

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

\_\_\_\_\_, Individually and On Behalf of All  
Others Similarly Situated,

Plaintiff,

v.

HERBALIFE NUTRITION LTD.,  
RICHARD P. GOUDIS, MICHAEL O.  
JOHNSON, JOHN G. DESIMONE, and  
BOSCO CHIU.

Defendants.

**Case No.**

**CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT**

**JURY TRIAL DEMANDED**

**CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT**

Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_ (“Plaintiff”), individually and on behalf of all other persons similarly situated, by Plaintiff’s undersigned attorneys, for Plaintiff’s complaint against Defendants, alleges the following based upon personal knowledge as to Plaintiff and Plaintiff’s own acts, and information and belief as to all other matters, based upon, *inter alia*, the investigation conducted by and through Plaintiff’s attorneys, which included, among other things, a review of the Defendants’ public documents, conference calls and announcements made by Defendants, United States Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) filings, wire and press releases published by and regarding Herbalife Nutrition Ltd. (“Herbalife” or the “Company”), analysts’ reports and advisories about the Company, and information readily obtainable on the Internet. Plaintiff believes that substantial evidentiary support will exist for the allegations set forth herein after a reasonable opportunity for discovery.

**NATURE OF THE ACTION**

1. This is a federal securities class action on behalf of a class consisting of all persons other than defendants who purchased or otherwise acquired Herbalife’s securities between April

28, 2014 through February 7, 2019, both dates inclusive (the “Class Period”), seeking to recover damages caused by defendants’ violations of the federal securities laws and to pursue remedies under Sections 10(b) and 20(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Exchange Act”) and Rule 10b-5 promulgated thereunder, against the Company and certain of its top officials.

2. Herbalife was formerly known as Herbalife Ltd. and changed its name to Herbalife Nutrition Ltd. in April 2018. The Company was founded in 1980 and its U.S. headquarters are located in Los Angeles, California.

3. Herbalife develops and sells nutrition solutions in North America, Mexico, South and Central America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and the Asia Pacific. It provides science-based products in the areas of weight management; targeted nutrition; energy, sports, and fitness; and outer nutrition. Herbalife offers weight management products, including meal replacement products, protein shakes, drink mixes, weight loss enhancers, and healthy snacks; targeted nutrition products comprising dietary and nutritional supplements that contain herbs, vitamins, minerals, and other natural ingredients; outer nutrition products consisting of facial skin, body, and hair care products; and energy, sports, and fitness products, such as N-R-G tea and energy drink products. Herbalife also provides literature, promotional, and other materials, including start-up kits, sales tools, and educational materials. Herbalife offers its products through own retail stores, as well as through independent service providers, sales representatives, and sales officers.

4. On January 20, 2017, Herbalife filed a current report on Form 8-K with the SEC (the “January 2017 8-K”). In an Exhibit 99.1 attached to the January 2017 8-K, Herbalife disclosed that it was under investigation by the SEC regarding the Company’s anti-corruption compliance in China, and had discussed the investigation with the U.S. Department of Justice (“DOJ”). Specifically, Herbalife disclosed that:

The SEC has requested from the Company documents and other information relating to the Company's anti-corruption compliance in China and the Company is conducting its own review. The Company has discussed the SEC's investigation and the Company's review with the Department of Justice. The Company is cooperating with the SEC's investigation and cannot predict the eventual scope, duration, or outcome of the matter at this time.

5. Throughout the Class Period, Defendants made materially false and misleading statements regarding the Company's business, operational and compliance policies. Specifically, Defendants made false and/or misleading statements and/or failed to disclose that: (i) Herbalife and certain of its employees, including, *inter alia*, the Company's former Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") and Chief Financial Officer ("CFO") Richard Goudis ("Goudis"), had violated the Company's internal accounting practices in connection with its business in China; (ii) in light of Herbalife's investigation by the SEC and DOJ, the foregoing placed Herbalife and certain of its employees at increased risk of adverse criminal and regulatory action, thereby depreciating the Company's share value; and (iii) as a result, the Company's public statements were materially false and misleading at all relevant times.

6. On January 8, 2019, Herbalife announced the resignation, effective immediately, of CEO Goudis. Herbalife merely stated that "Mr. Goudis' departure . . . pertains to comments which recently came to light made by Mr. Goudis prior to his role as CEO, that are contrary to the Company's expense-related policies and business practices."

