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Food & Consumer Packaged Goods Litigation

Court Approves “Natural” Sweetener Settlement

Aguiar v. Merisant Company, No. 2:14-cv-00670-RGK-AGR (C.D. Cal.): The court granted final approval of a class action settlement in a case claiming defendants misleadingly marketed their sweetener products as "natural" when they in fact contain synthetic dextrose and chemically-processed ingredients derived from stevia. Under the settlement, defendants will pay \$1.65 million into a settlement fund to compensate consumers who purchased the products. Individual consumers can seek between \$5 and \$30 from the fund, with any residual funds to be distributed on a pro rata basis to class members. Defendants also agreed to change their product labeling to include an asterisk directing consumers to a website for more information about ingredients and the basis for the 'natural' classification of the products. Finally, the settlement awards the named plaintiff up to \$4,000 as an incentive award and allows class counsel to seek up to 30% of the settlement fund for attorneys' fees. [Order](#).

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