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3  
4 **IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
5 **FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA**

6 IN RE: Sprouts Farmers  
7 Market, Inc. Employee Data Security  
8 Breach Litigation

MDL Docket No. 16-2731

9 This Document Relates to: All Actions

HON. DOUGLAS L. RAYES

10 **MASTER CLASS AND COLLECTIVE**  
11 **ACTION COMPLAINT AND**  
12 **JURY DEMAND**

13  
14  
15  
16 **MASTER COMPLAINT**  
17

18 Plaintiffs, Debra Price, Sean Wilson, Sandra Esposito, Julio Hernandez, Cynthia  
19 Byrne, Danielle Butler, Beverly Porras, Leticia Stocks, and Nancy Castellano (collectively,  
20 “Plaintiffs”), on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated, by and through their  
21 undersigned attorneys, as their Master Class and Collective Action Complaint against  
22 Defendants, Sprouts Farmers Market, Inc., SFM, LLC and SF Markets, LLC (collectively,  
23 “Sprouts” or “Defendants”) hereby complain and allege as follows:  
24  
25

26 **CLASS AND COLLECTIVE ACTION**

27 This case is brought by Plaintiffs who had their personal identifying information  
28

1 (“PII”) accessed, stolen, and used without their authorization, and who, because of the  
2 negligence, breaches of statutory, common law and contractual duties, and other acts and  
3 omissions described herein on the part of Defendants, suffered actual harm and monetary  
4 damages. Plaintiffs bring this action to obtain declaratory and injunctive relief, damages  
5 (including compensatory, statutory, exemplary and punitive damages), penalties, costs of  
6 suit, attorneys’ fees and other appropriate relief on their own individual behalf, and on  
7 behalf of all others similarly situated, specifically, the more than 21,000 employees who  
8 worked for Sprouts during 2015. The case is brought as both a class and collective action,  
9 as described herein (hereinafter referred to as a “Class action”).

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11  
12 **NATURE OF THE CASE**

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14 1. Plaintiffs bring this case as a class and collective action on their own behalves  
15 and on the behalf of more than 21,000 employees who have had their PII and tax  
16 information accessed, stolen and used illegally as a result of the acts and failures to act of  
17 the Defendants. This case seeks to remedy the harmful effects of the data breach that  
18 occurred in or about March 2016, Defendants’ failure to timely and reasonably notify  
19 Plaintiffs and the Class (“Plaintiffs”) of the breach in accordance with the laws of most  
20 states, including Arizona and California, failure to abide by other laws that required that  
21 Plaintiffs’ PII be secured, and, the insufficient remedy afforded by Defendants.

22  
23  
24 2. Defendants were negligent in storing, maintaining and disclosing their  
25 employees’ 2015 IRS Form W-2s and that negligence has damaged and additionally placed  
26 Plaintiffs at an increased risk of fraud, identity theft, and financial injury associated with  
27 repairing the identity theft that has already occurred, monitoring future attempts at identity  
28

1 theft, compensating the Plaintiffs for damage that has already occurred and will continue  
2 to occur in the future, and guarding against unauthorized tax filing and other abuse that is  
3 a direct and proximate result of Sprouts' violations of Plaintiffs' rights.  
4

5 3. Defendants' current and former employees' most sensitive data, including  
6 over 21,000 Form W-2s and their related information (which includes social security  
7 numbers), was compiled and negligently released by Defendants in response to a "phishing  
8 scam" and is now in the possession of unknown third parties who are believed to be using  
9 the data for illegal purposes.  
10

11 4. Defendants owed a legal duty to Plaintiffs and any and all employees who  
12 work or worked at a Sprouts location in California affected by the breach ("California  
13 Subclass Members") to maintain, protect, and safeguard their tax information. Defendants  
14 breached that duty by negligently compiling Plaintiffs' and California Subclass Members'  
15 private tax information and sending it off to third parties.  
16  
17

18 5. As a result of Defendants' failure to protect Plaintiffs' PII, Plaintiffs' and the  
19 other Class Members' private tax information and social security numbers were  
20 compromised, placing them at an increased risk of fraud and identity theft, and causing  
21 direct financial expenses, including time expended, associated with credit monitoring,  
22 replacement of compromised credit, debit and bank card numbers, and other measures  
23 needed to protect against the misuse of their private tax information.  
24  
25

26 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

27 6. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to the Class Action  
28 Fairness Act of 2005, 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d). Plaintiffs and Defendants are residents of

1 different states. Sprouts is an incorporated for-profit business entity whose principal place  
2 of business and corporate headquarters is located in Phoenix, Arizona.

3 7. More than 21,000 Plaintiff Class Members nationwide had their PII accessed,  
4 wrongfully disclosed by Sprouts, and taken by unknown third parties. The aggregate  
5 amount in controversy exceeds \$5,000,000.00.  
6

7 8. This Court has personal jurisdiction over the parties because Defendants  
8 conduct substantial business in Arizona, have had systematic and continuous contacts  
9 within Arizona, and have agents and representatives that can be found in this State.  
10

11 9. Under 28 U.S.C. § 1391, venue is proper in this District because Defendants  
12 engaged in substantial conduct relevant to the claims of Plaintiffs, and caused harm to  
13 Members of the Class, in this District.  
14

15 **PARTIES**

16 10. Plaintiff Debra Price (“Price”) is a former employee of Sprouts. Sprouts  
17 employed Price from approximately February 28, 2010 until approximately December 3,  
18 2015. She worked as a courtesy clerk and then as a part time cashier. Price’s PII was  
19 compromised when on or around March 14, 2016, a Sprouts employee who was given  
20 access to all of Plaintiffs’ PII e-mailed complete copies of all current and former  
21 employees’ 2015 IRS W-2 forms to a phishing scammer who pretended to be another  
22 Sprouts employee. After Price’s W-2 was stolen, her identity was compromised. Price  
23 and her husband were unable to e-file their taxes because someone in possession of Price’s  
24 social security number had already claimed a rapid refund through unknown sources to  
25 obtain Price’s tax refund. Price has suffered actual, tangible damages. She will need to  
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1 expend additional time, money and resources to work with the IRS, her CPA, the State of  
2 Colorado and all credit reporting agencies to sort out the fraudulent tax claim made with  
3 her social security number that was compromised due to Sprouts' negligence and failure to  
4 protect her form W-2.  
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6 11. Plaintiff Sean Wilson ("Wilson") has been employed at Sprouts for  
7 approximately four (4) years in California. He has worked at two (2) California Sprouts  
8 stores; store numbers 249 and 228. He is currently the 3<sup>rd</sup> Supervisor in the Produce  
9 Department of store 228 located in San Diego, California. Like all other Class Members,  
10 Wilson's W2 information was stolen and used by an unknown person, and as a proximate  
11 result he will suffer and/or has suffered economic damages and other harm such as identity  
12 theft, and identity or medical fraud and has incurred and/or will incur costs associated with  
13 additional credit monitoring beyond the inadequate one-year monitoring offered by  
14 Sprouts. The theft and use of his personal information has caused actual and ongoing  
15 damage.  
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18

19 12. Plaintiff Sandra Esposito ("Esposito") was an employee of Sprouts in  
20 Scottsdale, Arizona during 2015 who worked as a salad clerk. In early April 2016, Esposito  
21 and her husband attempted to electronically file their taxes, but received an IRS notice that  
22 a return had already been filed for her social security number and she would not receive  
23 her refund until she followed IRS fraud procedures. Esposito has suffered actual, tangible  
24 damages. Most critically, she has been unable to obtain the refund that was expected and  
25 needed to pay for critical medical care. As of the filing of this Complaint, Esposito still  
26 has not received her tax return, but has put the family behind in billing schedules, causing  
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1 them to incur late fees. She will need to expend additional time, money and resources, to  
2 work with the IRS, her CPA, the State of Arizona and all credit reporting agencies to sort  
3 out the fraudulent tax claim made with her social security number that was compromised  
4 due to Sprouts' negligence and failure to protect her form W-2.  
5

6 13. Plaintiff Julio Hernandez ("Hernandez") is a resident of the State of  
7 California who worked for Sprouts in San Diego, California. Sprouts employed Hernandez  
8 from approximately December, 2013 to February, 2016. To protect himself following the  
9 Data Breach, Hernandez signed up for identity theft protection through his bank, Wells  
10 Fargo, for \$12.99 per month in addition to the one year credit monitoring offered by  
11 Defendants through Experian. To date, Hernandez has heard nothing from Defendants  
12 about the breach other than a form letter dated March 28, 2016, which was sent out to the  
13 employees.  
14

15  
16 14. Plaintiff Cynthia Byrne ("Byrne") is a resident of the State of California who  
17 is currently employed by Sprouts in San Diego, California. Byrne has been employed with  
18 Sprouts since approximately November, 1990. Since the Data Breach, Byrne has had her  
19 identity stolen when a tax return was filed using her name and social security number.  
20 Byrne has also started to receive harassing phone calls from people purporting to be from  
21 the IRS. Byrne has signed up for the one year credit monitoring offered by Defendants  
22 through Experian.  
23

24  
25 15. Plaintiff Danielle Butler ("Butler") is a resident of the State of New  
26 Hampshire and a former employee of Sprouts. Sprouts employed Ms. Butler at their  
27 corporate office in Phoenix, Arizona, from approximately May, 2011 to December, 2015.  
28

1 Butler has had her identity stolen since the Data Breach when a federal tax return had been  
2 filed using her name and social security number. Butler never received any notice from  
3 Sprouts regarding the Data Breach despite reaching out to them several times. Butler  
4 learned about the Data Breach only after receiving a letter from the IRS regarding the fraud  
5 and hearing about the Data Breach from former coworkers. Butler has signed up for credit  
6 monitoring to protect herself against any future fraud.  
7

8  
9 16. Plaintiffs Beverly Porras (“Porras”) and Leticia Stock (“Stock”) are residents  
10 of California who were employed by Defendants during the relevant time period. Porras’  
11 and Stock’s personal and financial information was compromised as a result of the Data  
12 Breach. Porras and Stock have suffered and continue to suffer economic injuries, anxiety,  
13 and stress as a result of the Data Breach. After receiving notice of the Data Breach, Porras  
14 and Stock enrolled in Experian credit monitoring either the same day they received  
15 notification or soon thereafter. Porras and Stock suffered loss of their time spent enrolling  
16 in credit monitoring and reviewing the credit reports received from that monitoring service.  
17  
18 Porras suffered financial losses as a result of the Data Breach when she spent money to  
19 place a security freeze on her credit. Stock will suffer financial losses as a result of the Data  
20 Breach from buying fraud alert services. Stock has received multiple phone calls purporting  
21 to offer services related to credit cards and/or credit reporting. She had not received this  
22 high volume of calls in the past.  
23  
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25  
26 17. Plaintiff Nancy Castellano (“Castellano”) is a resident of California who  
27 worked for Sprouts in La Jolla, California. Sprouts employed Castellano from  
28 approximately April 2015 to April 2016. She had her sensitive, non-public information,



1 including her social security number, compromised due to the W-2 Data Breach and has  
2 been injured as a result. Castellano has expended time and resources monitoring her credit  
3 for fraudulent activity, including signing up for a credit monitoring service and pulling and  
4 reviewing her credit report, and inquiring with the IRS about possible tax return fraud.  
5 Castellano never received formal notification of the W-2 Data Breach from Sprouts, other  
6 than the posting on the employee bulletin board at work.  
7

8  
9 18. Defendants Sprouts Farmers Market, Inc., SFM, LLC, and SF Markets, LLC  
10 (collectively, “Sprouts” or “Defendants”) are entities organized under the laws of  
11 Delaware, with principal offices located in Phoenix, Arizona. As of January 25, 2016,  
12 Defendants were operating 224 stores in 13 states, including California. At all times  
13 relevant to this Complaint, Sprouts employed more than 21,000 people.  
14

15 **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

16 19. Plaintiffs hereby incorporate the preceding factual allegations as though fully  
17 set forth herein.  
18

19 20. Sprouts owns and operates a chain of grocery stores throughout the United  
20 States.  
21

22 21. Approximately 92 of Sprouts’ stores are located in California, where Sprouts  
23 employs thousands of employees.

24 22. Plaintiffs and all Members of their Class (“Class Members”), were employed  
25 by Sprouts during the 2015 tax year.  
26

27 23. Sprouts collects and stores their employees’ Personal and Financial  
28 Information, including full names, social security numbers (“SSN”), wages, withheld

1 taxes, and addresses, which are included on Form W-2s for distribution to employees and  
2 tax authorities.

### 3 **A. Sprouts' Data Breach**

4  
5 24. On March 14, 2016, an employee working in Sprouts' corporate payroll  
6 department received an e-mail purporting to be from a Sprouts senior executive. In this e-  
7 mail, the purported senior executive requested that the payroll employee send him or her  
8 the 2015 Form W-2 Wage and Tax Statements ("W-2s") for all employees who had worked  
9 for Sprouts in 2015. The Sprouts payroll employee compiled the requested W-2s and  
10 complied with the request by e-mailing the requested W-2s to the purported Sprouts senior  
11 executive (the "W-2 Data Breach").  
12

13  
14 25. Thereafter, on March 17, 2016, Sprouts discovered that the e-mail from the  
15 purported Sprouts senior executive was actually a "whaling" scam and that the payroll  
16 employee had improperly disclosed the unencrypted W-2s of over 21,000 Sprouts  
17 employees to an unauthorized third party. As a result, Sprouts released and disclosed  
18 Plaintiffs' and Class Members' PII, including their names, addresses, Social Security  
19 numbers, wages, and withheld taxes to an unauthorized third party and, potentially, the  
20 public.  
21

22  
23 26. A "whaling" scam is a variation of a "phishing" scam. A "phishing" scam is  
24 an attempt to acquire information, such as usernames, passwords, credit card details, and  
25 other sensitive or personal information, by masquerading as a trustworthy entity through  
26 an electronic communication, such as e-mail. A "whaling" scam specifically targets or  
27 impersonates high ranking members of a company, with the usual goal being to trick the  
28

1 contacted employee into sending sensitive or personal information via an unsecure channel,  
2 such as through an e-mail.