7. Then, on February 7, 2019, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that Goudis' resignation was prompted "after a recording of comments he made years ago about bypassing internal accounting policies recently ended up in the hands of federal investigators." Citing "people familiar with the matter," *The Wall Street Journal* reported that "[w]hen Mr. Goudis was Herbalife's chief financial officer about a decade ago, he told a colleague working in Hong Kong or mainland China to ignore the company's expense-account limit on entertainment spending" and

that a recording of the conversation had “reached the Justice Department, which has been investigating whether [Herbalife] violated foreign bribery laws in its business dealings in China.”

8. Following this news, Herbalife’s stock price fell \$3.37 per share, or 5.55%, to close at \$57.34 on February 7, 2019.

9. As a result of Defendants’ wrongful acts and omissions, and the precipitous decline in the market value of the Company’s securities, Plaintiff and other Class members have suffered significant losses and damages.

### **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

10. The claims asserted herein arise under and pursuant to §§ 10(b) and 20(a) of the Exchange Act (15 U.S.C. §§ 78j(b) and 78t(a)) and Rule 10b-5 promulgated thereunder by the SEC (17 C.F.R. § 240.10b-5).

11. This Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter of this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and Section 27 of the Exchange Act.

12. Venue is proper in this Judicial District pursuant to § 27 of the Exchange Act (15 U.S.C. § 78aa) and 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b). Herbalife is headquartered in this District, Defendants conduct business in this District, and a significant portion of Defendants’ actions took place within this District.

13. In connection with the acts, conduct and other wrongs alleged in this Complaint, defendants, directly or indirectly, used the means and instrumentalities of interstate commerce, including but not limited to, the United States mail, interstate telephone communications and the facilities of the national securities exchange.

## **PARTIES**

14. Plaintiff, as set forth in the attached Certification, acquired Herbalife securities at artificially inflated prices during the Class Period and was damaged upon the revelation of the alleged corrective disclosures.

15. Defendant Herbalife is incorporated under the jurisdiction of the Cayman Islands with its principal executive offices listed as P.O. Box 309GT, Ugland House, South Church Street, Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands. Herbalife maintains its U.S. headquarters at 800 West Olympic Blvd., Suite 406, Los Angeles, CA 90015. Herbalife securities trade in an efficient market on the New York Stock Exchange (“NYSE”) under the ticker symbol “HLF.”

16. Defendant Richard P. Goudis (“Goudis”) served as Herbalife’s CEO since June 1, 2017 until January 8, 2019 and served as its Chief Operating Officer since January 1, 2010. Goudis served as the CFO of Herbalife and its subsidiary, Herbalife International Inc., from June 2004 to January 1, 2010.

17. Defendant Michael O. Johnson (“Johnson”) served as Herbalife’s CEO since April 2003 until May 2017. He served as Interim CEO at Herbalife since January 8, 2019, then resumed serving as CEO since January 2019. Johnson has been the Chairman of Herbalife since June 1, 2017.

18. Defendant John G. DeSimone (“DeSimone”) served as Herbalife’s CFO from January 1, 2010 to May 1, 2018. DeSimone has been Co-President & Chief Strategic Officer of Herbalife since May 1, 2018.

19. Defendant Bosco Chiu (“Chiu”) has served as Herbalife’s Executive Vice President and CFO since May 1, 2018.

20. The defendants referenced above in ¶¶ \_\_\_\_ are sometimes referred to herein as the “Individual Defendants.”

21. The Individual Defendants possessed the power and authority to control the contents of Herbalife's SEC filings, press releases, and other market communications. The Individual Defendants were provided with copies of the Company's SEC filings and press releases alleged herein to be misleading prior to or shortly after their issuance and had the ability and opportunity to prevent their issuance or to cause them to be corrected. Because of their positions with the Company, and their access to material information available to them but not to the public, the Individual Defendants knew that the adverse facts specified herein had not been disclosed to and were being concealed from the public, and that the positive representations being made were then materially false and misleading. The Individual Defendants are liable for the false statements and omissions pleaded herein.

## **SUBSTANTIVE ALLEGATIONS**

### **Background**

22. Herbalife was formerly known as Herbalife Ltd. and changed its name to Herbalife Nutrition Ltd. in April 2018. The Company was founded in 1980 and its U.S. headquarters are located in Los Angeles, California.

23. Herbalife develops and sells nutrition solutions in North America, Mexico, South and Central America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and the Asia Pacific. It provides science-based products in the areas of weight management; targeted nutrition; energy, sports, and fitness; and outer nutrition. Herbalife offers weight management products, including meal replacement products, protein shakes, drink mixes, weight loss enhancers, and healthy snacks; targeted nutrition products comprising dietary and nutritional supplements that contain herbs, vitamins, minerals, and other natural ingredients; outer nutrition products consisting of facial skin, body, and hair care products; and energy, sports, and fitness products, such as N-R-G tea and energy drink products.

