

OTKUPMAN LAW FIRM, A LAW CORPORATION

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April 30, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Labor & Workforce Development Agency

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Betteravia Farms LLC
1850 W. Stowell Rd.
Santa Maria, CA 93458
Defendant certified mail # 9589 0710 5270 2390 8675 05

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Agent for Service of Process
Candice Carmel Diaz
1850 W. Stowell Rd.
Santa Maria, CA 93458
Agent certified mail # 9589 0710 5270 2390 8675 05

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

San Ysidro Farming LLC
1850 W. Stowell Rd.
Santa Maria, CA 93458
Defendant certified mail # 9589 0710 5270 2390 8675 05

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Agent for Service of Process
Alain Pincot
1850 W. Stowell Rd.
Santa Maria, CA 93458
Agent certified mail # 9589 0710 5270 2390 8675 05

Re: ***Carlos Lopez v. Betteravia Farms LLC, San Ysidro Farming LLC – Compliance Letter of California Labor Code § 2698 – Private Attorneys General Act***

Dear Sir or Madam:

This office represents Carlos Lopez (“Plaintiff”), a former California employee of Betteravia Farms LLC, San Ysidro Farming LLC (“Defendants”). The purpose of this letter is to comply

with the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, pursuant to California Labor Code § 2698 *et seq.*

Our client works for Defendant in Southern California. Herein we set forth the facts and theories of California Labor Code violations which we allege Defendant engaged in with respect to our client and other of its California non-exempt employees.

Plaintiff began working for Defendants April 4, 1986. While working for Defendant as a Farmer Worker, Plaintiff was earning (\$18.00) dollars per hour.

Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees were routinely unable, and not authorized to take their 10-minute rest periods and were also unable to take an uninterrupted 30-minute meal break for every shift they worked. Specifically, Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees were forced to continue working through their meal and rest breaks in order to assist Defendant's needs. Because of this, Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees were unable to take their required meal and rest breaks. Moreover, Defendants failed to pay premium wages of one hour's pay for each missed meal and rest break to Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees who were denied timely meal and rest breaks, in violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7, 512, and 558, and IWC Order No. 5-2001, Section 12.

Plaintiff also claims that Defendant has failed to pay all overtime wages due to non-exempt employees. As a result, employees are not properly compensated for work performance in excess of eight (8) hours in a workday and work performed in excess of forty (40) hours in a workweek at a rate of no less than one and one-half times the regular rate of pay. Employees of Defendant regularly work in excess of eight (8) hours in a day or more than forty (40) hours per week and do not receive overtime compensation at a rate of one and one half of their regular rate. Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees were forced to work overtime and were not paid for all hours worked including all straight time wages, and overtime wages. These failures to pay all overtime wages constitute violations of Labor Code §§ 510, 1194, 1194.2.

Plaintiff, on behalf of himself and all other California employees of Defendant claims that Defendant has failed to pay all overtime wages due to non-exempt employees. Defendant pays their employees bonuses and commissions which are not included in the employees regular rate of pay for the purposes of computing the proper overtime rate. As a result, employees are not properly compensated for work performed in excess of eight (8) hours in a workday and work performed in excess of forty (40) hours in a workweek at a rate of no less than one and one-half times the regular rate of pay. These failures to pay all overtime wages constitute violations of Labor Code §§ 510, 1194, and 1194.2.

Defendants failed to issue Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees accurately itemized wage statements. As Defendants failed to compensate Plaintiff and Defendants' California employees with all wages due, as detailed above, their wage statements failed to accurately state all gross wages earned, in violation of Labor Code § 226(a)(1), total hours worked, in violation

of Labor Code § 226(a)(2), net wages earned, in violation of Labor Code § 226(a)(5). Plaintiff and the California employees wage statements' failed to accurately state the name and address of the legal entity that is the employer in violation of Labor Code § 226(a)(8), and all applicable hourly rates during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours worked, in violation of Labor Code § 226(a)(9), as a result of Defendants' failure to pay all overtime wages due. These violations also violate Labor Code §§ 226(e) and 226.3 with respect to Plaintiff and Defendants' California employees.

Defendants knowingly and intentionally failed to provide Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees timely, accurate, itemized wage statements in accordance with Labor Code § 226 and keep accurate records and required by §1174(d). The statements provided to Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees, and the records maintained by Defendants, have not accurately reflected actual gross wages earned, including pay for all hours worked, overtime, and meal/rest premiums, and total hour worked.

Our client further alleges that Defendants paid him and Defendant's California employees their final wages beyond the time frames set forth in Labor Code §§ 201 and 202. As they were not paid all wages due and owing throughout the course of their employment as a result of Defendants' failure to pay all premium wages as detailed above, at the time of their separation, they were not paid all final wages due and owing for the entirety of their employment. This violates Labor Code §§ 201-203.

Defendant pays Plaintiff and it's California employees on a weekly basis and has failed to comply with Labor Code § 204(a) which holds that wages earned on a weekly basis must be paid no later than seven calendar days following the close of the payroll period. Due to the violations described above, Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees did not receive all of their wages earned in a timely manner as required by Labor Code § 204(a)(b) and 201.3.

Defendant failed to reimburse its California employees for using their personal cell phones for the benefit of Defendant. Labor Code section 2802 provides that "[a]n employer shall indemnify his or her employee for all necessary expenditures or losses incurred by the employee in direct consequence of the discharge of his or her duties." As such, Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees have incurred reasonable and necessary expenses in the course of their job duties, which were not reimbursed by Defendant, in violation of Labor Code § 2802.

Defendants failed to pay all wages earned to Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees as a result of the unlawful employment policies and practices herein. As a result of these practices, Plaintiff and Defendant's California employees were underpaid for hours worked, including overtime and penalty wages, and this underpayment resulted in a failure to pay all wages owed twice per month. Due to this failure, Defendants are liable under Labor Code § 210 for failure to pay wages as required by law.

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We invite Defendants or its attorney(s) to contact our office to discuss this matter, including whether an early resolution of the claims can be reached.

Our office awaits your response.

Very truly yours,

OTKUPMAN LAW FIRM

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Otkupman', is written over a horizontal line.

ROMAN OTKUPMAN