3 27. During tax season, cybercriminals most often use such phishing or whaling  
4 attacks to steal W-2 data to perform tax refund fraud; however, they also sell the  
5 information underground or use it to stage further attacks.

6 28. At all times relevant to this Complaint, Sprouts was advised by skilled  
7 lawyers, employees and other professionals who were knowledgeable about protection and  
8 storage of PII and the requirements of Arizona and California law.

9 29. Sprouts knew, or should have known, that it was susceptible to such attacks  
10 as various retailers, banks and hospitals have been hit recently in similar attacks, including  
11 a data breach experienced by Sprouts between January 25 and January 29, 2013 on their  
12 point of sale system that affected credit card terminals at 19 of Sprouts' 151 stores.

13 30. In the information age, such attacks are commonplace and Sprouts knew or  
14 should have known that fact and taken precautions to prevent becoming unwitting  
15 accomplices to the scam, especially in light of their point of sale data breach just a few  
16 years earlier.

17 31. Between March 1, 2016 and March 13, 2016, the following companies  
18 publicized similar data breaches that had occurred in February 2016 and March 2016 and  
19 in which employees' W-2 information was compromised and disclosed as a result of a  
20 "whaling" e-mail scam: Seagate Technology, Snapchat, Central Concrete Supply Co.,  
21 Main Line Health, Turner Construction Company, Billy Casper Golf, Evening Post  
22 Industries, Information Innovators, Inc., York Hospital, Acronis, Money Tree, General  
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1 Communications, Inc., Advance Auto Parts, Applied Systems, Inc., eClinicalWorks, LAZ  
2 Parking, Endologix, Inc., ConvaTec, Inc., Care.com, Foss Manufacturing Company,  
3 Mitchell International, Inc., and Matrix Service Company. Based on these breaches,  
4 Sprouts knew or should have known that it was susceptible to such an attack.  
5

6 32. Sprouts also ignored several warnings from the IRS regarding the prevalence  
7 in 2016 of malicious “phishing” e-mails being sent to individuals and companies to steal  
8 personal information.  
9

10 33. On February 18, 2016, about a month before Sprouts’ Data Breach, the IRS  
11 issued a public advisory warning after reporting an approximate 400 percent increase in  
12 phishing and other similar malicious incidents during the year’s tax season. These phishing  
13 e-mails are designed to look like official communications from the IRS or others in the tax  
14 industry, such as tax software companies. The e-mails typically ask individuals to update  
15 important information by clicking on a web link. The link then takes the individual to a  
16 scam web page designed to look like an official page from the IRS or some other tax  
17 industry company or professional. Individuals who do not detect the fraudulent nature of  
18 the e-mail and the web link end up disclosing their personal information, such as their  
19 Social Security number, to an unauthorized third party, who then uses the information for  
20 a variety of illegal activities, such as filing false tax returns to fraudulently obtain tax  
21 refunds.  
22

23 34. On March 1, 2016, about two weeks before the Sprouts W-2 Data Breach,  
24 the IRS issued a public advisory warning to payroll and Human Resources professionals  
25 specifically, alerting them to be aware of an emerging phishing e-mail scheme whereby a  
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1 purported company executive requests employees' personal information. The IRS reported  
2 that the payroll and human resources departments at several other companies had already  
3 received and responded to such e-mails and had disclosed their employees' W-2s,  
4 containing Social Security numbers and other Personal and Financial Information, to  
5 cybercriminals posing as company executives. The IRS statement warned companies to  
6 check out e-mails that appear to come from high-ranking company executives, such as the  
7 CEO, and ask for personal information regarding company employees, to ensure that such  
8 requests for information are legitimate before responding. This variation of phishing is  
9 called a "spoofing" e-mail.

12 35. Despite all of these warnings, Sprouts made no efforts to train their payroll  
13 department employees to avoid these scams.

15 36. The risk of theft by or disclosure to cyber criminals of sensitive data,  
16 including PII, stored electronically is well-known and common knowledge.

18 37. Despite this knowledge, Sprouts did not encrypt or password-protect any of  
19 the Plaintiffs' PII that it wrongfully disclosed.

20 38. Sprouts not only failed to take any precautions to prevent this attack, but have  
21 subsequently failed to make any appropriate efforts to remedy it.

23 **B. Sprouts' Inadequate Response to the Data Breach**

24 39. On March 17, 2016, Sprouts became aware of the Data Breach disclosing its  
25 employees' 2015 W-2s.  
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1           40.    On or about March 18, 2016, Sprouts informally notified its employees about  
2 the W-2 Data Breach via e-mail and by posting the information on the employee bulletin  
3 board at its stores. See Exhibit A.

4           41.    Castellano did not receive any notification via e-mail and was not aware of  
5 the W-2 Data Breach until she was advised to review the posting on the employee bulletin  
6 board at work on or about March 21, 2016. Sprouts' informal notification did not provide  
7 all of the details of the breach nor did it provide the information on how Plaintiffs could  
8 sign up for the free credit monitoring that Sprouts claimed it was offering. Instead,  
9 Plaintiffs and Class Members had to wait another ten days for the formal notification in  
10 order to obtain this information and protect themselves. The informal notification also did  
11 not confirm that all of Sprouts' employees who worked for the company in 2015 had been  
12 affected, but rather misled Plaintiffs and Class Members into believing that their PII may  
13 have only potentially been compromised.

14           42.    On March 28, 2016, Sprouts mailed a letter to Plaintiffs, informing Plaintiffs  
15 that they and 21,000 of their former coworkers' 2015 W-2s were disclosed to an unknown  
16 person claiming to be a Sprouts senior executive. The letter stated that:

17                   (a) Sprouts was the victim of a phishing scam the week of March 14, 2016;

18                   (b) Sprouts disclosed all 2015 form W-2 wage and tax statements when  
19 fulfilling what was believed to be a legitimate request for information;

20                   (c) Sprouts became aware of the incident on March 17, 2016;

21                   (d) Sprouts disclosed the Form W-2s, which includes full name, address,  
22 SSN, wages, taxes withheld in 2015;

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(e) Sprouts claimed that it did not disclose birthdate, bank information, credit card information, or e-mail addresses;

(f) Sprouts stated that they had taken steps to address the situation, and suggested steps the recipient of the letter could take to protect their personal information;

(g) Sprouts claimed they took immediate action as soon as they discovered the breach;

(h) Sprouts stated it contacted the FBI;

(i) Sprouts also stated that it communicated with their employees/former employees so that those employees and former employees could take steps to protect themselves;

(j) Sprouts offered each employee/former employee a complimentary one-year Membership of Experian’s Protect MyID Alert;

(k) Sprouts suggested that each employee obtain their free credit report from the credit bureaus, and look to the FTC to obtain more information about placing a security freeze on their credit files, and placing a fraud alert on their accounts also;

(l) Sprouts set up a toll free hotline for questions – 855-814-8016 and [teammemberhelp@sprouts.com](mailto:teammemberhelp@sprouts.com).

43. The letter was signed by Brandon Lombardi, Chief Legal Officer.

44. Sprouts offered current and former employees twelve months of credit monitoring and insurance through Experian’s ProtectMyID Alert. But credit monitoring

1 and insurance cannot prevent identity theft or fraud, even for over a twelve-month period.  
2 Credit monitoring only informs a consumer of instances of fraudulent opening of new  
3 accounts, and identity theft insurance reimburses losses after they have occurred. Neither  
4 prevent identity theft or fraud by: (i) detecting sales of W-2 tax information on the black  
5 market before the information is used to commit identity theft or identity fraud; (ii)  
6 monitoring public records, loan data, or criminal records; (iii) flagging existing accounts  
7 for fraud in order to prevent identity thieves' use of compromised W-2 tax information  
8 before an unauthorized transaction can be completed; or (iv) freezing credit, which  
9 prevents identity thieves' ability to open new accounts with compromised W-2 tax  
10 information.  
11 information.

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14 45. Sites ranking companies that provide identity protection services have noted  
15 that while many of these companies do offer services to prevent identity theft and fraud,  
16 ProtectMyID's services (ranked just 29th overall) focus more on credit monitoring rather  
17 than a more balanced and comprehensive approach to protection. Specifically,  
18 ProtectMyID lacks an analytical system (such as ID Analytics) that can search the dark  
19 web and protect private information, and provide real time alerts to victims when their  
20 identity has been compromised.  
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23 46. The letter Sprouts sent to Plaintiffs on March 28, 2016 squarely placed the  
24 burden on Plaintiffs and the Class Members, rather than Sprouts, to protect themselves and  
25 mitigate the damages flowing from the W-2 Data Breach – such as spending time reviewing  
26 their account statements and monitoring their credit reports. Unfortunately, many of  
27 Sprouts' mitigation directives require Plaintiffs and Class Members to incur additional out-  
28



1 of-pocket expenses and spend hours of their personal time on such actions. For example,  
2 as a general rule in California, the fee to place (and remove) a “security freeze” on one’s  
3 credit report, as suggested by the W-2 Data Breach Notification, is approximately \$10 each  
4 time it is placed at each of the three credit reporting agencies (Experian, Equifax, and  
5 Transunion). Monitoring one’s credit reports, another option suggested by the W-2 Data  
6 Breach Notification, would cause a W-2 Data Breach victim to incur an expense to see his  
7 or her credit reports beyond the one free annual report to which they are entitled. Sprouts  
8 has not offered to pay for the cost of these protections; however, York Hospital, which  
9 suffered a similar data breach only a few weeks before Sprouts, has offered to reimburse  
10 its employees for these costs for one year.

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14 47. The PII “protection” offered by Sprouts is woefully inadequate because the  
15 free credit monitoring and identity theft insurance is only for one year. As advised by the  
16 Federal Trade Commission, a person impacted by a data breach should take proactive steps  
17 well after a year has passed to protect against identity theft and related fraud. The reason  
18 is that cybercriminals are aware that one year is the common duration for credit monitoring  
19 following a data breach and so they may wait until that year of credit monitoring is up  
20 before using the stolen PII for fraudulent means or selling it on the black market.

21  
22  
23 48. Further, Sprouts did not provide any protection against medical identity theft  
24 and fraudulent health insurance claims, the victims of which are often left with huge  
25 medical bills, damaged credit, and erroneous medical records.

26  
27 49. Additionally, after Plaintiffs and Class Members sign up for the credit  
28 monitoring program and provide the three credit bureaus with their contact information,

1 the credit bureaus will most certainly solicit them with advertising to purchase other  
2 products and services Sprouts decided not to provide or a continuation of the short program  
3 that Sprouts did offer. These advertisements will serve to further exploit Plaintiffs and  
4 Class Members.  
5

6 50. Due to Sprouts' wrongful actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary  
7 care, and the resulting W-2 Data Breach, Plaintiffs and Class Members have been and will  
8 be required to take affirmative steps to recover their peace of mind, and personal security,  
9 for which there is a financial and temporal cost. Plaintiffs and Class Members will spend  
10 significant time and expense engaging in such actions, including, without limitation: (i)  
11 identifying and dealing with fraudulent charges and accounts, including tax refund fraud,  
12 (ii) frequently purchasing credit reports from multiple credit reporting agencies, (iii)  
13 placing and removing fraud alerts and security freezes on credit reports, (iv) purchasing  
14 credit monitoring and internet monitoring services, (v) purchasing identity theft insurance,  
15 (vi) spending time on the telephone attempting to sort out issues related to the W-2 Data  
16 Breach, (vii) and even obtaining new Social Security numbers. However, Sprouts has not  
17 offered to pay Plaintiffs and Class Members for the time they have spent and will spend  
18 taking these actions.  
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23 51. Because Plaintiffs and Class Members have been required to take these  
24 actions as a result of their employment with Sprouts, and Sprouts is or should be aware that  
25 Plaintiffs and Class Members are taking such actions, and spending hours of their time to  
26 do so, Sprouts has suffered and permitted them to work and, thus, is required to pay them  
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1 at least minimum wage for all hours they spend taking such actions and provide them with  
2 accurate itemized wage statements reflecting the hours worked and wages earned.

3 52. Sprouts' wrongful actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary care in  
4 failing to completely and accurately notify Plaintiffs and Class Members about the W-2  
5 Data Breach and corresponding unauthorized release and disclosure of their PII were  
6 arbitrary, capricious and in derogation of Sprouts' duties to Plaintiffs and Class Members,  
7 and the notification procedures required by various state laws,  
8

9  
10 53. Even in the face of the IRS' warnings, the recent publicized similar W-2 data  
11 breaches, and the 2013 data breach of Sprouts' customers' credit card information, Sprouts  
12 did nothing to implement adequate security measures to detect and prevent a breach and  
13 disclosure of its employees' W-2s and PII.  
14

### 15 **C. The Gravity of the Data Breach**

16 54. A person's social security number is perhaps the most important piece of  
17 information to an individual in the modern world. It is used, among other things, to verify  
18 eligibility for employment, to apply for a passport, to open a bank account, to apply for a  
19 credit card, or a student loan, or a mortgage. A social security number is also needed to  
20 obtain government benefits like social security and Medicare. Social security numbers are  
21 assigned to citizens (and sometimes to noncitizens) as early as their birth and are required  
22 to enroll in school, and to obtain healthcare services. A social security number follows a  
23 person through life.  
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1           55.     The theft of Social Security numbers in particular, as opposed to other PII, is  
2 difficult to rectify because Social Security numbers are difficult to change and their misuse  
3 can continue for years into the future.

4  
5           56.     Identity thieves use Social Security numbers to commit other types of fraud,  
6 such as obtaining false identification cards, obtaining government benefits in the victim's  
7 name, committing crimes, and filing fraudulent tax returns to obtain tax refunds. Identity  
8 thieves also obtain jobs using compromised Social Security numbers, rent houses and  
9 apartments, and obtain medical services in the victim's name. Identity thieves may also  
10 give a victim's PII to police during an arrest, resulting in the issuance of an arrest warrant  
11 in the victim's name and an unwarranted criminal record.

12  
13  
14           57.     The unauthorized disclosure of a persons' Social Security number can be  
15 particularly damaging since Social Security numbers cannot be easily replaced like a credit  
16 card or debit card. A person whose PII has been compromised cannot obtain a new Social  
17 Security number unless he or she can show that the number is being used fraudulently.

