

# **\* NEWS RELEASE \***

## **Salinas Man Pleads No Contest to Conspiring to Transport Over 4 Kilograms of Methamphetamine for Sale**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Jesse Mendoza Hernandez, age 32, a resident of Salinas pled no contest to conspiring to transport over 4 kilograms of methamphetamine for sale.

In March of 2015, the Department of Justice Task Force known as "STING" (Strategic Team Interdiction Narcotics and Gangs), initiated an investigation into a drug trafficking organization operating in Monterey County. After investigating a few members of the drug traffic organization, STING task force officers focused on select individuals believed to be directly involved in drug sales; Hernandez was among them. Over the course of an investigation that spanned March, April, and May, STING task force officers determined that Hernandez conspired with several members of a drug trafficking ring to import a substantial amount of methamphetamine from Mexico into California.

On the afternoon of April 18, 2014, U.S. Border Patrol Agents pulled aside Daniel T. Montes, a co-conspirator with Hernandez, who attempted to cross the border from Mexico into California. Border Patrol Agents searched Montes's car and discovered over 9 pounds of methamphetamine concealed within the vehicle.

Hernandez will be sentenced by the Honorable Carrie M. Panetta on March 8, 2016 in Department 4 at 8:45 a.m. He faces a maximum prison sentence of 10 years served in the Monterey County jail due to Realignment.