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| **Office of the United States Attorney**  **Eastern District of California**  **United States Attorney Benjamin B. Wagner** |
| FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: LAUREN HORWOOD  Tuesday, May 12, 2015 PHONE: 916-554-2706  *www.justice.gov/usao/cae usacae.edcapress@usdoj.gov*  Docket #: 1:14-cr-048-LJO | |

GUILTY PLEAS IN BAKERSFIELD DRUG DISTRIBUTION RING

FRESNO, Calif. —Arnoldo Delgado Garcia (Delgado), aka Fabricio Rene Delgado-Perea, 35, a Mexican national, pleaded guilty on Monday to conspiring to distribute and possess with intent to distribute methamphetamine and heroin, and in the same case Erik Gesus Rivera, 28, of Bakersfield, pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine, United States Attorney Benjamin B. Wagner announced.

According to court documents, from May 2013 through January 2014, Delgado and Rivera regularly distributed methamphetamine and heroin to various drug dealers and users in Kern County. During this time period, Delgado admitted that he distributed between 15 and 45 kilograms of methamphetamine and over 1,000 grams of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of heroin. Rivera admitted in his plea agreement that he was involved in the distribution of between 15 and 45 kilograms of methamphetamine, and on January 29, 2014, he was found to be in possession of over a pound of crystal methamphetamine and several ounces of heroin that were intended for distribution. According to the plea agreement, Delgado was the supplier for co-conspirator Jose Cruz, 28, of Bakersfield. On April 27, 2015, Cruz pleaded guilty to the conspiracy charge.

This case is the product of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the Drug Enforcement Administration, Kern County Sheriff’s Office, and the Southern Tri-County High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Task Force. Assistant United States Attorney Brian K. Delaney is prosecuting the case.

Cruz is scheduled to be sentenced by United States District Judge Lawrence J. O'Neill on July 20, 2015. Delgado and Rivera are scheduled to be sentenced by Judge O'Neill on August 3, 2015. Cruz and Delgado face a maximum statutory penalty of life in prison and a $10 million fine. Rivera faces a maximum statutory penalty of 40 years in prison and a $5 million fine. The actual sentences, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of any applicable statutory factors and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables.

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