18  
19           58.     Even if a victim were to obtain a new Social Security number, that would not  
20 absolutely prevent against identity theft. Government agencies, private businesses, and  
21 credit reporting companies likely maintain a victim's records under the old number, so  
22 using a new Social Security number will not guarantee a fresh start. For some identity theft  
23 and identity fraud victims, a new number may create new problems. Because prior positive  
24 credit information is not associated with the new Social Security number, it is more difficult  
25 to obtain credit due to the absence of a credit history.  
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1           59.     Sprouts, as an employer, required Plaintiffs to surrender to it their SSNs and  
2 other PII, and Sprouts was entrusted with properly holding and safeguarding such PII.

3           60.     Sprouts had a duty as an employer to guard and protect the private, highly  
4 sensitive, confidential PII of Plaintiffs and the Class Members.  
5

6           61.     Sprouts not only failed to safeguard and prevent the theft of this PII from its  
7 computers or network, but voluntarily handed it over to third parties upon their mere  
8 electronically-delivered e-mail request.  
9

10          62.     Sprouts failed to take reasonable precautions to protect the Plaintiffs' PII,  
11 and otherwise failed to act reasonably in fulfillment of their duty not to disclose Plaintiffs'  
12 PII, and affirmatively to protect that PII.  
13

14          63.     Sprouts negligently and carelessly kept its employees' and former  
15 employees' personal information.  
16

17          64.     Sprouts did not encrypt or password-protect Plaintiffs' social security  
18 numbers as a prudent and responsible company would do with its employees' confidential  
19 and personal identifying information.  
20

21          65.     Sprouts violated basic guidelines to encrypt or password-protect sensitive  
22 information of its employees and in so doing failed to meet the most basic standards of data  
23 security and reasonable business practices, and thereby failed to ensure adequate security  
24 of the Plaintiffs' personal, and financial PII and failed to retain this PII in a secure and safe  
25 manner.  
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1           66. Arizona’s Consumer Protection Act prohibits a person or entity from  
2 requiring an individual to transmit his or her social security number over the internet, unless  
3 the connection is secure or the social security number is encrypted.  
4

5           67. Cal. Civ. Code §1798.81.5 requires any business that maintains personal  
6 information about a California resident to implement and maintain reasonable security  
7 procedures and practices appropriate to the nature of the information, to protect the  
8 personal information from unauthorized access or disclosure.  
9

10           68. Sprouts violated California law by failing to implement reasonable or  
11 appropriate security procedures, measures or protocols to protect its current and former  
12 employees’ PII in accordance with the law.  
13

14           69. As a direct and proximate result of Sprouts’ actions, all its 2015 employees  
15 and former employees have been required to spend man hours addressing and ameliorating  
16 or otherwise dealing with actual and ongoing harm to the PII and W2 information –  
17 information that Sprouts would not have been able to wrongfully disclose but for the  
18 employment relationship between it and the Plaintiffs. Thus, Sprouts has failed to pay the  
19 Plaintiffs and Class at least minimum wage for the time spent as a result of its actions.  
20

21           70. Within only a week of the W-2 Data Breach, Plaintiffs’ PII was used to steal  
22 Plaintiffs’ federal tax returns, to wreak havoc on Plaintiffs’ tax filings and to cause  
23 unmeasured damage to the Plaintiffs’ identities, which damage is ongoing.  
24

25           71. The number of workers affected is believed to be over 21,000.  
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#### D. The Preventability of the Data Breach

1  
2 72. Sprouts knew or should have known that its data security processes, controls,  
3 policies, procedures, and protocols were insufficient, inadequate, and did nothing to  
4 safeguard and protect its current and former employees' PII, yet Sprouts did nothing to  
5 expand, improve, or update them.  
6

7 73. Although Sprouts could not have prevented the phishing e-mail from being  
8 sent, the W-2 Data Breach could have been prevented or greatly minimized had Sprouts  
9 utilized the proper data security measures, processes, controls, policies, procedures, and  
10 protocols. Sprouts recognized as much as it asserted in its W-2 Data Breach Notification  
11 that it was working to enhance its controls and make additional investments in protocols,  
12 technology, and training. See Exhibit B.  
13  
14

15 74. The W-2 Data Breach could have been prevented had Sprouts implemented  
16 securely configured mail services with advanced spam filters so that the phishing e-mail  
17 never reached the payroll employee's inbox in the first place.  
18

19 75. The W-2 Data Breach could have been prevented had Sprouts conducted  
20 information security training throughout the company. Sprouts should have provided  
21 education and training to its payroll and Human Resources employees, as well as any other  
22 employees with access to employee PII, as follows: (i) to be aware of the signs of fraudulent  
23 e-mail scams; (ii) to verify the sources of e-mail messages that are sent to them and that  
24 ask for sensitive company or personal information; (iii) to question requests for PII and  
25 other sensitive information that are made through informal or non-routine channels; (iv) to  
26 alert key Members of the company if a request for information seems suspicious; (v) and  
27  
28

1 to ask questions before responding when presented with what appears to be a request from  
2 a company executive for employee PII, such as contacting the company executive via  
3 telephone to ensure the request is legitimate or inquiring as to why non-finance personnel  
4 have a “need to know” for the data requested.  
5

6 76. The W-2 Data Breach also could have been prevented had Sprouts  
7 implemented data security controls, policies, and procedures regarding payroll and Human  
8 Resources employees’ access to employee PII. Sprouts should have had policies in place  
9 that prohibited payroll and Human Resources employees from having on-demand access  
10 to all of its employees’ PII or at least required payroll and Human Resources employees to  
11 go through multiple layers of computer system security and scrutiny, such as requiring  
12 approval from a superior or involving the information technology or security team, before  
13 being provided access to so much sensitive information at one time.  
14  
15

16 77. The W-2 Data Breach could have been prevented had Sprouts implemented  
17 data security measures to ensure that employee PII was never sent in an unencrypted form.  
18 Sprouts should have used proper controls for data access and encrypted employee  
19 information that was sent via e-mail, so that it could maintain control of the data, even after  
20 it was sent. In addition, Sprouts should have implemented a data security measure that  
21 provided it with the capability to remotely delete a file that was mistakenly sent.  
22  
23

24 78. Had Sprouts taken even these most fundamental data security measures, the  
25 W-2 Data Breach never would have happened.  
26  
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**E. The Harms Suffered by Plaintiffs**

1  
2 79. During the week of April 4, 2016, Price’s CPA attempted to e-file Price and  
3 her husband’s joint tax return for 2015 with the IRS. However, the return was rejected  
4 because Price’s SSN had already been used by an unknown person to get a rapid refund.  
5

6 80. On April 8, 2016, Price called the IRS to alert them of the apparent theft of  
7 her SSN and her tax refund. The IRS confirmed the SSN used was Price’s and put an alert  
8 on the return. As of this date it is unknown exactly what process Price and her husband  
9 will be able to use to file their taxes. But it is clear that Price’s SSN is compromised and  
10 will require additional time, money and effort to repair the damage already done, to ensure  
11 that her SSN is not used again and to do or undo whatever is necessary to repair the breach.  
12  
13

14 81. Price’s minor daughter was also an employee of Sprouts during 2015 and her  
15 W-2 has also been compromised, leaving her vulnerable to identity theft and a threat that  
16 her credit will be compromised before she even has a chance to build that credit.  
17

18 82. As a result of the data breach, unknown third parties now possess the PII of  
19 Sprouts’ employees and former employees who are the Plaintiffs in this case.  
20

21 83. As a direct and proximate effect of Sprouts’ disclosure of its employees 2015  
22 W-2s the Plaintiffs’ SSNs were stolen and used to claim Price, Esposito and Wilson’s tax  
23 refunds and an as yet unknown number of other Class Members’ tax refunds.  
24

25 84. Upon information and belief, the information was disseminated and  
26 transmitted over the internet in and from the state of Arizona by Sprouts.  
27

28 85. To protect himself following the Data Breach, Hernandez signed up for  
identity theft protection through his bank, Wells Fargo, for \$12.99 per month in addition

1 to the one year credit monitoring offered by Sprouts through Experian. To date, Hernandez  
2 has heard nothing from Sprouts about the breach other than the form letter dated March 28,  
3 2016, which was sent out to the employees. He has already expended several hours  
4 attempting to safeguard himself from identity theft and other harms caused by the release  
5 of his Form W-2 related tax information and social security number. Going forward,  
6 Hernandez anticipates spending considerable time in an effort to contain the impact of  
7 Sprouts' Data Breach on himself.  
8  
9

10 86. Hernandez suffers from an increased risk of future identity theft as a result  
11 of Sprouts' actions. In addition to suffering loss of time enrolling in credit monitoring  
12 services and reviewing his credit, Hernandez has suffered financial losses as a result of  
13 signing up for additional credit protection through his bank.  
14

15 87. Byrne received the form letter sent by Sprouts dated March 28, 2016.  
16 Unfortunately for Byrne, her identity has already been stolen and her social security  
17 number compromised. Byrne was contacted by the IRS by a letter dated April 20, 2016,  
18 informing her that a tax return was filed using her name and social security number and the  
19 IRS needed to verify her identity before processing the return. In a subsequent letter dated  
20 May 4, 2016, the IRS informed Byrne that someone attempted to impersonate her by using  
21 her name and social security number by filing a fraudulent tax return in her name. Byrne  
22 has also started to receive harassing phone calls from people purporting to be from the IRS.  
23 Byrne has signed up for the one year credit monitoring offered by Sprouts through  
24 Experian. Byrne has already expended several hours attempting to safeguard herself from  
25 identity theft and other harms caused by the release of her Form W-2 related tax  
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1 information and social security number. Going forward, Byrne anticipates spending  
2 considerable time in an effort to contain the impact of Sprouts' Data Breach on herself.

3 88. Byrne suffers from an increased risk of future identity theft as a result of  
4 Sprouts' actions. In addition to suffering loss of time enrolling in credit monitoring  
5 services and reviewing and monitoring her credit, Byrne has suffered, and continues to  
6 suffer, enormous stress over the theft of her identity.  
7

8 89. Like Byrne, Butler has already had her identity stolen. Butler was contacted  
9 by the IRS by a letter dated April 20, 2016, informing her that that a federal tax return had  
10 been filed using her name and social security number. Butler never received any notice  
11 from Sprouts regarding the Data Breach despite reaching out to them several times. Butler  
12 learned about the Data Breach only after receiving the letter from the IRS and hearing about  
13 the Data Breach from former coworkers. Butler has already expended several hours  
14 attempting to safeguard herself from identity theft and other harms caused by the release  
15 of her Form W-2 related tax information and social security number. Going forward, Butler  
16 anticipates spending considerable time in an effort to contain the impact of Sprouts' Data  
17 Breach on herself.  
18  
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21 90. Like all Plaintiffs and Members of the Class, Butler suffers from an increased  
22 risk of future identity theft as a result of Sprouts' actions. In addition to suffering loss of  
23 time enrolling in credit monitoring services and reviewing and monitoring her credit, Butler  
24 has suffered, and continues to suffer, enormous stress over the theft of her identity.  
25  
26

27 91. To protect herself following the Data Breach, Castellano signed up for a  
28 credit monitoring service, pulled and reviewed her credit report, and inquired with the IRS

1 about possible tax return fraud. To date, Castellano has not received formal notification of  
2 the W-2 Data Breach from Sprouts, other than the posting on the employee bulletin board  
3 at work, nor has she received any other communications from Sprouts regarding the Data  
4 Breach. Castellano has already expended time and resources attempting to safeguard  
5 herself from identity theft and other harms caused by the release of her Form W-2 related  
6 tax information and social security number. Going forward, Castellano anticipates  
7 spending additional time in an effort to contain the impact of Sprouts' Data Breach on  
8 herself. Castellano also suffers from an increased risk of future identity theft as a result of  
9 Sprouts' actions.

12 92. After receiving notice of the Data Breach, Porras and Stock enrolled in  
13 Experian credit monitoring either the same day they received notification or soon  
14 thereafter. Porras suffered financial losses as a result of the Data Breach when she spent  
15 money to place a security freeze on her credit. Stock will suffer financial losses as a result  
16 of the Data Breach from buying fraud alert services. Stock has received multiple phone  
17 calls purporting to offer services related to credit cards and/or credit reporting. Stock had  
18 not received this high volume of calls in the past.

21 93. Sprouts flagrantly disregarded and violated Plaintiffs' and Class Members'  
22 employment and privacy rights, and harmed them in the process, by not obtaining their  
23 prior written consent to disclose their PII to any other person or entity – as required by  
24 California statutory and common laws.

27 94. Sprouts flagrantly disregarded and violated Plaintiffs' and Class Members'  
28 employment and privacy rights, and harmed them in the process, by failing to safeguard

1 and protect and, in fact, wrongfully releasing and disclosing their PII to an unauthorized  
2 third party and, potentially, the public without their authorization.

3 95. Sprouts flagrantly disregarded and violated Plaintiffs’ and Class Members’  
4 employment and privacy rights, and harmed them in the process, by failing to design,  
5 adopt, implement, control, direct, oversee, manage, monitor, and audit the appropriate data  
6 security processes, controls, policies, procedures, and protocols to safeguard and protect  
7 Plaintiffs’ and Class Members’ PII. Sprouts’ failure to do so – even in the face of previous  
8 similar W-2 data breaches in the weeks and months before at other companies and the IRS’  
9 warnings to beware of such breaches – is an abuse of discretion and confirms its intentional  
10 and willful failure to observe procedures required by law and industry standards and  
11 recommendations.  
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15 96. Sprouts flagrantly disregarded and violated Plaintiffs’ and Class Members’  
16 employment and privacy rights, and harmed them in the process, by failing to completely  
17 notify and inform them about the W-2 Data Breach and the disclosure of their PII in an  
18 expedient manner.  
19

20 97. Sprouts’ inadequate W-2 Data Breach Notification – including its failure to  
21 provide Plaintiffs and Class Members with adequate and reasonable protection or sufficient  
22 relief from the W-2 Data Breach – substantially increased Plaintiffs’ and Class Members’  
23 imminent risk of identity theft, identity fraud, or medical fraud.  
24

25 98. A person whose PII has been compromised may experience identity theft and  
26 identity fraud for years because PII is a valuable commodity to identity thieves and once  
27  
28

1 that information has been compromised, these criminals often trade the information on the  
2 “cyber black-market” for years.