Herbalife also provides literature, promotional, and other materials, including start-up kits, sales tools, and educational materials. Herbalife offers its products through own retail stores, as well as through independent service providers, sales representatives, and sales officers.

24. On January 20, 2017, Herbalife filed the January 2017 8-K. In an Exhibit 99.1 attached to the January 2017 8-K, Herbalife disclosed that it was under investigation by the SEC regarding the Company's anti-corruption compliance in China, and had discussed the investigation with the DOJ. Specifically, Herbalife disclosed that:

The SEC has requested from the Company documents and other information relating to the Company's anti-corruption compliance in China and the Company is conducting its own review. The Company has discussed the SEC's investigation and the Company's review with the Department of Justice. The Company is cooperating with the SEC's investigation and cannot predict the eventual scope, duration, or outcome of the matter at this time.

**Materially False and Misleading Statements Issued During the Class Period**

25. The statements referenced in ¶¶ \_\_\_\_ were materially false and misleading because defendants made false and/or misleading statements, as well as failed to disclose material adverse facts about the Company's business, operational and compliance policies. Specifically, Defendants made false and/or misleading statements and/or failed to disclose that: (i) Herbalife and certain of its employees, including, *inter alia*, the Company's former CEO and CFO Goudis, had violated the Company's internal accounting practices in connection with its business in China; (ii) in light of Herbalife's investigation by the SEC and DOJ, the foregoing placed Herbalife and certain of its employees at increased risk of adverse criminal and regulatory action, thereby depreciating the Company's share value; and (iii) as a result, the Company's public statements were materially false and misleading at all relevant times.

**The Truth Begins to Emerge**

26. On January 8, 2019, Herbalife announced the resignation, effective immediately, of CEO Goudis. Herbalife merely stated that “Mr. Goudis’ departure . . . pertains to comments which recently came to light made by Mr. Goudis prior to his role as CEO, that are contrary to the Company’s expense-related policies and business practices.”

27. Then, on February 7, 2019, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that Goudis’ resignation was prompted “after a recording of comments he made years ago about bypassing internal accounting policies recently ended up in the hands of federal investigators.” Citing “people familiar with the matter,” *The Wall Street Journal* reported that “[w]hen Mr. Goudis was Herbalife’s chief financial officer about a decade ago, he told a colleague working in Hong Kong or mainland China to ignore the company’s expense-account limit on entertainment spending” and that a recording of the conversation had “reached the Justice Department, which has been investigating whether [Herbalife] violated foreign bribery laws in its business dealings in China.”

28. Following this news, Herbalife’s stock price fell \$3.37 per share, or 5.55%, to close at \$57.34 on February 7, 2019.

29. As a result of Defendants’ wrongful acts and omissions, and the precipitous decline in the market value of the Company’s securities, Plaintiff and other Class members have suffered significant losses and damages.

#### **PLAINTIFF’S CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

30. Plaintiff brings this action as a class action pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23(a) and (b)(3) on behalf of a Class, consisting of all those who purchased or otherwise acquired Herbalife securities during the Class Period (the “Class”); and were damaged upon the revelation of the alleged corrective disclosures. Excluded from the Class are defendants herein, the officers and directors of the Company, at all relevant times, members of their immediate



families and their legal representatives, heirs, successors or assigns and any entity in which defendants have or had a controlling interest.

31. The members of the Class are so numerous that joinder of all members is impracticable. Throughout the Class Period, Herbalife securities were actively traded on the NYSE. While the exact number of Class members is unknown to Plaintiff at this time and can be ascertained only through appropriate discovery, Plaintiff believes that there are hundreds or thousands of members in the proposed Class. Record owners and other members of the Class may be identified from records maintained by Herbalife or its transfer agent and may be notified of the pendency of this action by mail, using the form of notice similar to that customarily used in securities class actions.

32. Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the members of the Class as all members of the Class are similarly affected by defendants' wrongful conduct in violation of federal law that is complained of herein.

33. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the members of the Class and has retained counsel competent and experienced in class and securities litigation. Plaintiff has no interests antagonistic to or in conflict with those of the Class.

