

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Impossible Foods Inc. v. Impossible X LLC

Impossible Foods · No. 21-cv-02419-BLF · Decided September 17, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California grants two administrative motions to seal materials related to an opposition to Impossible Foods Inc.'s motion for partial summary judgment. The court applies the compelling-reasons standard and finds that the materials contain confidential financial information, business strategies, and other information whose disclosure could cause competitive harm. The court also orders the parties to refile public versions with narrower redactions or renew their sealing motions by September 29, 2025.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Beth Labson Freeman
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	September 17, 2025
DOCKET	21-cv-02419-BLF
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The court decided two administrative motions to seal materials filed in connection with Defendants' opposition to Plaintiff's motion for partial summary judgment.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Motions to seal material more than tangentially related to the merits require a showing of compelling reasons; material only tangentially related to the merits may be sealed upon a showing of good cause.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown; district court order addressing administrative motions to seal.

TOPICS

- summary judgment
- commercial litigation
- civil procedure
- intellectual property

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether portions of filings related to an opposition to a motion for partial summary judgment may be sealed under the compelling-reasons standard.
2. Whether the requested sealing and redactions were narrowly tailored under Civil Local Rule 79-5.
3. Whether material designated as confidential by another party should be sealed under Civil Local Rule 79-5(f).

HOLDINGS

1. Because the materials concerned an opposition to a motion for partial summary judgment and were more than tangentially related to the merits, the court applied the compelling-reasons standard rather than the lesser good-cause standard.
2. Compelling reasons existed to seal the identified confidential business, financial, and strategic information because public disclosure could harm the parties' competitive standing.
3. The sealing requests were narrowly tailored to the material warranting protection.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“As the sealing request relates to an opposition to a motion for partial summary judgment, Court will apply the “compelling reasons” standard.” (at 2)

“The “compelling reasons” standard is met for confidential business information that would harm a party’s competitive standing if publicly disclosed” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Defendants sought to seal portions of their opposition to Plaintiff's motion for partial summary judgment, asserting that the material disclosed business and financial decision-making strategies and that disclosure would cause competitive harm. Plaintiff separately supported sealing material concerning its financial information, revenue, expenditures, and marketing strategies. The court found compelling reasons to seal the identified material and determined that the requested redactions were narrowly tailored.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Impossible X LLC filed an administrative motion to seal portions of its opposition to Impossible Foods Inc.'s motion for partial summary judgment. It also filed an administrative motion asking the court to consider whether another party's material should be sealed. The court granted both motions and ordered the parties to refile public versions with narrower redactions or submit renewed sealing motions by September 29, 2025.

DISPOSITION

other

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

None. The court ordered the parties to refile public versions of the filings with narrower redactions by September 29, 2025, unless they filed renewed sealing motions.

CASES CITED

- *Kamakana v. City & Cnty. of Honolulu*, 447 F.3d 1172, 1178 (9th Cir. 2006)
- *Nixon v. Warner Commc'ns, Inc.*, 435 U.S. 589, 597 & n.7 (1978)
- *Ctr. for Auto Safety v. Chrysler Grp., LLC*, 809 F.3d 1092, 1097, 1099-1102 (9th Cir. 2016)
- *Laatz v. Zazzle, Inc.*, No. 22-cv-04844, 2023 WL 4983670, at *2 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 3, 2023)
- *Jam Cellars, Inc. v. Wine Grp. LLC*, No. 19-cv-01878, 2020 WL 5576346, at *2 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 17, 2020)
- *Fed. Trade Comm'n v. Qualcomm Inc.*, No. 17-cv-00220, 2019 WL 95922, at *3 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 3, 2019)
- *In re Elec. Arts, Inc.*, 298 F. App'x 568, 569 (9th Cir. 2008)

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