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**FORMER MANAGER OF BEAUREGARD RANCH & TRACTOR
SUPPLY PLEADS GUILTY IN FEDERAL COURT
TO WIRE FRAUD CHARGES**

LAFAYETTE, La.: United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced today that the former manager for Beauregard Ranch and Tractor Supply, located in DeRidder, La., pleaded guilty in federal court to wire fraud charges related to his embezzlement of funds associated with customer accounts.

Arnold Russell Williams, 53, of Singer, La., along with his wife, Janet L. Williams, was charged in February of 2006 with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and aggravated identity theft. Arnold Williams pleaded guilty today to conspiracy to commit wire fraud. As manager of Beauregard Ranch & Tractor Supply (BRATS) during August 2, 2000 through January 18, 2001, Arnold Williams, along with the assistance of his wife, Janet L. Williams, used customer account information to submit false electronic account information and invoices to Farm Plan Credit Financial (The Plan). Some of the BRATS customers used Farm Plan Credit accounts, which were provided by Farm Plan Credit Financial, as a means to make credit purchases for John Deere equipment. After Williams submitted the false information, The Plan would then reimburse BRATS directly by electronically wiring funds into the BRATS' bank account for the false credit charges that were submitted. When the customers received their billing statements, they contacted BRATS and were informed by Arnold Williams that they had been billed by mistake due to a computer error. BRATS customers told investigators that they did not order any of the items for which they were billed, did not ask for quotes or prices for any of the items, and did not receive any items for which their accounts were billed.

At sentencing, this defendant faces a term of imprisonment of not more than five years, a fine of not more than \$250,000, or both, and a term of supervised release of not more than three years. **Sentencing has been scheduled for January 17, 2013.**

The case was investigated by Federal Bureau of Investigation, Lake Charles Resident Agency, and is being prosecuted by United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley.

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