34. Common questions of law and fact exist as to all members of the Class and predominate over any questions solely affecting individual members of the Class. Among the questions of law and fact common to the Class are:

- whether the federal securities laws were violated by defendants' acts as alleged herein;
- whether statements made by defendants to the investing public during the Class Period misrepresented material facts about the business, operations and management of Herbalife;

- whether the Individual Defendants caused Herbalife to issue false and misleading financial statements during the Class Period;
- whether defendants acted knowingly or recklessly in issuing false and misleading financial statements;
- whether the prices of Herbalife securities during the Class Period were artificially inflated because of the defendants' conduct complained of herein; and
- whether the members of the Class have sustained damages and, if so, what is the proper measure of damages.

35. A class action is superior to all other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy since joinder of all members is impracticable. Furthermore, as the damages suffered by individual Class members may be relatively small, the expense and burden of individual litigation make it impossible for members of the Class to individually redress the wrongs done to them. There will be no difficulty in the management of this action as a class action.

36. Plaintiff will rely, in part, upon the presumption of reliance established by the fraud-on-the-market doctrine in that:

- defendants made public misrepresentations or failed to disclose material facts during the Class Period;
- the omissions and misrepresentations were material;
- Herbalife securities are traded in an efficient market;
- the Company's shares were liquid and traded with moderate to heavy volume during the Class Period;
- the Company traded on the NYSE and was covered by multiple analysts;
- the misrepresentations and omissions alleged would tend to induce a reasonable investor to misjudge the value of the Company's securities; and
- Plaintiff and members of the Class purchased, acquired and/or sold Herbalife securities between the time the defendants failed to disclose or misrepresented material facts and the time the true facts were disclosed, without knowledge of the omitted or misrepresented facts.

37. Based upon the foregoing, Plaintiff and the members of the Class are entitled to a presumption of reliance upon the integrity of the market.

38. Alternatively, Plaintiff and the members of the Class are entitled to the presumption of reliance established by the Supreme Court in *Affiliated Ute Citizens of the State of Utah v. United States*, 406 U.S. 128, 92 S. Ct. 2430 (1972), as Defendants omitted material information in their Class Period statements in violation of a duty to disclose such information, as detailed above.

### **COUNT I**

#### **(Violations of Section 10(b) of the Exchange Act and Rule 10b-5 Promulgated Thereunder Against All Defendants)**

39. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation contained above as if fully set forth herein.

40. This Count is asserted against defendants and is based upon Section 10(b) of the Exchange Act, 15 U.S.C. § 78j(b), and Rule 10b-5 promulgated thereunder by the SEC.

41. During the Class Period, defendants engaged in a plan, scheme, conspiracy and course of conduct, pursuant to which they knowingly or recklessly engaged in acts, transactions, practices and courses of business which operated as a fraud and deceit upon Plaintiff and the other members of the Class; made various untrue statements of material facts and omitted to state material facts necessary in order to make the statements made, in light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading; and employed devices, schemes and artifices to defraud in connection with the purchase and sale of securities. Such scheme was intended to, and, throughout the Class Period, did: (i) deceive the investing public, including Plaintiff and other Class members, as alleged herein; (ii) artificially inflate and maintain the market price of Herbalife securities; and (iii) cause Plaintiff and other members of the Class to purchase or otherwise acquire Herbalife

securities and options at artificially inflated prices. In furtherance of this unlawful scheme, plan and course of conduct, defendants, and each of them, took the actions set forth herein.

42. Pursuant to the above plan, scheme, conspiracy and course of conduct, each of the defendants participated directly or indirectly in the preparation and/or issuance of the quarterly and annual reports, SEC filings, press releases and other statements and documents described above, including statements made to securities analysts and the media that were designed to influence the market for Herbalife securities. Such reports, filings, releases and statements were materially false and misleading in that they failed to disclose material adverse information and misrepresented the truth about Herbalife's finances and business prospects.

43. By virtue of their positions at Herbalife, defendants had actual knowledge of the materially false and misleading statements and material omissions alleged herein and intended thereby to deceive Plaintiff and the other members of the Class, or, in the alternative, defendants acted with reckless disregard for the truth in that they failed or refused to ascertain and disclose such facts as would reveal the materially false and misleading nature of the statements made, although such facts were readily available to defendants. Said acts and omissions of defendants were committed willfully or with reckless disregard for the truth. In addition, each defendant knew or recklessly disregarded that material facts were being misrepresented or omitted as described above.

44. Information showing that defendants acted knowingly or with reckless disregard for the truth is peculiarly within defendants' knowledge and control. As the senior managers and/or directors of Herbalife, the Individual Defendants had knowledge of the details of Herbalife's internal affairs.

