



# PRESS NOTICE

PETER M. MCCOY, JR.

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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*1441 Main Street, Suite 500 \* Columbia, SC 29201 \* (803) 929-3000*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Food Suppliers to Pay \$250,000 to Resolve Claims of Diluting Spices Sold to Prisons**

**Columbia, South Carolina**----- United States Attorney Peter M. McCoy, Jr. announced today that his office has resolved claims that FlavorPros, LLC; America's Best Packaging, LLC; Artisan Foods, LLC; Charlene R. Brach; Richard B. Brach; and Richard C. Brach submitted false claims to the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) between October 1, 2011, and December 31, 2018, for food product, particularly spices, that contained significant quantities of filler agents. The food suppliers will pay \$250,000 to resolve the claims.

In its complaint, filed November 1, 2019, the United States alleged that FlavorPros, LLC, contracted with the BOP to supply spices that were required by the contract to be in pure condition with no additives, extenders, foreign matter, or flow agents. The United States alleged that FlavorPros sold spices to the BOP that were substantially comprised of filler agent for economic

gain. Thus, it was alleged that FlavorPros and its principal, Charlene Brach, submitted false claims for payment by the BOP for the spices that did not meet the purity requirements of the contract. The United States also alleged that Charlene and Richard Brach created Artisan Foods to circumvent administrative suspension of FlavorPros and filed a false claim to the BOP for substandard food product.

As part of the settlement reached today, FlavorPros, America's Best Packaging, and Artisan Foods will pay the United States \$170,000. For their individual roles in the fraud, Charlene Brach will pay the United States \$60,000; and Richard B. Brach and Richard C. Brach will each pay the United States \$10,000.

"All federal contractors must use tax dollars responsibly and for their intended purpose," said U.S. Attorney McCoy. "Today's resolution illustrates the Department of Justice's emphasis on combating fraud against the government. If a federal contractor fraudulently obtains tax dollars paid by hard-working Americans, this office will act."

"Contractors that are selected and paid by the government to supply food to inmates are expected to comply with contractual and other standards. When they provide adulterated products, as the defendants allegedly did here, the government is cheated and the health and safety of inmates are placed at risk," said Kenneth R. Dieffenbach, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General (DOJ OIG)

Fraud Detection Office. “The DOJ OIG is committed to rooting out this type of fraud.”

The case was investigated by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of South Carolina and the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Inspector General. The civil settlement was reached for the U.S. Attorney’s Office by Assistant United States Attorneys Beth Warren and Stan Ragsdale, both of the Columbia office.

The claims resolved by this settlement are allegations only. There has been no determination of liability, and the food suppliers did not admit liability.

Anyone who suspects fraud against the Department of Justice or its components should report it at <https://oig.justice.gov/hotline>

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