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Proskauer Secures Defense Win for Sanderson Farms in $7 Billion Antitrust Jury Trial

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Full Defense Verdict in One of the Largest-Ever Agriculture Industry Antitrust Trials in the U.S.

NEW YORK, October 26, 2023 – Proskauer, a leading international law firm, announced today that it secured a landmark victory for Sanderson Farms in a blockbuster broiler chicken antitrust conspiracy case. Following a six-week trial, a jury in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois delivered a full defense verdict, rejecting the Plaintiffs' claims that alleged that Sanderson Farms participated in a supply reduction conspiracy with other producers in the broiler industry between 2008 and 2012.

The Proskauer team defeated $7 billion in damages claims, which – had the jury ruled against Sanderson Farms – would have been tripled by statute to $21 billion. The defense verdict was one of the largest-ever antitrust jury trial wins involving the U.S. agriculture industry.

"We are pleased that, after a full and fair trial, the jury has rendered a unanimous verdict in favor of Sanderson Farms on all counts. Today's verdict vindicates Sanderson Farms and shows that the Plaintiffs' case ignored fundamental truths about Sanderson Farms and the nature of the chicken industry," said Jeremy Kilburn, Chief Legal & Compliance Officer at Wayne-Sanderson Farms.

"We thank Sanderson Farms for using Proskauer as their trial team and for being a true partner throughout the trial, and for having the confidence that they would be vindicated. We focused on presenting the clear evidence that Sanderson was the only company to build and ramp up new production plants during an alleged supply reduction conspiracy, and that different companies made individual production decisions during the crisis of the Great Recession and high feed costs. We appreciate the jury's efforts in such a long trial, and for returning a verdict that there was no conspiracy," said Chris Ondeck, Co-Chair of Proskauer's Antitrust Group.

The Proskauer team was led by partners Chris Ondeck, Colin Cabral, Kyle Casazza and Shawn Ledingham, senior counsel Stephen Chuk, associates Henrique Carneiro, Justin Cohen, Bryan Cruz, Jared DuBosar, Jessica Griffith, Emily Kline, Shannon McGowan, Shiva Pedram, Hannah Silverman and Simona Weil, and legal assistants Jeff Soldridge, Julia Zaiser, Adam Tolson and Nikhil Sadaranganey (Litigation). The team also included partner John Roberts, senior counsel Scott Eggers, associates Tara Brailey, Adam Deming and Kelly Landers Hawthorne, and legal assistants Emma Keane, Jordan Caloras, Aliyah Kilpatrick, Anna Prusko and Madison Wilson.

About Proskauer

We are 800+ lawyers serving clients from 12 offices located in the leading financial and business centers in the Americas, Europe and Asia. We work with asset managers, private equity and venture capital firms, Fortune 500 and FTSE companies, major sports leagues, entertainment industry legends and industry-redefining companies.

Proskauer has a full-service litigation practice with extensive trial experience in virtually every major forum across the globe. We take a collaborative approach to representing defendants and plaintiffs, multinationals, middle-market and small-cap businesses, financial institutions, partnerships and individuals, with one thing in mind – driving successful outcomes for our clients.

We win make-or-break cases, change laws and establish precedents. Our litigators cover the full spectrum of complex commercial litigation practice areas and handle the complete range of sophisticated litigation, trial, appellate and counseling, as well as government contractor issues and investigations. Our prowess in the field consistently earns the highest accolades, receiving a top-tier rankings in *Chambers* and recognized as leaders by *The Legal 500* and *Benchmark Litigation*, among others.

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