3 99. Sprouts flagrantly disregarded and violated Plaintiffs’ and Class Members’  
4 employment and privacy rights, and harmed them in the process, by depriving them of the  
5 value of their PII, for which there is a national and international market in which  
6 cybercriminals sell and trade the stolen PII.  
7

8 100. As a direct and proximate result of Sprouts’ above-described wrongful  
9 actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary care, and the resulting W-2 Data Breach,  
10 Plaintiffs and Class Members have incurred (and will continue to incur) economic damages  
11 and other injury and actual harm, which harm is ongoing.  
12  
13

14 **CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

15 101. Plaintiffs hereby incorporate the preceding factual allegations as though fully  
16 set forth herein.  
17

18 102. In addition to bringing this case individually, Plaintiffs also bring this case  
19 as a Class Action pursuant to Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, on behalf of  
20 all Plaintiffs and as Members of the following proposed Class:  
21

22 **All current and former employees of Sprouts who worked at Sprouts**  
23 **and received a Form W-2 for work performed in 2015, and who, during**  
24 **the period beginning on or about March 14, 2016 and continuing**  
25 **through the present had their PII disclosed and disseminated by Sprouts**  
26 **to a third party.**  
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- b. The standard to which Sprouts is to be held with respect to its possession and/or dissemination of Plaintiffs' PII;
- c. Whether Sprouts adequately designed, adopted, implemented, controlled, directed, oversaw, managed, monitored, and audited the appropriate data security processes, controls, policies, procedures, and protocols to safeguard and protect Plaintiffs' and Class Members' PII that was disclosed without authorization in the W-2 Data Breach;
- d. Whether Sprouts failed to act reasonably in protecting the PII of Plaintiffs in its care, custody and control;
- e. Whether the actions and/or failures to act of Sprouts caused the PII of Plaintiffs and Class Members to be accessed, stolen and/or used without authorization;
- f. Whether Sprouts failed to timely and reasonably notify Plaintiffs and Class Members of the theft of their PII in conformity with the laws of Arizona, California and other states;
- g. Whether Sprouts was negligent;
- h. Whether Sprouts' notification contained false or misleading information and/or failed to inform Plaintiffs and Class Members of material information necessary to allow Plaintiffs to protect themselves from further harm due to the disclosure of their PII;
- i. Whether Sprouts' conduct with respect to the Data Breach was unfair and deceptive;



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- j. Whether Sprouts’ conduct constituted unfair methods of competition and/or was unfair and/or unlawful;
- k. Whether Sprouts has been unjustly enriched by having obtained the labor and other benefits from services of Plaintiffs and Class Members, and the saving of costs that would have been expended had they acted reasonably to protect the PII in their care, custody and control;
- l. Whether Sprouts breached its agreements, express and implied, with Plaintiffs and Class Members;
- m. Whether Sprouts violated a duty of good faith and fair dealing in its agreements with Plaintiffs and Class Members;
- n. Whether Sprouts breached a fiduciary duty it had toward Plaintiffs and Class Members;
- o. Whether Sprouts complied with the security notification laws of Arizona and other States upon learning of the breach of the PII of Plaintiffs and Class Members;
- p. Whether Sprouts violated the consumer protection laws of Arizona and other states through their acts and omissions set forth in this Complaint;
- q. Whether Plaintiffs and the Class Members are at an increased risk of identity theft as a result of Sprouts’ breaches and failure to protect Plaintiffs’ and the Class Members’ private tax information and social security numbers;
- r. Whether Sprouts unlawfully failed to inform Plaintiffs and Class Members that it did not maintain and implement data security measures, procedures,

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- and protocols adequate to reasonably safeguard employees’ PII and whether Sprouts failed to inform Plaintiffs and Class Members of the W-2 Data Breach in a timely and accurate manner;
- s. Whether the Plaintiffs and Members of the Class were “employees” under the Fair Labor Standards Act for work they reasonably had to perform to safeguard their PII because of the actions or inactions of Sprouts;
  - t. Whether Sprouts failed to pay Plaintiffs and Class Members at least minimum wage for the time they spent taking actions to protect themselves and deal with the ramifications of the W-2 Data Breach;
  - u. Whether Sprouts failed to provide Plaintiffs and Class Members with accurate itemized wage statements reflecting the hours worked and wages earned for time they have spent taking actions to protect themselves and deal with the ramifications of the W-2 Data Breach;
  - v. Whether Sprouts failed to indemnify Plaintiffs and Class Members for the losses and expenses they have suffered as a result of the W-2 Data Breach;
  - w. Whether Plaintiffs and Class Members suffered injury, including ascertainable losses, as a result of Sprouts’ actions, inaction, omission, and want of ordinary care;
  - x. Whether Plaintiffs and the Members of the Class are entitled to damages, and, if so, the nature of such damages;
  - y. whether Plaintiff and Class members are entitled to recover penalties; and

1 z. Whether Plaintiffs and Class Members are entitled to equitable relief,  
2 including injunctive relief, restitution, disgorgement, and/or other equitable  
3 relief.  
4

5 **Typicality**

6 109. Plaintiffs' claims are typical of the claims of the Members of the Class.  
7 Plaintiffs and Class Members sustained injuries as a result of the unlawful disclosure of  
8 their PII, which injuries were directly and proximately caused by Sprouts' acts and  
9 omissions.  
10

11 110. As detailed herein, Plaintiffs' known harms that have already occurred  
12 consisted of the actual theft of their identities by the use of their SSN to file fraudulent tax  
13 returns, which resulted in costs, expenses, emotional distress and other damages and is  
14 likely to cause additional and continuing damage to all Plaintiffs and Class Members.  
15

16 **Adequacy of Representation**

17 111. Plaintiffs can and will fairly and adequately represent and protect the  
18 interests of the Class, and Plaintiffs have no interests that conflict with or are antagonistic  
19 to the interests of the Members of the Class.  
20

21 112. Plaintiffs have retained competent attorneys with over 30 years of experience  
22 in complex Class actions, including employment related Class actions.  
23

24 113. No conflict exists between Plaintiffs and the Members of the Class.  
25

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**Superiority**

1  
2 114. A Class action is superior to any other available method for the fair and  
3 efficient adjudication of this controversy and common questions of law and fact  
4 overwhelmingly predominate over any individual questions that may arise.  
5

6 115. The prosecution of separate actions by individual Members of the plaintiff  
7 Class would create a risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications with respect to individual  
8 Members of the Class. These adjudications would establish incompatible standards of  
9 conduct for Sprouts which would, as a practical matter, be disparities of the claims of the  
10 other Members not parties to the adjudications or substantially impair or impede their  
11 ability to protect their interests.  
12

13  
14 116. By its dissemination of the Plaintiffs' PII, Sprouts has acted or refused to act  
15 on grounds generally applicable to all Members of the Class, thereby making appropriate  
16 final injunctive relief or corresponding declaratory relief with respect to the Class as a  
17 whole.  
18

19 **Public Policy Considerations**

20 117. Current employees are often afraid to assert their rights against their  
21 employers out of fear of direct or indirect retaliation. Former employees are fearful of  
22 bringing actions against their employers because they believe their former employers might  
23 damage their future endeavors through negative references and/or other means. Class  
24 actions provide the Class Members who are not named in the complaint with a type of  
25 anonymity that allows for the vindication of their rights at the same time as affording them  
26 privacy protections.  
27  
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1           118. Accordingly, Class certification is appropriate under Rule 23 of the Federal  
2 Rules of Civil Procedure.

3                           **CALIFORNIA LABOR CODE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL ACT**  
4                           **“PAGA” REPRESENTATIVE ACTION ALLEGATIONS.**

5           119. Plaintiffs hereby incorporate the preceding factual allegations as though fully  
6 set forth herein.

7  
8           120. The California claims alleged herein are appropriately suited for a Labor  
9 Code Private Attorneys General Act of 2004 (“PAGA”) action because:

- 10                   a. Pursuant to California Labor Code § 2699(a), any provision of the Labor  
11 Code “that provides for a civil penalty to be assessed and collected by the  
12 Labor and Workforce Development Agency or any of its departments,  
13 divisions, commissions, boards, agencies, or employees, for a violation of  
14 this code, may, as an alternative, be recovered through a civil action brought  
15 by an aggrieved employee on behalf of himself or herself and other current  
16 or former employees pursuant to the procedures specified in section 2699.3.”  
17  
18                   b. This action involves allegations of violations of provisions of the California  
19 Labor Code that provide or do not provide for a civil penalty to be assessed  
20 and collected by the Labor & Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”)  
21 or any departments, divisions, commissions, boards, agencies or employees;  
22  
23                   c. Plaintiffs are “aggrieved employees” because they were employed by the  
24 alleged violators and had one or more of the alleged violations committed  
25 against them; and  
26  
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1 d. On April 8, 2016, Castellano satisfied the procedural requirements of §  
2 2699.3 by serving, via Certified Mail, the LWDA and her employers  
3 SPROUTS FARMERS MARKET, INC. and SFM, LLC with her notice for  
4 wage and hour violations and penalties, including the facts and theories to  
5 support each violation. More than 33 days have passed since Castellano  
6 served notice via Certified Mail to the LWDA and Sprouts. Therefore,  
7 Plaintiffs have satisfied all the administrative requirements to pursue civil  
8 penalties against Defendants pursuant to California Labor Code § 2698, et  
9 seq.

10 e. Castellano filed her action pursuant to Labor Code § 2699(a) and (f), on  
11 behalf of herself and all other current and former aggrieved employees of  
12 Sprouts to recover civil penalties. Said civil penalties include unpaid wages  
13 which are to be paid to the affected employees pursuant to Labor Code § 558  
14 subdivisions (a)(1) and (a)(3).

15 f. Castellano's action was subsequently consolidated into this action.

16 g. Defendants were Plaintiffs' employers or persons acting on behalf of  
17 Plaintiffs' employers, within the meaning of California Labor Code § 558,  
18 who violated or caused to be violated, a section of Part 2, Chapter 1 of the  
19 California Labor Code or any provision regulating hours and days of work  
20 in any order of the Industrial Welfare Commission and, as such, are subject  
21 to penalties for each underpaid employee, as set forth in Labor Code § 558,  
22 at all relevant times.  
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1 h. Plaintiffs seek to recover all applicable civil penalties under PAGA on behalf  
2 of themselves and all other aggrieved employees including, but not limited  
3 to, all unpaid and/or underpaid wages pursuant to Labor Code § 558,  
4 Reynolds v. Bement, 36 Cal.4th 1075, 1089 (2005), and Thurman v.  
5 Bayshore Transit Management, Inc., 203 Cal. App. 4th 1112 (2012).  
6

7 **COUNT I:**

8 **NEGLIGENCE**

9  
10 121. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs  
11 as though fully set forth herein.

12 122. Defendants owed a duty of care to Plaintiffs and the Class to ensure that their  
13 PII was not accessed or used for improper purposes. This duty included, among other  
14 things, designing, maintaining and testing Sprouts' security systems to ensure that  
15 Plaintiffs' and Class Members' private tax information and social security numbers in  
16 Sprouts' possession were adequately secured and protected. Sprouts further owed a duty to  
17 Plaintiffs and the Class Members to implement processes that would detect a breach of its  
18 security system in a timely manner and to timely act upon warning and alerts including  
19 those generated by its own security systems.  
20  
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22

23 123. Sprouts owed a duty to Plaintiffs and the Class Members to provide security,  
24 consistent with industry standards and requirements, to ensure that its systems and  
25 networks, and the personnel responsible for them, adequately protected the private tax  
26 information and social security numbers of its current and former employees.  
27  
28

1           124. Sprouts owed a duty of care to Plaintiffs and the Class Members because they  
2 were foreseeable and probable victims of any inadequate security practices.

3           125. Sprouts knew or should have known it had inadequately safeguarded its  
4 employees' private tax information and social security numbers, and yet Sprouts failed to  
5 take reasonable precautions to safeguard current and former employees' private tax  
6 information and social security numbers.  
7

8           126. Sprouts also owed a duty to timely and accurately disclose to Plaintiffs and  
9 the Class Members that their private tax information and social security numbers had been  
10 or were reasonably believed to have been compromised. Timely disclosure was required,  
11 appropriate and necessary so that, among other things, Plaintiffs and the Class Members  
12 could take appropriate measures to avoid identify theft or fraudulent charges, including,  
13 monitoring their account information and credit reports for fraudulent activity, contacting  
14 their banks or other financial institutions, obtaining credit monitoring services, filing  
15 reports with law enforcement and other governmental agencies and taking other steps to  
16 mitigate or ameliorate the damages caused by Sprouts' misconduct.  
17  
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19           127. Sprouts' procedures for handling the financial and personal information of  
20 its current and former employees were intended to and did affect Plaintiffs and Class  
21 Members. Sprouts knew that by collecting and storing its employees' sensitive personal  
22 and financial information, it undertook a responsibility to take reasonable security  
23 measures to protect the information from being exposed to unauthorized persons.  
24  
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26           128. Sprouts' own conduct also created a foreseeable risk of harm to Plaintiffs and  
27 the Class Members. Sprouts' misconduct included, but was not limited to, its failure to take  
28



1 the steps and opportunities to prevent and stop the Data Breach as set forth herein. Sprouts'  
2 misconduct also included its decision not to comply with industry standards for the  
3 safekeeping and maintenance of the private tax information and social security numbers of  
4 Plaintiffs and the Class Members.  
5

6 129. Plaintiffs and the Class Members entrusted Sprouts with their private tax  
7 information and social security numbers with the understanding that Sprouts would  
8 safeguard their information and that the company was in a position to protect against the  
9 harm suffered by Plaintiffs and the Class Members as a result of the Data Breach.  
10

11 130. Defendants breached their duty of care to Plaintiffs and the Class to ensure  
12 that their PII was not used for improper purposes by failing to provide adequate protections  
13 of the PII, by negligently disseminating the PII, and by allowing the PII to be accessed, in  
14 unencrypted format, by third parties.  
15

16 131. Sprouts also breached its duties to timely and accurately disclose that  
17 Plaintiffs' and Class Members' private tax information and social security numbers in  
18 Sprouts' possession had been or was reasonably believed to have been, stolen or  
19 compromised.  
20

21 132. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' failure to take reasonable  
22 care and use at least industry-standard measures to protect the personal and financial  
23 information placed in their care, Plaintiffs and Class Members had their personal and  
24 financial information stolen, causing direct and measurable monetary losses, threat of  
25 future losses, identity theft and/or threat of identity theft.  
26  
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1           133. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' negligence and misconduct,  
2 Plaintiffs and Class Members were injured in fact or will be injured by actual harm in the  
3 form of: damage to credit scores and credit reports; heightened risk of identity theft; other  
4 fraudulent activity; and time and expense related to: (a) finding and contesting fraudulent  
5 activity; (b) finding and buying services to prevent identity theft and monitor their credit;  
6 (d) flagging assets and accounts for fraud; (e) reporting the theft of their social security  
7 numbers to financial institutions, credit agencies, and the IRS; (f) reviewing credit reports;  
8 (g) repairing damage to credit and other financial accounts; (h) the general stress and  
9 anxiety of dealing with all these issues resulting from the Data Breach; and (g) costs  
10 associated with the loss of productivity from taking time to ameliorate the actual and future  
11 consequences of the Data Breach, all of which have an ascertainable monetary value to be  
12 proven at trial.

