



Department of Justice

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Southern District of Ohio

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14 ARREST WARRANTS ISSUED IN ALLEGED FOOD STAMP FRAUD, DRUG TRAFFICKING CONSPIRACY

DAYTON, Ohio – An investigation by federal, state and local law enforcement in Butler County has led to the issuance of 14 arrest warrants on people charged in a conspiracy to defraud the United States, wire fraud, illegal use of Food Stamp benefits, theft of public money, money laundering and possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance (including near schools and playgrounds).

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Harold Torrens, Agent in Charge, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Ohio Investigative Unit, Anthony Mohatt, Special Agent in Charge, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Office of Inspector General, Mark Porter, Special Agent in Charge, United States Secret Service, Butler County Sheriff Richard Jones, Hamilton County Sheriff Jim Neil, Fairfield Police Chief Mike Dickey, Cincinnati Police Chief Jeffrey Blackwell and Warren County Sheriff Larry Sims and other members of the Southern District of Ohio Task Force announced the arrests that took place today.

This morning federal, state and local law enforcement officials executed 19 search warrants, 14 arrest warrants and four seizure warrants against the owners, operators and employees of Butcher Shop Food Distributors, LLC of 300 Commercial Drive, Fairfield, OH and US Beef of Cincinnati, LLC of 3210 Profit Drive, Fairfield, OH.

Locations searched included business premises, residences and vehicles. Today's raid culminated an 18-month undercover investigation into the suspected criminal practices of both of these retail meat home delivery services that operate in an approximate 50-mile radius of Fairfield. Their door-to-door retail sales of beef, poultry, pork and sea food products have impacted residential customers in Butler, Hamilton, Warren, Montgomery and Greene Counties.

Court documents allege that since 2011, individuals associated with Butcher Food Shop Distributors LLC and U.S. Beef Cincinnati LLC in Fairfield, Ohio actively engaged in illegal/fraudulent SNAP EBT (Food Stamp) transactions in exchange for cash. It is alleged that the owners, managers and other employees of the door-to-door meat retailers repeatedly, continually and illegally acquired and redeemed SNAP benefits in exchange for ineligible items, including money, Oxycodone, heroin and marijuana.

USDA records show that between December 2011 and May 2015, approximately 8,145 suspected fraudulent SNAP EBT transactions were completed via voucher for U.S. Beef employees for a total amount of approximately \$1.1 million. The total estimated fraud for the Butcher Shop is approximately \$382,000 and the total estimated number of SNAP EBT transactions for that shop is 7,912.

Initial court appearances for the arrestees are scheduled for 1:30 PM on August 27, 2015 before U.S. Magistrate Judge Michael J. Newman. They include:

Steven E. Mueller, 61, of Fairfield
Joseph Raymond Gray, 34, of Fairfield
Jeffrey C. Knab, 58, of Cincinnati
Andrie Lamarr Scott, 22, of Cincinnati
Francis E. Racicot, IV, 32, of Cincinnati
Rici Lynn Hopkins, 25, of Cincinnati
Christopher Doane, 29, of Cincinnati
Scott Andrew Traum, 45, of Cincinnati
Joey Lightcap-Traum, 43, of Cincinnati
Dalton Andrew Traum, 19, of Cincinnati
Keith Blankenship, 35, of Loveland
Gregory M. Brown, 35, of Cincinnati
Jordan A. Kaiser, 22, of Fairfield
William N. King, 22, of Fairfield

The Southern District of Ohio Task Force is an electronic and financial crimes task force made up of approximately 60 federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Ohio. This task force, along with an additional 80 electronic and financial networks across the United States, has been established to prevent, detect and investigate various forms of criminal activity that have large community impact.

U.S. Attorney Stewart commended the cooperative investigation by the local, state and federal law enforcement, as well as Assistant U.S. Attorney Dwight Keller, who is prosecuting the case.

Charges contained in a complaint are allegations. All defendants should be presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.

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