



January 24, 2023

BY ONLINE SUBMISSION

California Labor & Workforce Development Agency
PAGAfiling@dir.ca.gov

Re: SUNSWEET GROWERS, INC.

Dear Representative:

We have been retained to represent Annamarie Renteria-Hinojosa against Sunsweet Growers, Inc. (including any and all affiliates, subsidiaries, parents, directors, officers, agents, and executive employees) (collectively referred to as "SGI") for violations of California wage-and-hour laws. Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa seeks penalties for violations of the California Labor Code, which are recoverable under California Labor Code section 2698, et seq., the Labor Code Private Attorneys General Act of 2004 ("PAGA") and all other remedies available under PAGA.

Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa seeks these remedies on behalf of the State of California and "aggrieved employees," as defined herein. This letter is sent in compliance with the reporting requirements of California Labor Code section 2699.3.

SGI employed Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa as an hourly-paid, non-exempt employee from approximately February 2018 to approximately April 2022, in the State of California.

The "aggrieved employees" that Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa may seek penalties on behalf of are all current and former hourly-paid or non-exempt employees who worked for any of the above-referenced entities within the State of California.

Based on the following facts and theories, SGI has violated and/or continues to violate, among other provisions of the California Labor Code and applicable wage law, California Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 204, 226(a), 226.7, 510, 512(a), 551, 552, 558, 1174(d), 1194, 1197, 1197.1, 1198, 2800 and 2802, and IWC Wage Orders including *inter alia*, Wage Orders 1-2001, 3-2001, 4-2001, and 7-2001.

SGI required aggrieved employees to perform work before their scheduled shifts, after their scheduled shifts, during off-the-clock meal breaks, and/or during rest breaks and failed to compensate aggrieved employees for this time. Such work included, but was not limited to, completing COVID screening protocols, waiting in line to clock-in and/or clock-out, and responding to work-related inquiries. SGI rounded the work time recorded by aggrieved employees in a manner that was not fair and neutral on its face and/or that favored SGI over time, resulting in aggrieved employees being underpaid for their time worked.

**410 ARDEN AVE, SUITE 203 / GLENDALE, CA 91203
(818) 265-1020 / WWW.CALLJUSTICE.COM**

California Labor Code sections 510 and 1198 require employers to pay time-and-a-half or double time overtime wages, and make it unlawful to work employees for hours longer than eight hours in one day and/or over forty hours in one week without paying the premium overtime rates at one-and-one-half times or double the regular rate of pay, including additional remuneration. During the relevant time period, Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees worked in excess of 8 hours in a day and 40 hours in a week. Therefore, Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees were entitled to receive certain wages for overtime compensation, but they were not paid for all overtime hours worked.

California Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512 require employers to pay an employee one additional hour of pay at the employee's regular rate for each meal or rest period that is not provided. During the relevant time period, SGI required Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees to work during meal and rest periods and failed to compensate them properly for non-compliant meal and rest periods including, *inter alia*, short, late, interrupted, and missed meal and rest periods. SGI also required aggrieved employees to stay on work premises during rest periods.

California Labor Code sections 201 and 202 provide that if an employer discharges an employee, the wages earned and unpaid at the time of discharge are due and payable immediately, and if an employee quits his or her employment, his or her wages shall become due and payable not later than seventy-two (72) hours thereafter, unless the employee has given seventy-two (72) hours' notice of his or her intention to quit, in which case the employee is entitled to his or her wages at the time of quitting. During the relevant time period, SGI failed to pay Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees all wages due to them within any time period specified by California Labor Code sections 201 and 202, including earned and unpaid minimum, overtime, and premium wages as discussed above.

California Labor Code section 204 requires that all wages earned by any person in any employment between the 1st and the 15th days, inclusive, of any calendar month, other than those wages due upon termination of an employee, are due and payable between the 16th and the 26th day of the month during which the labor was performed, and that all wages earned by any person in any employment between the 16th and the last day, inclusive, of any calendar month, other than those wages due upon termination of an employee, are due and payable between the 1st and the 10th day of the following month. California Labor Code section 204 also requires that all wages earned for labor in excess of the normal work period shall be paid no later than the payday for the next regular payroll period. During the relevant time period, SGI failed to pay Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees all wages due to them within any time period specified by California Labor Code section 204, including earned and unpaid minimum, overtime, and premium wages as discussed above.

California Labor Code section 226 requires employers to make, keep and provide complete and accurate itemized wage statements to their employees. During the relevant time period, SGI did not provide Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees with complete and accurate itemized wage statements. The wage statements they received from SGI were in violation of California Labor Code section 226(a). The violations include, but are not limited to, the failure to include the total hours worked by Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees, including time spent working off-the-clock and during meal and rest periods as discussed above.