45. The Individual Defendants are liable both directly and indirectly for the wrongs complained of herein. Because of their positions of control and authority, the Individual Defendants were able to and did, directly or indirectly, control the content of the statements of Herbalife. As officers and/or directors of a publicly-held company, the Individual Defendants had a duty to disseminate timely, accurate, and truthful information with respect to Herbalife's businesses, operations, future financial condition and future prospects. As a result of the dissemination of the aforementioned false and misleading reports, releases and public statements, the market price of Herbalife securities was artificially inflated throughout the Class Period. In ignorance of the adverse facts concerning Herbalife's business and financial condition which were concealed by defendants, Plaintiff and the other members of the Class purchased or otherwise acquired Herbalife securities at artificially inflated prices and relied upon the price of the securities, the integrity of the market for the securities and/or upon statements disseminated by defendants, and were damaged thereby.

46. During the Class Period, Herbalife securities were traded on an active and efficient market. Plaintiff and the other members of the Class, relying on the materially false and misleading statements described herein, which the defendants made, issued or caused to be disseminated, or relying upon the integrity of the market, purchased or otherwise acquired shares of Herbalife securities at prices artificially inflated by defendants' wrongful conduct. Had Plaintiff and the other members of the Class known the truth, they would not have purchased or otherwise acquired said securities, or would not have purchased or otherwise acquired them at the inflated prices that were paid. At the time of the purchases and/or acquisitions by Plaintiff and the Class, the true value of Herbalife securities was substantially lower than the prices paid by Plaintiff and the other

members of the Class. The market price of Herbalife securities declined sharply upon public disclosure of the facts alleged herein to the injury of Plaintiff and Class members.

47. By reason of the conduct alleged herein, defendants knowingly or recklessly, directly or indirectly, have violated Section 10(b) of the Exchange Act and Rule 10b-5 promulgated thereunder.

48. As a direct and proximate result of defendants' wrongful conduct, Plaintiff and the other members of the Class suffered damages in connection with their respective purchases, acquisitions and sales of the Company's securities during the Class Period, upon the disclosure that the Company had been disseminating misrepresented financial statements to the investing public.

## **COUNT II**

### **(Violations of Section 20(a) of the Exchange Act Against The Individual Defendants)**

49. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation contained in the foregoing paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.

50. During the Class Period, the Individual Defendants participated in the operation and management of Herbalife, and conducted and participated, directly and indirectly, in the conduct of Herbalife's business affairs. Because of their senior positions, they knew the adverse non-public information about Herbalife's misstatement of income and expenses and false financial statements.

51. As officers and/or directors of a publicly owned company, the Individual Defendants had a duty to disseminate accurate and truthful information with respect to Herbalife's financial condition and results of operations, and to correct promptly any public statements issued by Herbalife which had become materially false or misleading.

52. Because of their positions of control and authority as senior officers, the Individual Defendants were able to, and did, control the contents of the various reports, press releases and public filings which Herbalife disseminated in the marketplace during the Class Period concerning Herbalife's results of operations. Throughout the Class Period, the Individual Defendants exercised their power and authority to cause Herbalife to engage in the wrongful acts complained of herein. The Individual Defendants therefore, were "controlling persons" of Herbalife within the meaning of Section 20(a) of the Exchange Act. In this capacity, they participated in the unlawful conduct alleged which artificially inflated the market price of Herbalife securities.

53. Each of the Individual Defendants, therefore, acted as a controlling person of Herbalife. By reason of their senior management positions and/or being directors of Herbalife, each of the Individual Defendants had the power to direct the actions of, and exercised the same to cause, Herbalife to engage in the unlawful acts and conduct complained of herein. Each of the Individual Defendants exercised control over the general operations of Herbalife and possessed the power to control the specific activities which comprise the primary violations about which Plaintiff and the other members of the Class complain.

54. By reason of the above conduct, the Individual Defendants are liable pursuant to Section 20(a) of the Exchange Act for the violations committed by Herbalife.

#### **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

**WHEREFORE**, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendants as follows:

- A. Determining that the instant action may be maintained as a class action under Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, and certifying Plaintiff as the Class representative;
- B. Requiring Defendants to pay damages sustained by Plaintiff and the Class by reason of the acts and transactions alleged herein;

C. Awarding Plaintiff and the other members of the Class prejudgment and post-judgment interest, as well as their reasonable attorneys' fees, expert fees and other costs; and

D. Awarding such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

**DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY**

Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury.

Dated: March \_\_, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

**POMERANTZ LLP**

*/s/ draft*

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