

Lawsuits target ‘potato cartel’ enabled by price data aggregators

Tobias Burns | The Hill | 11-21-2024

Frozen potato producers are the target of multiple new federal lawsuits alleging that companies have been coordinating their prices through third-party data providers to form a “potato cartel.”

Companies including Cavendish Farms, McCain Foods, JRS, and Lamb Weston, as well as the National Potato Promotion Board, conspired “to raise, stabilize, fix [or] otherwise manipulate the prices in the market for the frozen potatoes in the United States,” according to one of the lawsuits filed in U.S. District Court in the Northern District of Illinois.

Price coordination between the ostensible competitors was enabled by mutual and exclusive participation in the market data aggregator PotatoTrac/NPD, a product made by market research firm Circana, which is also named in one of the suits.

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