Plaintiff realleges all prior allegations as though fully stated herein.

36. Defendant was and continues to be unjustly enriched at the expense of Plaintiff and other Class members.

37. Defendant should be required to disgorge this unjust enrichment.

VIII. UNLAWFUL, DECEPTIVE AND UNFAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES

38. Plaintiff realleges all prior allegations as though fully stated herein.

39. Defendant's sale of tainted pet food constitutes an unlawful, deceptive and unfair business act within the meaning of the Washington Consumer Protection Act, RCW 19.86 *et seq.*, and similar statutory enactments of other states (including consumer protection and consumer sales practice acts).

40. Defendant's sale of hazardous pet food has the capacity to deceive a substantial portion of the public and to affect the public interest.

41. As a result of Defendant's unfair or deceptive acts or practices, Plaintiff and other Class members suffered injuries in an amount to be proven at trial.

IX. BREACH OF WARRANTIES

42. Plaintiff realleges all prior allegations as though fully stated herein.

43. Cat food and dog food produced by Menu Foods are "goods" within the meaning of Uniform Commercial Code Article 2.

44. Defendant's conduct as described herein constitutes breach of an implied or express warranty of affirmation.

45. Defendant's conduct as described herein constitutes breach of an implied warranty of merchantability.

46. Defendant's conduct as described herein constitutes breach of an implied warranty of fitness for a particular purpose.



1 48. As a proximate result of the aforementioned wrongful conduct and breach,
2 Plaintiff and other Class members have suffered damages in an amount to be proven at trial.
3 Defendant had actual or constructive notice of such damages.

4 **X. PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

5 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff and Class members request that the Court enter an order of
6 judgment against Defendant including the following:

7 Certification of the action as a class action under Rule 23(b)(1) - (3) of the Federal Rules
8 of Civil Procedure with respect to the claims for damages, and appointment of Plaintiff as Class
9 Representative and his counsel of record as Class Counsel;

10 Actual damages (including all general, special, incidental, and consequential damages),
11 statutory damages (including treble damages), punitive damages (as allowed by the law(s) of the
12 states having a legally sufficient connection with Defendant and its acts or omissions) and such
13 other relief as provided by the statutes cited herein;

14 Prejudgment and post-judgment interest on such monetary relief;

15 Equitable relief in the form of restitution and/or disgorgement of all unlawful or illegal
16 profits received by Defendant as a result of the unfair, unlawful and/or deceptive conduct alleged
17 herein;

18 Other appropriate injunctive relief;

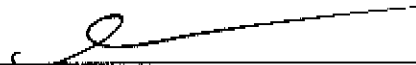
19 The costs of bringing this suit, including reasonable attorneys' fees; and

20 Such other relief as this Court may deem just, equitable and proper.

21 DATED this 26th day of April, 2007.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26

HAGENS BERMAN SOBOL SHAPIRO LLP

By: 
Steve W. Berman, WSBA #12536
1301 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2900
Seattle, Washington 98101
Telephone: (206) 623-7292
Facsimile: (206) 623-0594
E-mail: steve@hbsslaw.com

MYERS & COMPANY, P.L.L.C.
Michael David Myers
1809 Seventh Avenue, Suite 700
Seattle, Washington 98101
Telephone: (206) 398-1188
Facsimile: (206) 400-1112
E-mail: mmyers@myers-company.com

Attorneys for Plaintiffs

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT - 8
Case No.