

Amanda Groves Named Law360 Food & Beverage MVP

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Charlotte Litigation Practice Chair Amanda Groves has been named a Food & Beverage MVP by Law360. Ms. Groves is recognized for defending some of the world's biggest brands – such as Beam Suntory – as they battled consumer labeling class actions this past year.

Ms. Groves helped Beam Suntory Inc. escape highly publicized suits in Florida and California claiming the company falsely marketed its Maker's Mark and Jim Beam brands as "handmade." In May, a Florida federal judge sided with the manufacturer because the term's literal meaning cannot be applied to liquor. Three months later, a California federal judge put an end to a similar proposed class action, finding that a reasonable consumer would not interpret the word literally.

"[These suits] were among the first of a new wave of cases that hit the food and beverage industry: claims relating to 'handmade' on labels," Ms. Groves told Law360. "What makes the work that we did for Beam a little unique and why it garnered a lot of press is because the other companies that had been sued were not successful on getting out on motions to dismiss. We were the first to have these sort of cases dismissed at the motion to dismiss stage."

Ms. Groves also helped a client reach a settlement resolving three class actions claiming the company mislabeled its products as "natural," having "reduced fat," and containing "nothing artificial."

Referred to as a "food and beverage legal expert" by Law360, Ms. Groves represents consumer product companies, national retailers, and lending institutions in complex commercial litigation. She focuses her practice on consumer class action defense, primarily in cases alleging consumer fraud, false advertising, and product liability.

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