

Re: Scott Salyer's "Operation Rotten Tomato" Website

Our Website Guests:

I have debated for some time whether it would be worthwhile to respond to the false statements and malicious innuendo written by "Supporters of Scott Salyer," a group of individuals who lack the courage to identify themselves on the "Operation Rotten Tomato" website.

The accusations written and promulgated on this website are blatant lies; for example, a personal letter from Scott Salyer claims that I have significant influence over news media and the Federal Reserve System. This could not be further from the truth. The Department of Justice lists Morning Star as a victim of Salyer's admitted illegal activities, including bribery and collusion with two other companies in the processing tomato industry.

Morning Star has, and always will, allow its product quality, customer service, and competitive prices speak for themselves, but this is different. The website and the supporters of Scott Salyer attempt to impugn the integrity of Morning Star, our colleagues, our operations, and even some of our customers.

Morning Star was the victim of employee embezzlement, intellectual property theft (which ended up in Salyer's hands), Salyer's commercial bribery schemes, false product labeling, and criminal price-fixing (in conjunction with Salyer's currently unindicted co-conspirators). As any victim of a crime should do, Morning Star reported the facts to authorities and cooperated with the subsequent investigation as necessary. Through collusion and bribery, Salyer and his co-conspirators dishonestly acquired significant volumes of business and subsequently caused Morning Star tens of millions of dollars in damages as a result of their criminal activities. Morning Star seeks to recover those damages through the restitution process, as well as in separate civil cases against both Salyer and his co-conspirators.

The delusional ramblings of the supporters of Scott Salyer on this website are simply untrue and ignore the totality and severity of evidence presented by the Government. The guilty pleas submitted by Salyer himself, top corporate officers at SK Foods, and the recipients of SK Foods bribes speak for themselves.

Respectfully yours,

Chris J. Rufer  
Founder and President  
The Morning Star Company