



→ Christopher Van Gundy

Partner

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Christopher Van Gundy is a partner in the firm's San Francisco office, where he pursues a dual practice of litigation and regulatory compliance for his food, dietary supplement, tobacco and other clients regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Areas of Practice

For several years, Chris has been USA Chambers rated for Food Litigation and Regulation, based on both his food litigation and FDA regulatory experience for clients in a wide variety of categories – olive oil, fruit purees, juice, energy bars, dietary supplements, e-vapor products, snack products, spices, vinegar, seaweed, seafood, and pet food, to name a few. Chris is one of the few lawyers to try false advertising food cases to a jury, which Chris uses to gain litigation strategy insights and settlement leverage for his clients. Chris was a law clerk for two years in the Northern District of California, for Judge Spencer Williams in San Francisco and San Jose.

In his 30+ years of experience as both in-house and outside counsel, Chris has enjoyed extensive first chair case and trial responsibility in a wide variety of food and general commercial matters, in federal, state, and foreign court and arbitral tribunals. Chris regularly represents clients in class action and general litigation matters involving state consumer false advertising and Lanham Act claims, labeling claims, and supply chain and distribution disputes. Prior to joining Sheppard Mullin, Chris' in-house experience included representation of an affiliated group of food companies involving marquee brands of juice, bottled water, tree nuts and citrus.

With extensive experience in litigation, including jury trials, involving food companies and other FDA and USDA regulated companies, Chris is uniquely positioned to provide comprehensive regulatory counseling. Chris litigates and counsels companies on general regulatory compliance and product labeling reviews, California Proposition 65, product recalls, allergen and food borne pathogen issues, and "organic," "natural," "healthy" and nutrient content claims. By leveraging his dual practice, Chris is able to achieve optimal outcomes for his client by mitigating litigation risk or obtaining favorable results in litigation.

Chris is regularly asked to speak at leading food law conferences, including the Food and Drug Law Institute, and frequently writes on important food and dietary supplement law developments.

Honors

Leading Lawyer, Food & Beverages: Regulatory & Litigation, *Chambers USA*, 2022-2025

Articles

- Implications of the USDA's New Organic Rule
Food Manufacturing, 03.21.2023
- What We Learned From FDA's Public Hearing On Cannabis
Law360, 06.04.2019

FDA Law Blog Posts

- "Implications of the USDA's New Organic Rule," May 25, 2023
- "Comment Period for "Healthy" Regulations Extended; But Consumer Class Actions Targeting "Health Halos" May Continue," December 20, 2022
- "FDA Proposes Updated Rule for "Healthy" Foods," October 27, 2022

Speaking Engagements

Speaker, "What's the Deal with CBD?" American Bar Association Business Law Basics Webinar, January 9, 2020

Speaker, "What is FDA's Role in the Regulation of CBD?" Food and Drug Law Institute Legal and Practical Issues in the Evolving World of Cannabis Regulation, November 18, 2019

Co-Chair, "CLE International's 4th Annual Food Law Seminar," UCLA Law Faculty Center, Los Angeles, CA, June 6-7, 2019

Panelist, "How Cannabis & Hemp Might Disrupt the Industry," Tobacco Manufacturers' Association 104th Annual Meeting & Conference, Falls Church, VA, April 8-10, 2019

Co-Chair, "CLE International's Food Law Seminar," Denver, CO, April 19-20, 2018

Co-Chair, "CLE International's Food Law Seminar," Austin, TX, May 11-12, 2017

Co-Chair, "CLE International's Food Law Seminar," Washington, D.C., March 17-18, 2016

Speaker at CLE International's Annual Food Law Conference since 2014

Events

Navigating Food Labeling Litigation & Regulatory Hurdles in 2025 and Beyond
Webinar, 10.14.2025

Food Advertising, Labeling, and Litigation Conference 2025
September 17-18, 2025

2024 FDLI Annual Conference
Washington, DC, May 15-16, 2024

2023 FDLI Annual Conference
May 17-18, 2023

Law Over Lunch - Roundtable on The Current State of Class Action Litigation for Food and Dietary Supplements
10.27.2022

Food and Drug Law Institute: Food and Dietary Supplements Legislation, Regulation, and Litigation: Key Developments Over the Past Year
September 28-29, 2022

Exploring Advanced Topics in Food and Drug Law
06.14.2022

6th Annual Food Law Conference
Current Trends & Perspectives Beyond the Beltway
Virtual, 03.11.2022

Food Advertising, Labeling, and Litigation Conference: *For the Food and Dietary Supplement Industries*
Virtual, 09.28.2021

At the Intersection of Diet, Nutrition, and Health: The Role of Law, Science, and the FDA
FDLI Annual Conference: Exploring Advanced Topics in Food and Drug Law | Virtual Event
05.20.2021

Supply Chain Management: A Study in Sustainability, Traceability, Economic, and Environmental Impacts
5th Annual Advanced Summit on Food Law – Regulation, Compliance and Litigation
05.12.2021

Food For Thought: Functional Foods, Dietary Supplements, and Personalized Nutrition
FDLI Webinar
01.13.2021

Product Labeling & Advertising Claims Check-Up
Webinar, 10.14.2020

FDLI Annual Conference: Exploring Advanced Topics in Food and Drug Law
05.07.2020

CLE International's 5th Annual Food Law Conference
03.02.2020 and 03.03.2020

Webinar: Doing Business in China for Food Companies: An Insider's Update
via GlobalMeet
02.26.2020

Cannabis Webinar Wednesday: Getting Your CBD/Hemp Product To Market- Current Issues in Risk Management
02.19.2020

Business Law Basics webinar - What's the Deal with CBD?
American Bar Association
01.09.2020

CLE International's 3rd Annual Food Law Conference
Innovative Foods & Other Hot Topics
April 19-20, 2018

CLE International's 2nd Annual Food Law Conference
A Comprehensive Review of the Evolving Legal Landscape
May 11-12, 2017

Memberships

Chair, Food and Drug Law Institute, Food Ad Planning Committee

Podcasts & Webinars

Navigating Food and Dietary Supplements Labeling Litigation & Regulatory Hurdles in 2025 and Beyond
10.14.2025

Product Labeling & Advertising Claims Check-Up Webinar
10.14.2020

Cannabis Webinar Wednesday: Getting Your CBD/Hemp Product To Market- Current Issues in Risk Management
02.19.2020

Practices

Litigation
Class Action Defense
FDA Regulatory
Proposition 65

Industries

Cannabis
Food and Beverage
Life Sciences
Wine

Education

J.D., University of California at Berkeley, 1988

A.B., Brown University, 1985, *magna cum laude*, *Phi Beta Kappa*

Clerkships

Law Clerk to the Honorable Spencer Williams, U.S. District Court, San Jose.

Admissions

California