

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

SALINAS CORNER MARKET OWNER AND EMPLOYEE PAY \$100,000 IN RESTITUTION FOR FOOD STAMP TRAFFICKING

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Kim Hui Young, age 68 of Salinas, and her employee Seong Uk Kang, age 56, of Pacific Grove, paid \$100,000 dollars in restitution to the Department of Social Services for their participation in illegal food stamp trafficking. The restitution hearing was presided over by Monterey County Superior Court Judge Mark Hood.

Young and Kang each pled guilty to felony charges for illegal redemptions of CalFresh (also known as food stamps or welfare) benefits earlier this year and were placed on three years of formal felony probation and ordered to serve 120 days in jail. The case was then set for a restitution hearing.

CalFresh benefits are part of the Federal Supplemental Nutrition Act Program (SNAP) in conjunction with the State of California Department of Social Services. Stores like Corner Market, are licensed with California to redeem Electronic Benefit Transactions (EBT) and must comply with program rules. CalFresh benefits are administered via EBT cards. Young and Kang defrauded the program out of thousands of dollars of illegal redemptions by allowing benefit recipients to exchange their CalFresh benefits for cash and other ineligible items.

It is illegal to redeem CalFresh benefits for cash as well as to purchase ineligible items such as alcohol, tobacco products, and other nonfood items. The Monterey County Department of Social Services along with the 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 Agents Jesse Barragan and Anitra Mackie.

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