

NEWS RELEASE

SALINAS CORNER MARKET OWNER AND EMPLOYEE SENTENCED ON FOOD STAMP TRAFFICKING

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Young Kim and Seong Kang were sentenced to formal probation for 3 years and ordered to serve 120 days in custody. The pair pled guilty to felony charges involving Electronic Benefit Transactions (EBT) trafficking at the Corner Market in Salinas for over 2 years.

Young Kim, an owner of Corner Market, and Seong Kang, an employee at the market were charged with illegal redemptions of CalFresh (also known as food stamps or welfare) benefits. CalFresh benefits are part of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Act Program (SNAP) in conjunction with the State of California Department of Social Services. Retailers, like Corner Market, are licensed with California to redeem Electronic Benefit Transactions (EBT) and must comply with the program rules. CalFresh benefits are administered via EBT cards. Kim and Kang defrauded the program out of thousands of dollars in illegal redemptions by allowing benefit recipients to exchange their CalFresh benefits for cash. The defendants are scheduled to return to court on March 16, 2018 for a restitution hearing.

It is illegal to redeem CalFresh benefits for cash as well as to purchase items such as alcohol and cigarettes. Monterey County Department of Social Services along with Monterey County District Attorney's Office maintain a Welfare Fraud tip line. If you have information regarding welfare fraud you can leave an anonymous tip at (831)755-3224.

This case was investigated by District Attorney Investigator Don Magnusson in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture Office of the Inspector General Agent Jesse Barragan.

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