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# HOMEMADE, NATURAL SKIN HEALING PRODUCTS LAND BATH COUNTY AMISH MAN IN FEDERAL

BY TAYLOR RIPPE

Meet Sam Girod: An Amish man and father of twelve from Bath County, Kentucky.[i] Girod produces various forms of salves (i.e., products used to heal and protect the skin) out of his home in Bath County. Girod sold his “Chickweed Salve” out of his home and in small convenience stores in Kentucky and Missouri. In 2013, Girod was reported to authorities in Missouri, leading to an injunction being ordered by a federal judge and the involvement of authorities in Kentucky.[ii] Of particular concern was Girod’s “Chickweed Salve,” containing natural ingredients such as rosemary, beeswax, and olive oil.[iii]

Since 2015, Girod has been faced with a twelve-count federal indictment and up to sixty-eight years in prison. You might ask: wow is this possible when Girod’s products are made from ingredients you can find in your grandmother’s kitchen? The FDA took issue with the consumer testimonials contained in Girod’s pamphlets that accompanied the salve.[iv] The pamphlets claimed that Girod’s salve helped treat skin cancer.[v] Further, the FDA had a problem with the name of the product – “Chickweed Healing Salve.”[vi] When a manufacturer makes a claim about the effectiveness of a product, the product becomes classified as a drug, and must then register its manufacturing facility with the FDA.[vii] The Girod family home, which Girod did not register with the FDA, would be considered the manufacturing facility under this rule. Girod renamed his product to “Chickweed Salve” to comply with the FDA.[viii]





Unfortunately for Girod, the Amish culture is one of simple means and passiveness. Some residents of Bath County believe the FDA target the Amish because they are “easy prey.”<sup>[ix]</sup> Because of their faith, the Amish do not use lawyers.<sup>[x]</sup> Girod has been representing himself pro se, making any chance of full or partial dismissal slim at best.

Despite Girod’s attempts to comply with the FDA, the agency pursued a case against Girod and at the conclusion of the trial, the jury found Girod guilty on all twelve counts in the indictment.<sup>[xi]</sup> “The judge will sentence Girod at 10:00AM on Friday, June 16th, 2017. Until then, Girod will presumably be incarcerated in the Fayette County Detention Center.”<sup>[xii]</sup>

The result of this case is unsettling. While the FDA ensures consumer safety for the American people, is Sam Girod, the Amish farmer from Kentucky that makes a natural “skin healing” formula in his home, really the type of person against whom the consumer needs protection? One Bath County resident proposes a solution to this significant government overreach: let individuals make healing claims with disclaimers.<sup>[xiii]</sup> This simple solution provides a warning to consumers, while allowing individuals like Sam Girod to manufacture their products without being disturbed by the FDA.

[i] Vicki Batts, *Amish farmer facing 68 years in federal prison for making homemade products*, Natural News (Feb. 23, 2017), <http://www.naturalnews.com/2017-02-23-amish-farmer-facing-68-years-in-federal-prison-for-making-homemade-products.html>.

[ii] *Id.*

[iii] Hillary Thornton, *WKYT investigation: Amish farmer in jail awaiting trial, facing time in federal prison*, WKYT (Jan. 26, 2017, 4:50 PM), <http://www.wkyt.com/content/news/WKYT-Investigation-Amish-farmer-in-jail-awaiting-trial-facing-time-in-federal-prison-411915635.html>.

[iv] David Gumpert, *FDA Wants to Jail Sam Girod for 48 Years, for Making Salves People Love*, David Gumpert: The Complete Patient (Feb. 5, 2016, 7:25 PM), <http://www.davidgumpert.com/2783-2>.

[v] *Id.*

[vi] *Id.*

[vii] *Id.*

[viii] *Id.*

[ix] Sally Oh, *KY Amish Farmer Jailed over a Salve Lable; the FDA Wants Him Jailed for Life*, kyfreepress.com (Jan. 15, 2017), <http://www.kyfreepress.com/2017/01/fda-girod-indictment/>.

[x] *Id.*

[xi] Sally Oh, *The Trial: FDA v Samuel Girod Day 3*, kyfreepress.com (Mar. 5, 2017), <http://www.kyfreepress.com/2017/03/fda-v-sam-girod-trial-day-3/>.

[xii] *Id.*

[xiii] Sally Oh, *Sam Girod v FDA*, kyfreepress.com (Mar. 30, 2017), <http://www.kyfreepress.com/2017/03/updated-sam-girod-v-fda/>.

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631 SOUTH LIMESTONE, LEXINGTON, KY

40508 (859) 257-4747 [BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:blog.kjeanrl@gmail.com) ([MAILTO:BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:blog.kjeanrl@gmail.com))