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16           134. As a result of Sprouts' negligence, Plaintiffs and Class Members have  
17 suffered and will suffer injury, including but not necessarily limited to: (1) the loss of the  
18 opportunity to control how their PII is used; (2) the diminution in the value and/or use of  
19 their PII entrusted to Sprouts for the purpose of deriving employment from Sprouts and  
20 with the understanding that Sprouts would safeguard their PII against theft and not allow  
21 access and misuse of their PII by others; (3) the compromise, publication, and/or theft of  
22 their PII; (4) out-of-pocket costs associated with the prevention, detection, and recovery  
23 from identity theft and/or unauthorized use of financial and medical accounts; (5) lost  
24 opportunity costs associated with effort expended and the loss of productivity from  
25 addressing and attempting to mitigate the actual and future consequences of the breach,  
26  
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1 including but not limited to efforts spent researching how to prevent, detect, contest, and  
2 recover from identity data misuse; (6) costs associated with the ability to use credit and  
3 assets frozen or flagged due to credit misuse, including complete credit denial and/or  
4 increased costs to use credit, credit scores, credit reports, and assets; (7) unauthorized use  
5 of compromised PII to open new financial and/or health care or medical accounts; (8) tax  
6 fraud and/or other unauthorized charges to financial, health care or medical accounts and  
7 associated lack of access to funds while proper information is confirmed and corrected; (9)  
8 the continued risk to their PII, which remains in Sprouts' possession and is subject to  
9 further breaches so long as Sprouts fails to undertake the implementation of appropriate  
10 and adequate security measures, procedures, and protocols to protect the PII in its  
11 possession; and (10) future costs in terms of time, effort, and money that will be expended,  
12 to prevent, detect, contest, and repair the impact of the PII compromised as a result of the  
13 W-2 Data Breach for the remainder of the lives of Plaintiffs and Class Members.  
14  
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17

18 135. Plaintiffs and the Class Members have spent time and money to protect  
19 themselves as a result of Defendants' conduct, and will continue to be required to spend  
20 time and money protecting themselves, their identities, their credit, and their reputations.  
21

22 136. But for Sprouts' failure to implement and maintain adequate security  
23 measures to protect their employees' PII and allowing unauthorized access to their  
24 employees' PII, the PII of Plaintiffs and Class Members would not have been injured, and  
25 Plaintiffs and Class Members would not be at a heightened risk of identity theft in the  
26 future.  
27  
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1           137. Sprouts' negligence was a substantial factor in causing harm to Plaintiffs and  
2 Class Members. As a direct and proximate result of Sprouts' failure to exercise reasonable  
3 care and implement and maintain reasonable security measures, controls, procedures, and  
4 protocols, the PII of Sprouts' current and former employees was accessed by unauthorized  
5 individuals who may: (i) have already used the compromised information to commit  
6 identity theft and fraud; (ii) continue to use their compromised PII to commit identity theft  
7 and identity and health care and/or medical fraud; and (iii) post the information on the  
8 internet, allowing themselves and others to commit identity theft, and identity and health  
9 care and/or medical fraud using the compromised PII indefinitely.

10           138. As a direct and proximate result of Sprouts' above-described wrongful  
11 actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary care that directly and proximately caused  
12 the W-2 Data Breach, Plaintiffs and Class Members have suffered (and will continue to  
13 suffer) economic damages and other injury and actual harm, which is ongoing.

14           WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the Class,  
15 respectfully seek the relief set forth below.

16  
17                                   **COUNT II:**

18  
19                                   **VIOLATIONS OF THE ARIZONA CONSUMER FRAUD ACT**

20           239. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs  
21 as though fully set forth herein.

22           240. Sprouts engaged in an unfair or deceptive trade practice by not protecting  
23 and by not encrypting Plaintiffs' and the Class' PII when it transmitted its employees'  
24 social security numbers over the internet.  
25  
26  
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28

1 141. The lax security protocols and failure to encrypt Plaintiffs' and the Class' PII  
2 was a practice that occurred in the course of Defendants' business.

3 142. Defendants' failure to adequately protect the Plaintiffs and the Class' PII  
4 impacts its employees, who represent over 21,000 consumers who are also Members of the  
5 public and its actual or potential consumers of the Defendants' goods.  
6

7 143. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' unfair trade practices,  
8 Plaintiffs and Class Members suffered injury in fact to the protected interest of keeping  
9 their PII confidential and out of the hands of criminals and the practice caused the Plaintiffs  
10 actual injury  
11

12 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the Class,  
13 respectfully seek the relief set forth below.  
14

15 **COUNT III:**

16 **BREACH OF FIDUCIARY DUTY**

17  
18 144. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs  
19 as though fully set forth herein.

20 145. Defendants were fiduciaries, as employers, required to act primarily for the  
21 benefit of Defendants' employees in matters connected with their employment.  
22

23 146. Plaintiffs and the Class were in a fiduciary relationship by way of the duty  
24 Defendants had in relation to the employment of Plaintiffs, and Defendants' duty to act for  
25 or to give advice for the benefit of Plaintiffs and the Class upon matters within the scope  
26 of their relationship, specifically to keep income records, and report those records in a form  
27 W-2 to the IRS as the employer.  
28

1           147. Defendants breached their duty of care to Plaintiffs and the Class to ensure  
2 that their PII and W-2s were not used for improper purposes by failing to provide adequate  
3 protections to the information and by allowing the information to be accessed, in  
4 unencrypted format, by third parties to whom Sprouts voluntarily disseminated the  
5 information.  
6

7           148. As a direct and proximate result of the Defendants' actions alleged above,  
8 the Plaintiffs suffered actual damages.  
9

10           WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the Class,  
11 respectfully seek the relief set forth below.  
12

13                                   **COUNT IV:**

14                                   **BREACH OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

15           149. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs  
16 as though fully set forth herein.  
17

18           150. Plaintiffs' and Class Members' unique and private Personal and Financial  
19 Information in Defendants' possession, custody, and control was (and continues to be)  
20 highly confidential.  
21

22           151. Defendants breached the confidentiality of Plaintiffs' and Class Members'  
23 Personal and Financial Information by failing to identify, implement, maintain, and  
24 monitor appropriate data security measures, policies, procedures, and protocols to ensure  
25 the security and confidentiality of Plaintiffs' and Class Members' Personal and Financial  
26 Information, and wrongfully releasing and disclosing their Personal and Financial  
27 Information without authorization, as described above.  
28

1           152. Had Defendants not engaged in the above-described wrongful actions,  
2 inaction, and omissions, the Data Breach never would have occurred and Plaintiffs' and  
3 Class Members' Personal and Financial Information would not have been wrongfully  
4 released, disclosed, and compromised. Defendants' wrongful conduct constitutes (and  
5 continues to constitute) the tort of breach of confidentiality at common law.  
6

7           153. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' above-described wrongful  
8 actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary care that directly and proximately caused  
9 the Data Breach, Plaintiffs and Class Members have suffered (and will continue to suffer)  
10 economic damages and other injuries and actual harm in the form of, inter alia: damage to  
11 credit scores and credit reports; heightened risk of identity theft; other fraudulent activity;  
12 and time and expense related to: (a) finding and contesting fraudulent activity; (b) finding  
13 and buying services to prevent identity theft and monitor their credit; (d) flagging assets  
14 and accounts for fraud; (e) reporting the theft of their social security numbers to financial  
15 institutions, credit agencies, and the IRS; (f) reviewing credit reports; (g) repairing damage  
16 to credit and other financial accounts; (h) the general stress and anxiety of dealing with all  
17 these issues resulting from the Data Breach; and (g) costs associated with the loss of  
18 productivity from taking time to ameliorate the actual and future consequences of the Data  
19 Breach, all of which have an ascertainable monetary value to be proven at trial.  
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23

24           WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the Class,  
25 respectfully seek the relief set forth below.  
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**COUNT V:**

**BREACH OF CONTRACT**

154. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.

155. Plaintiffs and the Members of the Class had employment agreements with Defendants. These agreements involved a mutual exchange of consideration whereby Defendants entrusted Plaintiffs and the Class to work in various roles (such as courtesy clerk and cashier in its grocery stores) on its behalf, in exchange for the promise of employment, with wages, benefits in some cases, and secure PII.

156. The failure of Defendants to keep secure from breach the PII of Plaintiffs and the Class constitutes a material breach of the agreement between the Defendants and the Class.

157. As a direct and proximate result of the aforesaid breaches of Defendants' agreements with Plaintiffs and the Class, Plaintiffs and the Class have been harmed.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the Class, respectfully seek the relief set forth below.

**COUNT VI:**

**BREACH OF IMPLIED CONTRACT**

158. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.



1           159. Plaintiffs and the Class were required by Defendants to provide PII as a  
2 condition of their employment.

3           160. Implicit in the employment agreement between Defendants and Plaintiffs and  
4 Members of the Class was the obligation that both parties would maintain information  
5 confidentially and securely.  
6

7           161. Defendants implicitly and/or explicitly promised to keep the PII they  
8 collected from Plaintiffs and the Class secure and confidential. In addition, Defendants  
9 implicitly promised to retain this PII only under conditions that safeguarded such  
10 information, and to either destroy it after the employment ended, or to take appropriate  
11 steps to ensure that it was not improperly lost or stolen.  
12

13           162. Defendants had an implied duty of good faith to ensure that the Personal and  
14 Financial Information of Plaintiffs and Class Members in their possession was only used  
15 to provide the agreed-upon compensation and other employment benefits from Defendants.  
16 Defendants were therefore required to reasonably safeguard and protect the Personal and  
17 Financial Information of Plaintiffs and Class Members from unauthorized uses, and to  
18 timely and accurately notify Plaintiffs and Class Members if their Personal and Financial  
19 Information was compromised so that Plaintiffs and Class Members could act to mitigate  
20 the harm caused by the loss of opportunity to control how their Personal and Financial  
21 Information was used.  
22

23           163. Plaintiffs and Class Members accepted Defendants' employment offer and  
24 fully performed their obligations under the implied contract with Defendants by providing  
25 their Personal and Financial Information to Defendants, among other obligations.  
26  
27  
28

1           164. Plaintiffs and Class Members would not have provided and entrusted their  
2 Personal and Financial Information to Defendants in the absence of their implied contracts  
3 with Defendants, and would have instead retained the opportunity to control their Personal  
4 and Financial Information for uses other than compensation and other employment benefits  
5 from Defendants.  
6

7           165. Defendants breached their implied contracts with Plaintiffs and Class  
8 Members by failing to reasonably safeguard and protect Plaintiffs' and Class Members'  
9 Personal and Financial Information and by failing to provide timely and accurate notice to  
10 Plaintiffs and Class Members that their Personal and Financial Information was  
11 compromised as a result of the Data Breach.  
12

13           166. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' above-described wrongful  
14 actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary care that directly and proximately caused  
15 the Data Breach, Plaintiffs and Class Members have suffered (and will continue to suffer)  
16 economic damages and other injuries and actual harm in the form of, inter alia: damage to  
17 credit scores and credit reports; heightened risk of identity theft; other fraudulent activity;  
18 and time and expense related to: (a) finding and contesting fraudulent activity; (b) finding  
19 and buying services to prevent identity theft and monitor their credit; (d) flagging assets  
20 and accounts for fraud; (e) reporting the theft of their social security numbers to financial  
21 institutions, credit agencies, and the IRS; (f) reviewing credit reports; (g) repairing damage  
22 to credit and other financial accounts; (h) the general stress and anxiety of dealing with all  
23 these issues resulting from the Data Breach; and (g) costs associated with the loss of  
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1 productivity from taking time to ameliorate the actual and future consequences of the Data  
2 Breach, all of which have an ascertainable monetary value to be proven at trial.

3 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the Class,  
4 respectfully seek the relief set forth below.  
5

6 **COUNT VII:**

7 **VIOLATION OF RIGHT TO PRIVACY/  
8 PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF PRIVATE FACTS**

9 167. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs  
10 as though fully set forth herein.  
11

12 168. Plaintiffs and Class Members have a legally-protected privacy interest in  
13 their PII.  
14

15 169. Plaintiffs and Class Members had a reasonable expectation of privacy in  
16 providing their PII to Defendants in the context of their employment with Defendants.  
17

18 170. Defendants, through their negligence and carelessness, disclosed facts,  
19 specifically Plaintiffs' and the Class' PII, which are private in nature.  
20

21 171. By failing to protect those private facts the PII was disclosed to an unknown  
22 person or persons on the internet.  
23

24 172. Defendants' disclosure of Plaintiffs' and the Class' PII and the subsequent  
25 illicit use of that information was and is highly offensive to a reasonable person.  
26

27 173. Plaintiffs' and the Class' W-2 information is not of legitimate concern to the  
28 public, and will only be used for nefarious purposes.



1 178. Defendants, therefore, should be compelled to refund (or disgorge) such  
2 wrongfully collected, saved back, and shifted funds and expenses under the common law  
3 equitable doctrine of unjust enrichment.  
4

5 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the Class,  
6 respectfully seek the relief set forth below.