California Labor Code sections 551 and 552 require that every person employed in any occupation of labor is entitled to one day's rest in a seven-day workweek, that no employer of labor shall cause his employees to work more than six days in a workweek, and that an employer shall pay a civil penalty in the amounts of fifty dollars (\$50) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for the initial violation and one hundred dollars (\$100) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for each subsequent violation. During the relevant time period, Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and the aggrieved employees were required to regularly and/or consistently work in excess of six (6) days in a workweek. During the relevant time period, Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and the aggrieved employees were required to work in excess of thirty (30) hours in a week and/or six (6) hours in any one (1) day thereof, during workweeks in which they were required to work in excess of six (6) days. During the relevant time period, Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and the aggrieved employees were required to work in excess of six (6) days in a workweek without accumulating or being provided the opportunity to take at least one (1) day of rest, and when Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and the aggrieved employees accumulated days of rest, they were not actually provided the opportunity to take the equivalent of one (1) day's rest in seven (7) during each calendar month.

California Labor Code sections 1174(d) requires an employer to keep, at a central location in the state or at the plants or establishments at which employees are employed, payroll records showing the hours worked daily by and the wages paid to, and the number of piece-rate units earned by and any applicable piece rate paid to, employees employed at the respective plants or establishments. These records shall be kept with rules established for this purpose by the commission, but in any case shall be kept on file for not less than two years. During the relevant time period, SGI failed to keep accurate and complete payroll records showing the actual hours worked daily and the wages earned by Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees, including earned and unpaid minimum, overtime, and premium wages as discussed above.

California Labor Code section 2810.5 requires an employer to provide written notice to an employee, at the time of hiring, containing the following information:

The rate or rates of pay and basis thereof, whether paid by the hour, shift, day, week, salary, piece, commission, or otherwise, including any rates for overtime, as applicable. Allowances, if any, claimed as part of the minimum wage, including meal or lodging allowances. The regular payday designated by the employer in accordance with the requirements of this code. The name of the employer, including any "doing business as" names used by the employer. The physical address of the employer's main office or principal place of business, and a mailing address, if different. The telephone number of the employer. The name, address, and telephone number of the employer's workers' compensation insurance carrier. That an employee: may accrue and use sick leave; has a right to request and use accrued paid sick leave; may not be terminated or retaliated against for using or requesting the use of accrued paid sick leave; and has the right to file a complaint against an employer who retaliates. Any other information the Labor Commissioner deems material and necessary.

SGI failed to accurately provide aggrieved employees with the requisite notice in violation of California Labor Code section 2810.5.

California Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1197.1 provide the minimum wage to be paid to employees, and the payment of a lesser wage than the minimum so fixed is unlawful. During the relevant time period, SGI did not provide Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees with the minimum wages to which they were entitled for work performed “off-the-clock.”

California Labor Code section 1198 provides that “The employment of any employee ... under conditions of labor prohibited by the [Industrial Wage Orders] is unlawful.” The applicable Industrial Wage Orders, including *inter alia*, Wage Orders 1-2001, 3-2001, 4-2001, and 7-2001, require that for each workday an employee is required to report for work and does report, but is not put to work or is furnished less than half said employee’s usual or scheduled day’s work, the employee shall be paid for half the usual or scheduled day’s work, but in no event for less than two (2) hours nor more than four (4) hours, at the employee’s regular rate of pay. Further, if an employee is required to report for work a second time in any one workday and is furnished less than two (2) hours of work on the second reporting, said employee shall be paid for two (2) hours at the employee’s regular rate of pay. During the relevant time period, SGI failed to pay Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees half the usual or scheduled day’s work in an amount no less than two (2) hours nor more than four (4) hours at the employee’s regular rate of pay for workdays in which Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and the other aggrieved employees reported to work and were furnished less than half the usual or scheduled day’s work. During the relevant time period, SGI failed to pay Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees for two (2) hours at the employee’s regular rate of pay on days in which Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and the other aggrieved employees were required to report for work a second time in one workday and were furnished less than two (2) hours of work upon the second reporting.

California Labor Code sections 2800 and 2802 require an employer to reimburse its employee for all necessary expenditures incurred by the employee in direct consequence of the discharge of his or her job duties or in direct consequence of his or her obedience to the directions of the employer. During the relevant time period, Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa and other aggrieved employees incurred necessary business-related expenses and costs that were not fully reimbursed by SGI. These costs include, but are not limited to, the use of a personal phone for work-related tasks, the purchasing and maintenance of clothing and footwear in compliance with the dress code, and the purchasing and maintenance of supplies, including but not limited to, face masks.

