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Dietary supplement company Balance of Nature to pay \$1.1 million over false advertising



Santa Cruz County District Attorney's Office

By **Derrick Ow** FOLLOW



Published July 27, 2023 6:12 PM

SALINAS, Calif. (KION-TV)- The Monterey County and Santa Cruz District Attorney's Offices announced that a dietary company will have to pay \$1.1 million to settle a consumer protection lawsuit bought on by several district attorneys in



ordered to pay \$850,000 in civil penalties and investigative costs along with \$250,000 in restitution to customers.

"My office continues to be committed to the protection of consumers and holding businesses accountable for making unsupported claims about their products as well as other business practices that violate the law," Santa Cruz County District Attorney Jeff Rossell said in a statement.

The case was filed in Napa County Superior Court with the California Food, Drug and Medical Device Task Force. The group includes both Monterey County and Santa Cruz District Attorney's Offices as well as Alameda, Marin, Orange, Santa Clara, Solano and Sonoma counties.

The company sells supplements in capsule form which is made from ground-up fruit and vegetables. Prosecutors alleged that Balance of Nature made unlawful claims which were not supported by "reliable scientific evidence."



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fruit products which weighs about two grams contained the equivalent of over 5 servings of fruits per dose.

Another claim involved the company's fruit and veggies supplements in which they claimed three capsules had as much nutrition as "eating more than 10 servings of a salad made with 31 different fruits and vegetables."

Prosecutors alleged that the company claimed their products could prevent and treat serious diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. Battle of Nature used customer testimonials to make false claims according to Napa County District Attorney Allison Haley.

Balance of Nature is also alleged to have violated state law involving an automatically renewing subscription program by charging a monthly fee without clearly disclosing terms to customers. They are also alleged to have not given customers an "adequate acknowledgement of enrolling or not allowing customers to cancel online."

The judgment calls for any California resident who purchased a Balance of Nature product in the last six years to receive a notice on how to claim a refund. The company is prohibited from engaging in false advertising.

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