

U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Western District of New York*

Further Inquiries (716) 843-5700

PRESS RELEASE

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OWNER OF D&D FOOD CENTER LOCATED AT 817-819 JOSEPH AVENUE SENTENCED TO 37 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR FOOD STAMP AND TAX FRAUD

RE: UNITED STATES v. SAID DOULEH

Acting United States Attorney Kathleen M. Mehlretter announced today that Said Douleh, age 53, of Rochester, New York, was sentenced by the Honorable David G. Larimer, United States District Court Judge, to 37 months in prison in connection with his guilty pleas to food stamp fraud, in violation of Title 7, United States Code, Section 2024(b), which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both, and to filing a false tax return, in violation of Title 26, United States Code, Section 7206(1), which carries a maximum sentence of 3 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard A. Resnick, who handled the case, stated that Douleh was the owner of D&D Food Center located at 817-819 Joseph Avenue, Rochester, New York, which is now closed. Douleh admitted that from September 2001 and continuing through April 10, 2003, he fraudulently acquired and possessed food stamp benefits issued by the United States Department of Agriculture. The Court determined that the amount of food stamp benefits that Douleh fraudulently acquired and possessed was approximately \$1,500,000.

Food stamp benefits were issued by the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture through New York State social service agencies to eligible beneficiaries. The eligible beneficiaries were required to purchase eligible food items with the food stamp benefits. Douleh, however, purchased the food stamp benefits for less than their full value for cash from the beneficiaries. He did this by swiping the food stamp access device cards through the electronic funds transfer terminal installed at D&D Food Center and causing more than \$1.5 million to flow into his designated bank account.

Douleh also admitted that on his 2002 federal income tax return he failed to report additional taxable income of \$360,727.85, which resulted in a tax loss to the Internal Revenue Service of \$129,312.29.

The conviction was the culmination of an investigation by the Internal Revenue Service under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Anne Marie Coons, Criminal Investigation Division, and the Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Brian L. Haaser.