



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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VENTURA, California — District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced today that on September 19, 2014, Cimitrio Ambriz Cervantes (DOB 05/05/68) of Mission Hills was sentenced to serve 365 days in jail for felony trafficking in food stamp benefits. Cervantes was arrested in a multi-agency crackdown on store owners who pay cash to recipients of government food assistance benefits. This case was the result of a joint investigation by the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation, the United States Department of Agriculture's Office of the Inspector General, and the United States Secret Service.

CalFresh and the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provide nutrition assistance benefits to eligible, low-income individuals and families. It is illegal for a store owner to redeem these food assistance benefits for cash. Cervantes is the owner of Victor's Market a.k.a. La Victoria Market in Fillmore. Between January 24, 2012, and May 8, 2014, Cervantes illegally received \$75,557 in EBT benefits while working at his market.

Cervantes paid full restitution of \$75,557 prior to his sentencing. He was placed on three years of felony probation and banned for life from participating in the SNAP and CalFresh programs. His brother, Fernando Ambriz Cervantes (DOB 6/26/66), was previously convicted of a misdemeanor for trafficking in food stamps while working at the same market.

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