Therefore, on behalf of all aggrieved employees, Ms. Renteria-Hinojosa seeks all applicable penalties arising out of the above-referenced wage, hour, and payroll practices, or which could be assessed and collected by the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, for violation of the California Labor Code pursuant to PAGA, including civil penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 558.

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If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.
Thank you for your attention to this matter and the noble cause you advance each and every day.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cgalajan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

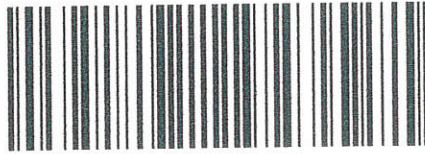
Christina Galajan, Esq.

Cc: (By U.S. Certified Mail / Return Receipt Requested)

Sunsweet Growers, Inc.
c/o Stella Mentink
Agent for Service of Process
901 W. Walton Avenue,
Yuba City, CA 95993

LAWYERS FOR JUSTICE
410 ARDEN AVE, SUITE 203 / GLENDALE, CA 91203

CERTIFIED MAIL®



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PITNEY BOWES
\$8.20⁰
US POSTAGE^{IM}
CORRECTION
026W0004897450
2000152203
ZIP 91203
JAN 24 2023



Sunsweet Growers, Inc.
c/o Stella Mentink
Agent for Service of Process
901 W. Walton Avenue,
Yuba City, CA 95993

U.S. Postal ServiceTM *PSA Notice*
CERTIFIED MAIL® RECEIPT

Domestic Mail Only *Known Addressee Return-Address v. Sunsweet*

For delivery information, visit our website at www.usps.com®.

OFFICIAL USE *Inc.*

Certified Mail Fee

Extra Services & Fees (check box, add fee as appropriate)

☐ Return Receipt (hardcopy)	\$
☐ Return Receipt (electronic)	\$
☐ Certified Mail Restricted Delivery	\$
☐ Adult Signature Required	\$
☐ Adult Signature Restricted Delivery	\$

Postage

\$

Sunsweet Growers, Inc.

c/o Stella Mentink

Agent for Service of Process

901 W. Walton Avenue,

Yuba City, CA 95993

Postmark
Here

PS Form 3800, April 2015 PSN 7530-02-000-9047 See Reverse for Instructions

PLACE STICKER AT TOP OF ENVELOPE TO THE RIGHT
OF THE RETURN ADDRESS, FOLD AT DOTTED LINE

SENDER: COMPLETE THIS SECTION

- Complete items 1, 2, and 3.
- Print your name and address on the reverse so that we can return the card to you.
- Attach this card to the back of the mailpiece, or on the front if space permits.

1. Article Addressed to:

Sunsweet Growers, Inc.
c/o Stella Mentink
Agent for Service of Process
901 W. Walton Avenue,
Yuba City, CA 95993



9590 9402 6612 1028 9925 67

2. Article Number (Transfer from service label)

7021 0950 0001 5113 6847

COMPLETE THIS SECTION ON DELIVERY

A. Signature

X

☐ Agent

☐ Addressee

B. Received by (Printed Name)

C. Date of Delivery

D. Is delivery address different from item 1? ☐ Yes
If YES, enter delivery address below: ☐ No

3. Service Type

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Adult Signature | ☐ Priority Mail Express® |
| ☐ Adult Signature Restricted Delivery | ☐ Registered Mail™ |
| ☐ Certified Mail® | ☐ Registered Mail Restricted Delivery |
| ☐ Certified Mail Restricted Delivery | ☐ Signature Confirmation™ |
| ☐ Collect on Delivery | ☐ Signature Confirmation Restricted Delivery |
| ☐ Collect on Delivery Restricted Delivery | |
| ☐ Insured Mail | |
| ☐ Insured Mail Restricted Delivery (over \$500) | |

PS Form 3811, July 2020 PSN 7530-02-000-9053

Domestic Return Receipt

Certified Mail

- A receipt (this portion)
- A unique identifier for delivery.
- Electronic verification

- A record of delivery (in signature) that is retained for a specified period.

Important Reminders

- You may purchase Certified Mail® service, First-Class Mail® service, or Priority Mail® service.
- Certified Mail service is international mail.
- Insurance coverage is provided with Certified Mail service.

- Insurance coverage and certain Priority Mail fees are included in the price of Certified Mail.
- For an additional fee, an endorsement on the mailpiece may be added for the following services:

- Return receipt service or delivery (including electronic version). For complete PS Form 3811, attach PS Form 3811.

PS Form 3800, April 2011