

JUSTICE NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, May 8, 2017

Bumble Bee Agrees to Plead Guilty to Price Fixing

Bumble Bee Foods LLC has agreed to plead guilty for its role in a conspiracy to fix the prices of shelf-stable tuna fish, such as canned and pouch tuna, sold in the United States, the Department of Justice announced.

According to a one-count felony charge filed today in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California in San Francisco, Bumble Bee and its co-conspirators agreed to fix the prices of shelf-stable tuna fish from as early as the first quarter of 2011 through at least as late as the fourth quarter of 2013. In addition to agreeing to plead guilty, Bumble Bee has agreed to pay a \$25 million criminal fine, which will increase to a maximum criminal fine of \$81.5 million, payable by a related entity, in the event of a sale of Bumble Bee subject to certain terms and conditions. Bumble Bee has also agreed to cooperate with the Antitrust Division's ongoing investigation. The plea agreement is subject to court approval.

"Today's charge is the third to be filed – and the first to be filed against a corporate defendant – in the Antitrust Division's ongoing investigation into price fixing among some of the largest suppliers of packaged seafood," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Andrew Finch of the Justice Department's Antitrust Division. "The division, along with our law enforcement colleagues, will continue to hold these companies and their executives accountable for conduct that targeted a staple in American households."

"We echo the Department of Justice Antitrust Division's sentiment," said Special Agent in Charge John F. Bennett of the FBI's San Francisco Division. "Companies small and large hold a great deal of the American peoples' trust and this type of unfair, greedy behavior will not be tolerated."

Today's charge is the result of an ongoing federal antitrust investigation into the packaged seafood industry, which is being conducted by the Antitrust Division's San Francisco Office and the FBI's San Francisco Field Office. Anyone with information on price fixing, bid rigging or other anticompetitive conduct related to the packaged seafood industry should contact the Antitrust Division's Citizen Complaint Center at (888) 647-3258, visit www.justice.gov/atr/contact/newcase.html, or call the FBI tip line at (415) 553-7400.

Bumble Bee Information

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