

For Immediate Release
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**FEDERAL JURY FINDS ALBUQUERQUE MAN GUILTY
OF MARIJUANA TRAFFICKING OFFENSE**

ALBUQUERQUE – Yesterday evening, a federal jury sitting in Albuquerque found **Edwin Toro Sanchez**, Sr., 53, of Albuquerque, guilty of a federal marijuana trafficking offense after a two-day trial. At sentencing, Sanchez faces a prison sentence of not less than five years and not more than forty years. Sanchez, has been in federal custody since his arrest on June 9, 2010. He remains detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be set.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Sanchez was tried on an indictment charging him with possession of more than 100 kilograms with intent to distribute. According to the indictment, Sanchez committed the offense in Bernalillo County.

The evidence at trial established that, in the early morning hours of June 9, 2010, federal agents and local law enforcement officers executed a search warrant at Sanchez's residence in the west side of Albuquerque. During the search of the detached garage and a shed in the residence's backyard, the agents and officers found horse feed bags each packed with approximately 100 pounds of marijuana. They also found eleven SUV type tires mounted on wheels that were extremely heavy. After cutting into the tires, the officers and agents discovered metal cages that contained more marijuana. In all, over 550 pounds of marijuana was seized from Sanchez's property.

In addition to the marijuana, the agents and officers found tools in the garage and shed that can be utilized to cut open the tires and dismantle the metal cages containing the marijuana. They also found two electronic scales, which are commonly used to weigh marijuana, and other narcotics paraphernalia in the garage and shed. Sanchez had keys that fit the locks on both the

garage and the shed.

During the defense case, Sanchez's girlfriend testified that Sanchez had been in Mexico from June 4, 2010 through June 9, 2010. Sanchez also took the stand in his own defense.

Sanchez told the jury that he had been in Mexico from June 4, 2010 through June 9, 2010, and did not notice the marijuana in his backyard when he returned.

The jury deliberated approximately eight hours before returning a guilty verdict.

The case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Albuquerque Police Department, and Las Cruces Metro Narcotics, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Renee L. Camacho and Michael D. Nammar.

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