7 **COUNT IX:**

8  
9 **FAILURE TO PAY MINIMUM WAGES AND OVERTIME  
10 IN VIOLATION OF THE FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT**

11 **29 U.S.C. § 201 et seq.**

12 179. Pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act  
13 (“FLSA”), 29 U.S.C. § 206 and § 207, the named Plaintiffs and the Class similarly situated  
14 were entitled to at least the minimum hourly wage, for each hour that they labored in  
15 Defendants’ business and, in the event they worked more than 40 hours a week, an overtime  
16 hourly wage of time and one-half such minimum hourly wage for all hours worked in  
17 excess of 40 hours per week.  
18

19 180. Through Sprouts’ wrongful conduct alleged herein, Sprouts suffered and  
20 permitted Plaintiffs and the Class Members to work and failed to pay them at least  
21 minimum wage for all of the time that Plaintiffs and the Class Members reasonably have  
22 spent to address and attempt to ameliorate, mitigate, and deal with the actual and ongoing  
23 consequences of its release of PII. That work suffered includes but is not limited to: (i)  
24 identifying and dealing with fraudulent charges and accounts, including tax refund fraud,  
25 (ii) frequently obtaining and/or purchasing credit reports from multiple credit reporting  
26  
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28

1 agencies, (iii) placing and removing fraud alerts and security freezes on credit reports, (iv)  
2 obtaining and/or purchasing credit monitoring and internet monitoring services, (v)  
3 obtaining and/or purchasing identity theft insurance, (vi) spending time on the telephone  
4 attempting to sort out issues related to the breach, (vii) and in some instances obtaining  
5 new Social Security numbers.  
6

7 181. Sprouts placed the burden on Plaintiffs and Class Members to spend hours  
8 of their time addressing these issues.  
9

10 182. Plaintiffs and Class Members have been required to take these actions as a  
11 result of their employment with Sprouts, and Sprouts is or should be aware that Plaintiffs  
12 and Class Members are taking such actions, and spending hours of their time to do so.  
13

14 183. Sprouts has suffered and permitted Plaintiffs to work and, thus, is required  
15 to pay them at least minimum wage for all hours they spend taking such actions.  
16

17 184. As a direct result of Sprouts' conduct alleged herein, Plaintiffs and Class  
18 Members have suffered and continue to suffer, substantial losses related to the use and  
19 enjoyment of such wages.

20 185. Plaintiffs seek to recover in a civil action the unpaid balance of the full  
21 amount of the unpaid wages resulting from Sprouts' minimum wage violations including  
22 interest thereon, reasonable attorney's fees and costs of suit, and liquidated damages to the  
23 fullest extent permissible.  
24

25 186. The Plaintiffs and the Class were paid no monetary compensation  
26 whatsoever by Defendants for performing labor suffered or permitted by Defendants and  
27 arising from the employer/employee relationship and such failure to pay the Plaintiffs and  
28

1 the Class any compensation whatsoever violates the minimum hourly wage requirements  
2 of 29 U.S.C. § 206 and, in the event any of the Class Members or Plaintiffs ever worked in  
3 excess of 40 hours in a week, the overtime pay requirements of 29 U.S.C. § 207.  
4

5 187. Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and all other similarly situated persons  
6 who consent in writing to join this action, it also being proposed that all such persons be  
7 notified of this action through the dispatch of a written notice to the last known names and  
8 addresses of such persons that are set forth in the Defendant's records or that can otherwise  
9 be ascertained, seek, on this Claim for Relief, a judgment for unpaid minimum wages and  
10 overtime wages and additional liquidated damages of 100% of any such unpaid wages,  
11 such sums to be determined based upon an accounting of the hours worked by the named  
12 Plaintiffs and any such other persons who consent to join this action, and the Plaintiffs also  
13 seek an award of attorney's fees, interest and costs as provided for by the FLSA.  
14

15  
16 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the Class,  
17 respectfully seek the relief set forth below.  
18

19 **COUNT X:**

20 **FAILURE TO PAY MINIMUM WAGES**  
21 **IN VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA LAW**

22 **Cal. Lab. Code §§ 1194, 1197, 1198, IWC Wage Order 7-2001**

23 ***California Subclass***

24 188. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs  
25 as though fully set forth herein.  
26  
27  
28

1           189. Plaintiffs and California Subclass Members are/were “non-exempt”  
2 employees of Sprouts in California within the meaning of the Labor Code and IWC Wage  
3 Order 7-2001 and all other applicable state laws.  
4

5           190. California Labor Code section 1197 states: “The minimum wage for  
6 employees fixed by the commission is the minimum wage to be paid to employees, and the  
7 payment of a less wage than minimum wage so fixed is unlawful.”  
8

9           191. Labor Code section 1197.1 states: “Any employer or other person acting  
10 either individually or as an officer, agent, or employee of another person, who pays or  
11 causes to be paid to any employee a wage less than the minimum fixed by an order of the  
12 commission shall be subject to a civil penalty, restitution of wages, liquidated damages  
13 payable to the employee, and any applicable penalties imposed pursuant to Section 203.  
14 For any initial violation that is intentionally committed, one hundred dollars (\$100) for  
15 each underpaid employee for each pay period for which the employee is underpaid. For  
16 each subsequent violation for the same specific offense, two hundred fifty dollars (\$250)  
17 for each underpaid employee for each pay period for which the employee is underpaid  
18 regardless of whether the initial violation is intentionally committed.”  
19  
20  
21

22           192. Labor Code section 1198 states: “The maximum hours of work and the  
23 standard conditions of labor fixed by the commission shall be the maximum hours of work  
24 and the standard conditions of labor for employees. The employment of any employee for  
25 longer hours than those fixed by the order or under conditions of labor prohibited by the  
26 order is unlawful.”  
27  
28



1           193. IWC Wage Order 7-2001 section 4 provides that an employer may not pay  
2 employees less than the applicable minimum wage for all hours worked.

3           194. Through Sprouts' wrongful conduct alleged herein, Sprouts violated  
4 California Labor Code sections 1197, 1198 and the applicable IWC Wage Order when it  
5 suffered and permitted Plaintiffs and California Subclass Members to work and failed to  
6 pay them at least minimum wage for all of the time that Plaintiffs and California Subclass  
7 Members have spent to address and attempt to ameliorate, mitigate, and deal with the actual  
8 and future consequences of the W-2 Data Breach, including, but not limited to: (i)  
9 identifying and dealing with fraudulent charges and accounts, including tax refund fraud,  
10 (ii) frequently obtaining and/or purchasing credit reports from multiple credit reporting  
11 agencies, (iii) placing and removing fraud alerts and security freezes on credit reports, (iv)  
12 obtaining and/or purchasing credit monitoring and internet monitoring services, (v)  
13 obtaining and/or purchasing identity theft insurance, (vi) spending time on the telephone  
14 attempting to sort out issues related to the W-2 Data Breach, (vii) and even obtaining new  
15 Social Security numbers.

16           195. Sprouts has placed the burden on Plaintiffs and California Subclass Members  
17 to spend hours of their time addressing these issues; however, because Plaintiffs and  
18 California Subclass Members have been required to take these actions as a result of their  
19 employment with Sprouts, and Sprouts is or should be aware that Plaintiffs and California  
20 Subclass Members are taking such actions, and spending hours of their time to do so,  
21 Sprouts has suffered and permitted them to work and, thus, is required to pay them at least  
22 minimum wage for all hours they spend taking such actions.

1           196. Labor Code section 1194 states: “Notwithstanding any agreement to work  
2 for a lesser wage, any employee receiving less than the legal minimum wage or the legal  
3 overtime compensation applicable to the employee is entitled to recover in a civil action  
4 the unpaid balance of the full amount of his minimum wage or overtime compensation,  
5 including interest thereon, reasonable attorney’s fees and costs of suit.” Labor Code section  
6 1194.2 states: “In any action under Section 98, 1193.6, 1194, or 1197.1 to recover wages  
7 because of the payment of a wage less than the minimum wage fixed by an order of the  
8 commission or by statute, an employee shall be entitled to recover liquidated damages in  
9 an amount equal to the wages unlawfully unpaid and interest thereon.”  
10  
11

12           197. As a direct result of Sprouts’ conduct alleged herein, Plaintiffs and California  
13 Subclass Members have suffered and continue to suffer, substantial losses related to the  
14 use and enjoyment of such wages, including lost interest on such monies and expenses and  
15 attorney’s fees in seeking to compel Sprouts to fully perform its obligations under state  
16 law, all to their respective damage in amounts according to proof at trial and within the  
17 jurisdictional limitations of this Court.  
18  
19

20           WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the  
21 California Subclass, respectfully seek the relief set forth below.  
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**COUNT XI:**

**VIOLATION OF THE CALIFORNIA CUSTOMER RECORDS ACT**

**Cal. Civ. Code §1798.80, et seq.**

***California Subclass***

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2  
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4  
5  
6 198. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs  
7 as though fully set forth herein.

8  
9 199. “[T]o ensure that personal information about California residents is  
10 protected,” the California Legislature enacted Civil Code section 1798.81.5, which requires  
11 that any business that “owns or licenses personal information about a California resident  
12 shall implement and maintain reasonable security procedures and practices appropriate to  
13 the nature of the information, to protect the personal information from unauthorized access,  
14 destruction, use, modification, or disclosure.”

15  
16 200. Sprouts is a “business” within the meaning of Civil Code section 1798.80(a).

17  
18 201. Each member of the California Subclass is an “individual” as defined by  
19 Civil Code section 1798.80(d).

20  
21 202. The employee information taken in the Data Breach was “personal  
22 information” as defined by Civil Code sections 1798.80(e) and 1798.81.5(d), which  
23 includes “information that identifies, relates to, describes, or is capable of being associated  
24 with, a particular individual, including, but not limited to, his or her name, signature, social  
25 security number, physical characteristics or description, address, telephone number,  
26 passport number, driver’s license or state identification card number, insurance policy  
27 number, education, employment, employment history, bank account number, credit card  
28

1 number, debit card number, or any other financial information, medical information, or  
2 health insurance information.”

3 203. The unauthorized acquisition of Plaintiffs’ and the California Subclass  
4 Members’ private tax information and social security numbers constituted a “breach of the  
5 security system” of Sprouts.  
6

7 204. Sprouts unreasonably delayed informing anyone about the breach of security  
8 of California Subclass Members’ confidential and non-public information after Sprouts  
9 knew the Data Breach had occurred.  
10

11 205. Upon information and belief, no law enforcement agency instructed Sprouts  
12 that notification to California Subclass Members would impede its investigation.  
13

14 206. Pursuant to Section 1798.84 of the California Civil Code:

15 (a) Any waiver of a provision of this title is contrary to public policy  
16 and is void and unenforceable.

17 \* \* \*

18 (e) Any business that violates, proposes to violate, or has violated this  
19 title may be enjoined.  
20

21 207. By failing to implement reasonable security measures, procedures, and  
22 protocols appropriate to the nature of the personal information of their current and former  
23 employees, Defendants violated Cal. Civ. Code §1798.81.5.  
24

25 208. In addition, by failing to immediately notify all affected current and former  
26 Defendants employees that their personal information had been acquired (or was  
27  
28



1           211. California Business & Professions Code § 17200 prohibits any “unlawful,  
2 unfair or fraudulent business act or practice and unfair, deceptive, untrue or misleading  
3 advertising.”  
4

5           212. Defendants’ conduct, as alleged herein, has been and continues to be unfair,  
6 unlawful and harmful to Plaintiffs and California Subclass Members.  
7

8           213. Plaintiffs seek to enforce important rights affecting the public interest within  
9 the meaning of Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5.  
10

11           214. A violation of Business and Professions Code §§ 17200, et seq. may be  
12 predicated on the violation of any state or federal law.  
13

14           215. Defendants violated the Unfair Competition Law (“UCL”) by intentionally  
15 accepting and storing Plaintiffs’ and the California Subclass Members’ personal and  
16 financial information but failing to take reasonable steps to protect it.  
17

18           216. In violation of industry standards and best practices, Defendants also violated  
19 Plaintiffs’ and the California Subclass Members’ reasonable expectations that they would  
20 safeguard Personal and Financial Information, thereby creating for Defendants an  
21 artificially lower cost of doing business in order to undercut their competitors and establish  
22 and gain a greater foothold in the marketplace.  
23

24           217. Defendants also violated the UCL by intentionally failing to immediately  
25 notify Plaintiffs and the California Subclass of the Data Breach. If Plaintiffs and the  
26 California Subclass had been notified in an appropriate fashion, they could have taken  
27 precautions to better safeguard their Personal and Financial Information.  
28

1           218. In the course of conducting their business, Defendants committed “unlawful”  
2 business practices by, inter alia, knowingly failing to design, adopt, implement, control,  
3 direct, oversee, manage, monitor, and audit appropriate data security processes, controls,  
4 policies, procedures, and protocols to safeguard and protect Plaintiffs’ and California  
5 Subclass Members’ Personal and Financial Information – especially in light of Sprouts’  
6 2013 data breach, the prior W-2 data breaches that other companies had experienced in the  
7 weeks and months leading up to the Data Breach, and the warnings from the IRS to be  
8 aware of phishing scam e-mails seeking employee W-2s – violating the statutory and  
9 common laws alleged herein in the process, including, inter alia, the California Customer  
10 Records Act.  
11  
12

13  
14           219. Plaintiffs and California Subclass Members reserve the right to allege other  
15 violations of law by Defendants constituting other unlawful business acts or practices.  
16 Defendants’ above-described wrongful actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary  
17 care are ongoing and continue to this date.  
18

19           220. Sprouts had exclusive knowledge of material information regarding its  
20 deficient security policies and practices, and regarding the security of the private tax  
21 information and social security numbers of Plaintiffs and the California Subclass Members.  
22

23           221. Sprouts also had exclusive knowledge about the extent of the Data Breach,  
24 including during the days and weeks following the Data Breach.  
25

26           222. Sprouts also had exclusive knowledge about the length of time that it  
27 maintained former employees’ private tax information and social security numbers after  
28 they left Sprouts’ employment.

