

Federal Circuit Finds Dietary Supplements Patents Eligible

March 25, 2019

Natural Alternatives International, Inc. (NAI), a publicly-traded company based in California, has won a landmark decision involving patents related to a popular natural product in the dietary supplements industry. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit held that NAI's patents directed to its CarnoSyn® beta-alanine, a leading ingredient in sports nutrition supplements, are "patent eligible" under existing patent law.

The impact of the Court's ruling is being viewed as a significant victory for dietary supplement, biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies. What inventions should be found to be patent eligible under 35 U.S.C. § 101 is the most controversial and important issue faced by federal courts, Congress and stakeholders primarily in the areas of life sciences and technology. The case sets important precedent for significantly clarifying the "natural phenomena" and "law of nature exceptions" that otherwise would have invalidated patents related to inventions derived from natural products. The decision reverses a 2017 ruling by a California district court and revives important patent rights in NAI's existing patent portfolio.

Kevin Bell, Principal and IP Litigator at Porzio, Bromberg & Newman, led the firm's Washington D.C. based team on the matter. "Companies in the dietary supplements industry as well as those in life sciences and pharmaceutical industries need to be aware of this ruling," Bell commented.

The Federal Circuit's decision is expected to have business implications on patent enforcement, funding of research, among other aspects that will directly affect businesses that seek to enforce existing patents and apply for patent protection on future inventions. Bell said that "the Natural Alternatives decision provides a road map on patent eligibility."

A copy of the decision is available [here](#).

For a full legal analysis of the ruling, please click [here](#).