



## U.S. Department of Justice

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### **Man from St. David Sentenced on Federal Drug Charges**

Bangor, Maine: United States Attorney Paula D. Silsby announced that **Ben Dionne**, 29, of St. David, Maine, was sentenced on May 6, 2009, in U.S. District Court in Bangor, Maine, to 24 months imprisonment, 3 years supervised release, a fine of \$4,000, and special assessments in the amount of \$200, for conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute marijuana and for failure to appear. Dionne pleaded guilty to both charges on January 5, 2009.

In September 2006, Dionne was charged with conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute marijuana. The indictment alleged that Dionne, Michael Pelletier, and others, conspired to possess with the intent to distribute and distribute marijuana.

Dionne was released on bail on the day of his arrest. Although he had been ordered to stay at home, Dionne was not at home the next day when a U.S. Probation Officer arrived there for a home visit. After several more attempts to contact Dionne had been made, a bail review hearing was scheduled, but Dionne failed to appear. It was learned that Dionne had fled to Canada. The defendant was charged with failure to appear. He was arrested in Canada in August 2007 and extradition proceedings commenced. He contested the extradition, but was ultimately returned to the United States in September 2008 to face the drug conspiracy charge and the failure to appear charge.

According to court records, from 2003 to sometime in 2006, Dionne conspired with Michael Pelletier and others to possess with intent to distribute marijuana, and to distribute marijuana. The marijuana was smuggled across the St. John River into the U.S. from Canada by individuals working for Pelletier. Bulk quantities of marijuana would then be transported to Pelletier's customers.

As one of Pelletier's customers, Dionne took delivery of marijuana from a person working for Pelletier. In addition, Dionne also sometimes delivered multi-pound quantities of marijuana for Pelletier. Dionne also delivered cash proceeds from the sale of marijuana to Pelletier at his home in St. David.

United States Attorney Silsby praised the investigation conducted by the U.S.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency, and the Social Security Administration - Office of the Inspector General. United States Attorney Silsby also recognized the contributions of the Maine State Police, the Aroostook County Sheriff's Office, and the Madawaska Maine Police Department to the investigation.

When told of the sentence imposed by the Court, Jeff Paula, Special Agent in Charge of the Boston Division of the Social Security Administration - Office of the Inspector General, stated, "The Office of the Inspector General for the Social Security Administration is proud to have been associated with its fellow law enforcement partners in the investigation and prosecution of Dionne."

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