1           223. Sprouts failed to disclose, and actively concealed, the material information it  
2 had regarding Sprouts' deficient security policies and practices, and regarding the security  
3 of the private tax information and social security numbers of Plaintiffs and the California  
4 Subclass Members.  
5

6           224. Sprouts' omissions were material, misleading, and had a tendency to deceive.  
7

8           225. Plaintiffs were misled by Sprouts' omissions about Sprouts' data security,  
9 and reasonably relied upon them to their detriment.

10           226. But for Sprouts' omissions, Plaintiffs would have insisted that their private  
11 tax information and social security number be more securely protected, and Plaintiffs  
12 would have asked that their private tax information and social security numbers be removed  
13 from Sprouts' systems promptly after their employment ended. They also would have  
14 taken additional steps to protect their identities and to protect themselves from the sort of  
15 harm that could flow from Sprouts' lax security measures.  
16

17           227. But for Sprouts' omissions, Plaintiffs would not be experiencing the  
18 increased risk of harm they are now facing as a result of the Data Breach, and could have  
19 taken more immediate measures to prevent potential harm.  
20

21           228. Sprouts' above-described wrongful actions, inaction, omissions, want of  
22 ordinary care, and practices, also constitute "unfair" business acts and practices in violation  
23 of the UCL in that Sprouts' wrongful conduct is substantially injurious to consumers,  
24 offends public policy, and is immoral, unethical, oppressive, and unscrupulous.  
25

26           229. The gravity of Sprouts' wrongful conduct outweighs any alleged benefits  
27 attributable to such conduct.  
28



1           230. Moreover, there were reasonably available alternatives to further Sprouts’  
2 legitimate business interests other than engaging in the above-described wrongful conduct.

3           231. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants’ above-described wrongful  
4 actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary care that directly and proximately caused  
5 the Data Breach and their violations of the UCL, Plaintiffs and California Subclass  
6 Members have suffered (and will continue to suffer) economic damages and other injuries  
7 and actual harm in the form of, inter alia: damage to credit scores and credit reports;  
8 heightened risk of identity theft; other fraudulent activity; and time and expense related to:  
9 (a) finding and contesting fraudulent activity; (b) finding and buying services to prevent  
10 identity theft and monitor their credit; (d) flagging assets and accounts for fraud; (e)  
11 reporting the theft of their social security numbers to financial institutions, credit agencies,  
12 and the IRS; (f) reviewing credit reports; (g) repairing damage to credit and other financial  
13 accounts; (h) the general stress and anxiety of dealing with all these issues resulting from  
14 the Data Breach; and (g) costs associated with the loss of productivity from taking time to  
15 ameliorate the actual and future consequences of the Data Breach, all of which would have  
16 been unnecessary but for Defendants’ conduct.  
17  
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21

22           WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the  
23 California Subclass, respectfully seek the relief set forth below.

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**COUNT XIII:**

**INDEMNIFICATION**

**Cal. Lab. Code §§ 2800 and 2802**

***California Subclass***

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6       232. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs  
7 as though fully set forth herein.

8  
9       233. Under California Labor Code § 2800, an employer must indemnify its current  
10 and former employees for losses caused by the employer's want of ordinary care.

11       234. Under California Labor Code § 2802, an employer also must indemnify its  
12 current and former employees for all necessary expenditures or losses incurred by the  
13 employees in directly discharging their duties, or in obedience to the employer's directions,  
14 even though unlawful, unless the employee, at the time of his or her obedience, believed  
15 them to be lawful.  
16

17  
18       235. Sprouts required its current and former employees, including Plaintiffs and  
19 California Subclass Members, to provide their confidential and personal PII as a condition  
20 of employment. Sprouts, however, failed to safeguard and protect their PII by failing to  
21 identify, implement, maintain, and monitor appropriate data security measures, policies,  
22 procedures, and protocols which, in turn, directly and proximately caused the W-2 Data  
23 Breach, and Sprouts' unauthorized release and disclosure of their PII to an unauthorized  
24 third party.  
25

26  
27       236. As a direct and proximate result of Sprouts' above-described wrongful  
28 actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary care that directly and proximately caused

1 the W-2 Data Breach, and violation of the California Labor Code, Plaintiffs and California  
2 Subclass Members have suffered (and will continue to suffer) economic damages and other  
3 injury and actual harm, which harm is ongoing.  
4

5 237. Sprouts has intentionally and willfully failed and refused to reimburse  
6 Plaintiffs and California Subclass Members for such losses and expenses. Plaintiffs and  
7 California Subclass Members, therefore, are entitled to recover such losses and expenses  
8 incurred during the course and scope of their employment, plus attorneys' fees, litigation  
9 expenses, costs, and interest under Cal. Lab. Code §§ 2800 and 2802.  
10

11 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the  
12 California Subclass, respectfully seek the relief set forth below.  
13

14 **COUNT XIV:**

15 **FAILURE TO PROVIDE ACCURATE ITEMIZED WAGE STATEMENTS**  
16 **IN VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA LAW**

17 **Cal. Lab. Code § 226, IWC Wage Order 7-2001**

18 ***California Subclass***

19  
20 238. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs  
21 as though fully set forth herein.  
22

23 239. California Subclass Members are employees of Sprouts in California within  
24 the meaning of the Labor Code and the applicable IWC Wage Order.

25 240. Labor Code section 226(a) states in pertinent part:

26 Every employer shall, semimonthly or at the time of each payment of  
27 wages, furnish each of his or her employees, either as a detachable  
28 part of the check, draft, or voucher paying the employee's wages, or

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separately when wages are paid by personal check or cash, an accurate itemized statement in writing showing:

- (1) Gross wages earned;
- (2) Total hours worked by the employee, except for any employee whose compensation is solely based on a salary and who is exempt from payment of overtime under subdivision (a) of Section 515 or any applicable order of the Industrial Welfare Commission;
- (3) The number of piece-rate units earned and any applicable piece rate if the employee is paid on a piece-rate basis;
- (4) All deductions, provided that all deductions made on written orders of the employee may be aggregated and shown as one item;
- (5) Net wages earned;
- (6) The inclusive dates of the period for which the employee is paid;
- (7) The name of the employee and only the last four digits of his or her social security number or an employee identification number other than a social security number;
- (8) The name and address of the legal entity that is the employer; and
- (9) All applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee.

The deductions made from payment of wages shall be recorded in ink or other indelible form, properly dated, showing the month, day, and year, and a copy of the statement and the record of the deductions shall be kept on file by the employer for at least three years at the place of employment or at a central location within the State of California.

241. IWC Wage Order 7-2001 section 7(A) states in relevant part that the employer shall keep accurate information regarding, “(4) Total wages paid each payroll

1 period, including value of board, lodging, or other compensation actually furnished to the  
2 employee; (5) Total hours worked in the payroll period and applicable rates of pay.”

3 242. Through Sprouts’ conduct alleged herein, including but not limited to,  
4 Sprouts’ failure to pay California Subclass Members at least minimum wage for all of the  
5 time they have spent to address and attempt to ameliorate, mitigate, and deal with the actual  
6 and future consequences of the W-2 Data Breach, Sprouts failed to provide California  
7 Subclass Members with accurate itemized wage statements including, but not limited to,  
8 the recording of all time worked, all wages earned, and the applicable rates of pay for time  
9 worked.  
10

11 243. California Subclass Members suffered injuries as a result of Sprouts’  
12 intentional and knowing failure to provide to Plaintiffs and California Subclass Members  
13 and maintain the writings required by Labor Code section 226(a). Sprouts’ failure to  
14 provide and maintain accurate wage statements left California Subclass Members without  
15 the ability to know, understand and question the hours worked and wages earned and due.  
16 As a direct result, California Subclass Members have suffered and continue to suffer  
17 substantial injuries, losses and actual damages related to Sprouts’ conduct, including lost  
18 wages, lost interest on such wages, and expenses and attorney’s fees in seeking to compel  
19 Sprouts to fully perform its obligations.  
20

21 244. Labor Code § 226(e) states: “An employee suffering injury as a result of a  
22 knowing and intentional failure by an employer to comply with subdivision (a) is entitled  
23 to recover the greater of all actual damages or fifty dollars (\$50) for the initial pay period  
24 in which a violation occurs and one hundred dollars (\$100) per employee for each violation  
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1 in a subsequent pay period, not exceeding an aggregate penalty of four thousand dollars  
2 (\$4,000), and is entitled to an award of costs and reasonable attorney’s fees.”

3 245. Labor Code § 226(e)(2)(B) states “An employee is deemed to suffer injury  
4 for purposes of this subdivision if the employer fails to provide accurate and complete  
5 information as required by any one or more of items (1) to (9), inclusive, of subdivision (a)  
6 and the employee cannot promptly and easily determine from the wage statement alone  
7 one or more of the following: (i) The amount of gross wages or net wages paid to the  
8 employee during the pay period or any other information required to be provided on the  
9 itemized wage statement pursuant to items (2) to (4), inclusive, (6) and (9) of subdivision  
10 (a)...”

11 246. Because California Subclass Members’ wage statements did not include an  
12 accurate accounting of the time spent to address and attempt to ameliorate, mitigate, and  
13 deal with the actual and future consequences of the W-2 Data Breach, and, thus, among  
14 other things, the gross wages earned or total hours worked, they are deemed to have  
15 suffered injury.

16 247. Labor Code § 226(h) states “An employee may also bring an action for  
17 injunctive relief to ensure compliance with this section, and is entitled to an award of costs  
18 and reasonable attorney’s fees.”

19 248. As a direct result of Sprouts’ conduct alleged herein, Plaintiffs and California  
20 Subclass Members have suffered and continue to suffer injury including substantial losses  
21 related to the use and enjoyment of such wages, lost interest on such monies and expenses  
22 and attorney’s fees in seeking to compel Sprouts to fully perform its obligations under state  
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1 law, all to their respective damage in amounts according to proof at trial and within the  
2 jurisdictional limitations of this Court.

3 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the  
4 California Subclass, respectfully seek the relief set forth below.  
5

6 **COUNT XV:**

7 **REPRESENTATIVE CLAIMS UNDER THE CALIFORNIA LABOR CODE**  
8 **PRIVATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL ACT**

9 **Cal. Lab. Code § 2698 et seq.**

10 ***California Subclass***

11  
12 249. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs  
13 as though fully set forth herein.

14 250. Pursuant to California Labor Code § 2699(a), any provision of the Labor  
15 Code that provides for a civil penalty to be assessed and collected by the LWDA or any of  
16 its departments, divisions, commissions, boards, agencies or employees for violation of the  
17 code may, as an alternative, be recovered through a civil action brought by an aggrieved  
18 employee on behalf of himself or herself and other current or former employees pursuant  
19 to the procedures specified in Labor Code § 2699.3.  
20

21 251. This action involves allegations of violations of Labor Code §§ 226, 226.3,  
22 558, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1, 1198, 2800, and 2802 that pursuant to Labor Code §  
23 2699.5 provide for a civil penalty to be assessed and collected by the LWDA or recovered  
24 through a civil action brought by an aggrieved employee on behalf of himself or herself  
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1 and other current or former employees pursuant to the procedures specified in Labor Code  
2 § 2699.3.

3           252. Pursuant to Labor Code § 2699(a), Castellano seeks civil penalties on behalf  
4 of herself and all other current and former employees of Defendants who reside or have  
5 resided in California and whose PII was compromised as a result of the W-2 Data Breach  
6 publicized in March 2016.

7  
8           253. Sprouts employed Castellano and she had one or more of the alleged  
9 violations committed against her. Therefore, Castellano is an “aggrieved employee” under  
10 PAGA because the alleged violator employed her and she had one or more of the alleged  
11 violations committed against her. As such, Castellano is properly suited to represent the  
12 interests of other current and former aggrieved employees in a PAGA Representative  
13 action.

14  
15           254. On April 8, 2016, pursuant to Labor Code §§ 2698, et seq., Castellano served,  
16 via Certified Mail, the LWDA and her employers SPROUTS FARMERS MARKET, INC.  
17 and SFM, LLC with her claim for wage/hour violations and penalties. More than 33 days  
18 have passed since Castellano served notice via Certified Mail to the LWDA and her  
19 employers. Therefore, Plaintiffs satisfied all the administrative requirements to pursue civil  
20 penalties against SPROUTS FARMERS MARKET, INC. and SFM, LLC pursuant to  
21 Labor Code §§ 2698, et seq.

