



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

JOHN F. WOOD

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html

FEBRUARY 9, 2009
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OPERATION SUPER CHICKEN

JURY CONVICTS KC RESTAURANT OWNERS, OTHERS IN \$2.3 MILLION COCAINE, MONEY LAUNDERING CONSPIRACIES

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – John F. Wood, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that the owners of a Kansas City, Mo., restaurant along with two co-defendants were convicted by a federal jury today of participating in a \$2.3 million dollar conspiracy to distribute large quantities of cocaine from Mexico into the Kansas City area, as well as a money laundering conspiracy to conceal drug-trafficking profits through the restaurant and through real estate transactions.

“Federal agents shut down one of Kansas City’s most potent drug trafficking rings in recent history,” Wood said. “The defendants who were convicted today, along with their co-defendants who have already pleaded guilty, were involved in a massive cocaine distribution conspiracy linked directly back to a Mexican source of supply.”

In May 2006, federal law enforcement agents began investigating Super Pollo, a Mexican restaurant at 3253 Independence Ave., Kansas City, Mo. Suspicious banking activity reports indicated that the restaurant’s owners were depositing more money into their business account than the restaurant could earn from legitimate sales. A year-long investigation involved more than 100 officers and utilized several wiretaps, surveillance, undercover drug transactions and an examination of personal and business tax returns. A federal grand jury returned an indictment against 15 defendants on April 4, 2007, followed by a superseding indictment on Feb. 7, 2008.

Operation Super Chicken was so successful that it had an immediate and significant impact on the cost and availability of cocaine throughout the Kansas City metropolitan area. Law enforcement officers seized approximately \$1 million and secured lis pendens on 11 properties in Kansas City and central Missouri with a value of approximately \$700,000.

Juan Delgado, also known as “Cachetes” and “Marana,” 34, a citizen of Mexico, **Luis Morgan**, 41, and **Omar Villareal**, also known as “Shaggy,” 32, all of Kansas City, Mo., were found guilty of participating in a conspiracy to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine from June 11, 2002, through April 11, 2007. In addition to the drug-trafficking conspiracy, **Juan Delgado** was found guilty of four

counts of distributing cocaine.

Juan Delgado and his wife **Sylvia Delgado**, 29, as well as **JUD, LLC** and **Santadelg Properties, LLC**, limited liability companies established by **Sylvia Delgado** to launder the proceeds of illegal drug trafficking, were found guilty of participating in a conspiracy to commit money laundering. **Juan and Sylvia Delgado** are co-owners of Super Pollo restaurant. They conducted financial transactions involving drug-trafficking proceeds, with the intent to promote that unlawful activity and with the intent that the transactions would conceal the nature, location, source, ownership or control of the proceeds.

Juan and Sylvia Delgado were also found guilty of one count of aiding and abetting each other to launder the proceeds of drug trafficking through the transfer of real estate in Kansas City from a co-defendant to **Santadelg Properties**. That transfer was made to reimburse **Chavez** for \$71,895 in illegal drug proceeds that had been seized from **Santa-Anna** by law enforcement officers.

Juan Delgado was also found guilty of four counts of money laundering. **Juan Delgado** purchased real estate in Kansas City and a 120-acre property in Benton County, Mo., using the proceeds of the unlawful distribution of cocaine. He also structured approximately \$40,000 in an attempt to avoid federal reporting requirements by purchasing 11 cashier's checks and money orders – each under \$10,000 – for use at the closing on the Benton County property. **Juan Delgado** aided and abetted another co-defendant to commit money laundering to deliver \$18,650, and aided and abetted other co-defendants to transfer \$484,340, all of which involved the proceeds of the unlawful distribution of cocaine.

Following the presentation of evidence, the jury in the U.S. District Court in Kansas City deliberated about five hours over two days before returning the guilty verdict to U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey, ending a trial that began Monday, Feb. 2, 2009.

Two co-defendants have been sentenced after pleading guilty. **Jose Estrada**, 44, a citizen of Mexico residing in Merriam, Kan., was sentenced on Nov. 13, 2008, to 17 years and six months in federal prison without parole. **Ricardo Ruiz**, also known as “The Rabbit” and “Conejo,” 33, also a co-owner of Super Pollo restaurant, was sentenced on Nov. 13, 2008, to 21 months in federal prison without parole.

Four co-defendants have pleaded guilty and await sentencing: **Raymond Sparks**, 37, **Cruz Santa-Anna**, also known as “Nene,” 28, and **Julian Araiza**, 32, all of Kansas City, Mo., **Jose Canales**, 54, of Burleson, Texas.

Fernando Chavez, also known as “Mr. Magoo,” “Old Boy” and “Nando,” 36, **Carlos Hernandez**, 44, and **Jose Ortega-Gallegos**, 39, are all citizens of Mexico and remain fugitives from justice.

The defendants must forfeit to the government any property derived from the proceeds of the violations, including more than \$2.3 million that was received from the distribution of cocaine -- including \$880,296 that seized during the course of the investigation. Approximately \$140,000, which was hidden in the bottom of a clothes hamper, behind a fake wall and in a closet of the **Delgado** home, was seized at the time of the arrest of **Juan and Sylvia Delgado**. Also subject to forfeiture are several real estate properties, including 120 acres and a manufactured home in Benton County owned by **Juan and Sylvia Delgado** and **JUD**, two lots and a cabin in Camden County owned by **Juan Delgado**, and three residential properties in Kansas City owned by **Juan and Sylvia Delgado**.

Under federal statutes, **Juan Delgado, Morgan and Villareal** are each subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in federal prison without parole, up to life in federal prison without parole. **Sylvia Delgado** is subject to a sentence of up to 40 years in federal prison without parole. Sentencing hearings will be scheduled after the completion of presentence investigations by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jane Pansing Brown and Gregg R. Coonrod. It was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration, IRS-Criminal Investigation, the Jackson County Drug Task Force and the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html