22  
23           255. Sprouts violated Labor Code §§ 1194 and 1197 by not paying Plaintiffs and  
24 aggrieved employees at least minimum wages for all the time they were suffered or  
25 permitted to work. Plaintiffs and the aggrieved employees have spent time taking actions  
26  
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1 to address and attempt to ameliorate, mitigate, and deal with the actual and future  
2 consequences of the W-2 Data Breach. Sprouts has not compensated them in any way for  
3 this time that they have expended in the course and scope of their employment as a result  
4 of Sprouts' disclosure of their PII in the W-2 Data Breach. Thus, under Labor Code §  
5 2699(f)(2), Sprouts is subject to a civil penalty of \$100 for each aggrieved employee per  
6 pay period for the initial violation of these sections, and \$200 for each aggrieved employee  
7 per pay period for each subsequent violation.  
8  
9

10 256. Sprouts violated Labor Code §§ 2800 and 2802 by failing to indemnify  
11 Plaintiffs and the aggrieved employees for the losses and expenses that they incurred in the  
12 discharge of their job duties and that were caused by Sprouts' want of ordinary care.  
13 Sprouts has failed to indemnify Plaintiffs and the aggrieved employees for the losses and  
14 expenses that they have suffered as a result of the W-2 Data Breach, which were incurred  
15 in the course and scope of their employment. Thus, under Labor Code § 2699(f)(2),  
16 Sprouts is subject to a civil penalty of \$100 for each aggrieved employee per pay period  
17 for the initial violation of these sections, and \$200 for each aggrieved employee per pay  
18 period for each subsequent violation.  
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21 257. Sprouts violated Labor Code § 226(a) by failing to pay Plaintiffs and the  
22 aggrieved employees at least minimum wage for all of the time they have spent to address  
23 and attempt to ameliorate, mitigate, and deal with the actual and future consequences of  
24 the W-2 Data Breach, and, thus, failing to provide Plaintiffs and aggrieved employees with  
25 accurate itemized wage statements including, but not limited to, the recording of all time  
26 worked, all wages earned, and the applicable rates of pay for time worked. Thus, under  
27  
28

1 Labor Code § 2699(f)(2), Sprouts is subject to a civil penalty of \$100 for each aggrieved  
2 employee per pay period for the initial violation of this section, and \$200 for each aggrieved  
3 employee per pay period for each subsequent violation.  
4

5 258. Labor Code § 226.3 provides for a civil penalty in the amount of \$250 per  
6 violation in an initial citation and \$1,000 for each violation in a subsequent citation, for  
7 which the employer fails to provide the employee a wage deduction statement or fails to  
8 keep the records required in subdivision (a) of § 226.  
9

10 259. For all provisions of the Labor Code for which a civil penalty is not  
11 specifically provided, Labor Code § 2699(f) imposes upon Defendants a penalty of one  
12 hundred dollars (\$100.00) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for the initial  
13 violation and two hundred dollars (\$200.00) for each aggrieved employee per pay period  
14 for each subsequent violation.  
15

16 260. Sprouts is and was Plaintiff's and aggrieved employees' employer or other  
17 person(s) acting either individually or as an officer, agent, or employee of another  
18 person(s), who pays or causes to be paid to any employee a wage less than the minimum  
19 fixed by an order of the Commission, and, as such, is subject to penalties for each underpaid  
20 employee pursuant to Labor Code § 1197.1.  
21  
22

23 261. Labor Code § 1197.1 imposes upon Sprouts for each initial violation of wage  
24 and hour laws a penalty of \$100.00 for each underpaid employee for each pay period for  
25 which the employee is underpaid. This amount shall be in addition to an amount sufficient  
26 to recover underpaid wages and liquidated damages pursuant to § 1194.2.  
27  
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1           262. Furthermore, Labor Code § 1197.1 imposes upon Sprouts for each  
2 subsequent violation of wage and hour laws a penalty of \$250.00 for each underpaid  
3 employee for each pay period for which the employee was underpaid in addition to an  
4 amount sufficient to recover the underpaid wages and liquidated damages pursuant to §  
5 1194.2.  
6

7           263. Sprouts is and was Plaintiff's and other aggrieved employees' employers, or  
8 persons acting on their behalf, within the meaning of Labor Code § 558, who violated or  
9 caused to be violated, a section of Part 2, Chapter 1 of the Labor Code or any provision  
10 regulating hours and days of work in any IWC Wage Order and, as such, is subject to  
11 penalties for each underpaid employee as set forth in Labor Code § 558.  
12

13           264. Pursuant to Labor Code § 558 and Labor Code § 2699(a) and (f), Sprouts is  
14 subject to a civil penalty of \$50.00 for an initial violation of any provision regulating the  
15 hours and days of work in any IWC Wage Order, for each aggrieved employee, for each  
16 pay period for which the aggrieved employee was not provided with all minimum wages  
17 for all hours suffered and permitted to work, as alleged herein. The civil penalty is in  
18 addition to an amount sufficient to recover the underpaid minimum wages, which shall be  
19 paid directly to each affected employee.  
20  
21

22           265. Furthermore, Labor Code § 558 imposes upon Sprouts for each subsequent  
23 violation of any provision regulating the hours and days of work in any IWC Wage Order  
24 a penalty of \$100.00 for each aggrieved employee for each pay period for which the  
25 aggrieved employee was not provided with all minimum wages for all hours suffered and  
26 permitted to work, as alleged herein. The civil penalty is in addition to an amount sufficient  
27  
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1 to recover the underpaid minimum wages, which shall be paid directly to each affected  
2 employee.

3           266. Sprouts violated Labor Code § 1198 when it failed to comply with the  
4 maximum hours of work and the standard conditions of labor fixed by the IWC under the  
5 “Hours and Days of Work” and the “Records” Sections of the applicable Wage Order, by  
6 failing to pay all minimum wages and failing to provide accurate itemized wage statements,  
7 as alleged herein. Thus, under Labor Code § 2699(f)(2), Sprouts is subject to a civil penalty  
8 of \$100 for each aggrieved employee per pay period for the initial violation of Labor Code  
9 § 1198 and \$200 for each aggrieved employee per pay period for each subsequent violation  
10 of Labor Code § 1198.  
11

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14           267. For bringing this action, Plaintiffs are additionally entitled to attorney’s fees  
15 and costs incurred herein.

16           268. Plaintiffs seek to recover civil penalties on behalf of themselves and other  
17 aggrieved employees for Sprouts’ violations of the Labor Code, including but not limited  
18 to Sprouts’ violations of Labor Code §§ 226, 226.3, 558, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1, 1198,  
19 2800, and 2802 pursuant to Labor Code §§ 2698, et seq. The exact amount of the applicable  
20 penalty is an amount to be shown according to proof at trial.  
21

22  
23           WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the aggrieved employees,  
24 respectfully seek the relief set forth below.

25 //

**COUNT XVI:**

**VIOLATION OF THE CALIFORNIA CONFIDENTIALITY  
OF MEDICAL INFORMATION ACT**

**Cal. Civ. Code §§ 56, *et seq.***

***California Subclass***

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7 269. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference the preceding and following paragraphs  
8 as though fully set forth herein.

9 270. Section 56.10 of the California Civil Code provides that “[a] provider of  
10 health care, health care service plan, or contractor shall not disclose medical information  
11 regarding a patient of the provider of health care or an enrollee or subscriber of a health  
12 care plan without first obtaining an authorization.”  
13

14 271. Pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code § 56.05(j), “medical information” is any  
15 individually identifiable information that “includes or contains any element of personal  
16 identifying information sufficient to allow identification of the individual, such as the  
17 patient’s name, address, ..., or social security number, or other information that, alone or  
18 in combination with other publicly available information, reveals the individual’s identity.”  
19  
20

21 272. At all relevant times, Sprouts was both a contractor and a health care provider  
22 because it had the “purpose of maintaining medical information ... in order to make the  
23 information available to an individual or to a provider of health care at the request of the  
24 individual or a provider of health care, for purposes of allowing the individual to manage  
25 his or her information, or for the diagnosis or treatment of the individual.” Cal. Civ. Code  
26 § 56.06(a).  
27  
28

1           273. At all relevant times, Sprouts collected, stored, managed, and transmitted  
2 Plaintiffs' and California Subclass Members' PII in order to provide health insurance and  
3 workers' compensation benefits and facilitate health insurance and workers' compensation  
4 claims.  
5

6           274. The CMIA requires Sprouts to implement and maintain standards of  
7 confidentiality with respect to all PII disclosed to it, and maintained by it. Specifically,  
8 Cal. Civ. Code § 56.10(a) prohibits Sprouts from disclosing Plaintiffs' and California  
9 Subclass Members' PII without first obtaining their authorization to do so.  
10

11           275. Section 56.11 of the California Civil Code specifies the manner in which  
12 authorization must be obtained before PII is released. Sprouts, however, failed to obtain  
13 the proper authorization – much less, any authorization – from Plaintiffs and California  
14 Subclass Members before releasing and disclosing their PII. Sprouts also failed to identify,  
15 implement, maintain and monitor the proper data security measures, policies, procedures,  
16 and protocols to safeguard and protect Plaintiffs' and California Subclass Members' PII as  
17 required by California law. As a direct and proximate result of Sprouts' wrongful actions,  
18 inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary care, Plaintiffs' and California Subclass  
19 Members' PII was wrongfully released and disclosed to an unauthorized third party. By  
20 disclosing Plaintiffs' and California Subclass Members' PII without their written  
21 authorization, Sprouts violated California Civil Code §§ 56, et seq., and its legal duty to  
22 protect the confidentiality of such information.  
23  
24  
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26

27           276. Sprouts also violated sections 56.06 and 56.101 of the California CMIA,  
28 which prohibits the negligent creation, maintenance, preservation, storage, abandonment,

1 destruction, or disposal of confidential PII. As a direct and proximate result of Sprouts'  
2 wrongful actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary care that directly and  
3 proximately caused the W-2 Data Breach, Plaintiffs' and California Subclass Members'  
4 confidential PII was wrongfully released and disclosed without their authorization.  
5

6 277. As a direct and proximate result of Sprouts' above-described wrongful  
7 actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary care that directly and proximately caused  
8 the W-2 Data Breach, and violation of the CMIA, Plaintiffs and California Subclass  
9 Members have suffered (and will continue to suffer) economic damages and other injury  
10 and actual harm in the form of, inter alia: (i) actual identity theft, identity fraud, or medical  
11 fraud, (ii) breach of implied contract, (iii) invasion of privacy, (iv) breach of the  
12 confidentiality of their PII, (v) statutory nominal damages of \$1,000 per Plaintiff and each  
13 Class member under the CMIA (Cal. Civ. Code § 56.36(b)(1)), (vi) unpaid minimum wages  
14 and liquidated damages (Cal. Lab. Code §§ 1194, 1197, 1198), (vii) inaccurate wage  
15 statements (Cal. Lab. Code § 226), (viii) expenses and losses in discharging their duties  
16 (Cal. Lab. Code §§ 2800 and 2802), (ix) deprivation of the value of their PII, for which  
17 there is a national and international market, (x) the financial and temporal cost of  
18 monitoring their credit, monitoring their financial accounts, and mitigating their damages,  
19 and (xi) the imminent, immediate, and continuing increased risk of identity theft, identity  
20 fraud, or medical fraud – for which they are entitled to compensation.  
21  
22

23 278. As a direct and proximate result of Sprouts' above-described wrongful  
24 actions, inaction, omissions, and want of ordinary care that directly and proximately caused  
25 the W-2 Data Breach and its violation of the CMIA, Plaintiffs and California Subclass  
26  
27  
28

1 Members also are entitled to: (i) injunctive relief, (ii) punitive damages of up to \$3,000 per  
2 Plaintiff and each Class member, and (iii) attorneys' fees, litigation expenses and court  
3 costs under Cal. Civ. Code § 56.35.  
4

5 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the Members of the  
6 California Subclass, respectfully seek the relief set forth below.

7 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**  
8

9 WHEREFORE, the representative Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and on behalf  
10 of the plaintiffs who are described within the Rule 23 definition of any Class or Subclass  
11 certified by the Court, respectfully ask that the Court:

- 12 A. Certify this case as a class action pursuant to Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of  
13 Civil Procedure, and as a collective action under the FLSA, and denominate  
14 Plaintiffs as adequate representatives for the Class and the undersigned  
15 counsel as counsel for the Class and collective action;  
16  
17 B. Allow that at the earliest possible time, Plaintiffs be allowed to give Notice  
18 of this action, or that the Court issue such Notice, to all persons who have at  
19 any time up through and including the date of this Court's issuance of Court-  
20 supervised Notice, been employed, as described above, by Sprouts. Such  
21 Notice shall inform such workers or former workers that this civil action has  
22 been filed and of the nature of the action;  
23  
24 C. Declare unlawful the acts and practices alleged herein and issue such  
25 injunctive and/or declaratory or other equitable relief to which the Plaintiffs  
26 may be entitled, so that the unlawful behavior of the Defendants may be  
27  
28



1           stopped. Such injunctive relief may include, without limitation: (i) the  
2           provision of credit monitoring for at least 25 years; (ii) the provision of bank  
3           monitoring for at least 25 years; (iii) the provision of internet monitoring;  
4           (iv) the provision of credit restoration services for at least 25 years; (v) the  
5           provision of identity theft insurance for at least 25 years; (vi) prohibiting  
6           Sprouts from continuing its above-described wrongful conduct including,  
7           without limitation, the unauthorized release and disclosure of its current and  
8           former employees' PII; (vii) requiring Sprouts to design, adopt, implement,  
9           control, direct, oversee, manage, monitor, and audit appropriate data security  
10          processes, controls, policies, procedures, and protocols to safeguard and  
11          protect the PII entrusted to it; (viii) periodic compliance audits by a third  
12          party to ensure that Sprouts is properly safeguarding and protecting the PII  
13          in its possession, custody, and control, and (ix) clear and effective notice to  
14          Class Members about the serious risks posed by the theft of PII and the  
15          precise steps that must be taken to protect themselves;

20          D.     Award the actual, statutory and compensatory damages incurred by Plaintiffs  
21          and the Members of the Class as a result of the wrongful acts complained of  
22          herein, along with pre-judgment and post- judgment interest at the maximum  
23          rate allowed by law;

25          E.     Award Plaintiffs and Class Members their unpaid wages and overtime  
26          compensation, along with liquidated damages in an amount equal to the  
27          wages and/or overtime compensation awarded;  
28

- 1 F. Award statutory nominal damages of \$1,000 per California Subclass  
2 Member under the CMIA (Cal. Civ. Code § 56.36(b)(1));  
3  
4 G. Award Plaintiffs punitive, exemplary and special damages for the wanton  
5 and willful behavior of Defendants, as alleged herein;  
6  
7 H. Order that Defendants restore and disgorge all funds to each employee  
8 acquired by means of any act or practice declared by this Court to be  
9 unlawful, unfair or fraudulent and, therefore, constituting unfair competition  
10 under Business and Professions Code §§ 17200, et seq.;
- 11 I. Grant incentive awards to Plaintiffs, as deemed reasonable by the Court;
- 12 J. Order Defendants to pay to Plaintiffs and Class Members all fines and  
13 penalties that apply under federal or state law;
- 14  
15 K. Award Plaintiffs their reasonable attorneys' fees;
- 16  
17 L. Award Plaintiffs the costs and expenses of this action; and
- 18 M. Grant to Plaintiffs all other and further relief as the Court deems to be  
19 equitable and just.

20  
21 **DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL**

22 PLAINTIFFS DEMAND A TRIAL BY JURY ON ALL TRIABLE ISSUES.

23  
24 Respectfully submitted, this 6<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2017.

25  
26 /s/ Adam M. Harrison

27 Adam M. Harrison (Admitted Pro Hac Vice)

28 aharrison@sawayalaw.com

David H. Miller (Admitted Pro Hac Vice)

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

1 I hereby certify that on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2017, I electronically transmitted the  
2 attached document to the Clerk's Office using the CM/ECF system for filing, which  
3 transmitted a copy of this document to the following CM/ECF registrants:  
4

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14 */s/ Adam M. Harrison*

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16 Adam M. Harrison  
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