

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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***For Immediate Release***

## **MARIJUANA GROWERS ILLEGALLY PRESENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARE SENTENCED AND ORDERED TO FORFEIT FIREARMS USED IN THE DRUG CONSPIRACY**

**NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY** - February 5, 2009

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Magdalena Mauleon, the last defendant in a three-defendant marijuana grow operation, was sentenced yesterday in U.S. District Court in San Diego by United States District Judge Roger T. Benitez to serve the minimum mandatory term of 60 months in custody and a three-year term of supervised release, based upon her July 7, 2008 guilty plea to possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking offense, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c).

On October 20, 2008, co-defendant Guillermo Barreto-Ortiz was sentenced by United States District Judge Roger T. Benitez to serve 157 months in custody and an eight-year term of supervised release, based

upon his July 7, 2008 guilty plea to conspiracy to manufacture marijuana plants and to possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking offense, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846, and Title 18, United States Code, Sections 924(c).

On October 14, 2008, co-defendant Consuelo Mauleon was sentenced by United States District Judge Roger T. Benitez to serve 33 months in custody and a four-year term of supervised release, based upon her September 25, 2007 guilty plea to conspiracy to manufacture marijuana plants and to being an illegal alien in possession of a firearm, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846, and Title 18, United States Code, Sections 922(g)(5) and 924(a).

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph J.M. Orabona, who prosecuted the case, Guillermo Barreto-Ortiz, Magdalena Mauleon, and Consuelo Mauleon, were arrested following a four-month investigation into several suspected marijuana grow operations on federal land in the Cleveland National Forrest and on residential property in Fallbrook, California.

On July 17, 2007, agents from the Drug Enforcement Administration (“DEA”) and the San Diego Narcotics Task Force (“NTF”) simultaneously executed a search warrant at a residence in Fallbrook, California and set up a lookout outside the marijuana grow operation in the Cleveland National Forrest. Agents found sophisticated outdoor marijuana growing operations in the Cleveland National Forrest, as well an operation to grow marijuana seedlings and to process fully grown marijuana plants at the residence in Fallbrook, California. Agents also seized a total of approximately 16,347 marijuana plants and 41.74 kilograms of processed marijuana. According to court documents, Guillermo Barreto-Ortiz and Consuelo Mauleon were apprehended along a dirt road leading to the marijuana grow operation in the Cleveland National Forrest, while Magdalena Mauleon was found at the residence that contained marijuana plants, processed marijuana, and ammunition and firearms, including a Winchester 12-Gauge Shotgun (Model 1300), an U.S. Carbine M-1 30-Caliber Rifle, an Universal Arms M-1 30-Caliber Rifle, and an Ithaca M-49 22-Caliber Lever-Action Rifle. An order of criminal forfeiture has been issued with respect to the firearms and ammunition seized at the residence.

Guillermo Barreto-Ortiz, Magdalena Mauleon and Consuelo Mauleon, all of whom are Mexican citizens, will each be subject to deportation after serving their respective custodial sentences.

**DEFENDANTS**

**Case Numbers: 07CR2882, 07CR2398**

Guillermo Barreto-Ortiz

Magdalena Mauleon

Consuelo Mauleon

An Amended Order of Criminal Forfeiture was entered on February 2, 2009.

**SUMMARY OF CHARGES**

Conspiracy to Manufacture Marijuana Plants (1000 plants or more)

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846

Possession of a Firearm During a Drug Trafficking Offense

Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)

Illegal Alien in Possession of a Firearm

Title 18, United States Code, Section 922(g)(5)

Criminal Forfeiture (Conspiracy to Manufacture Marijuana)

Firearms and ammunition seized from the residence in Fallbrook, California

**PARTICIPATING AGENCIES**

Drug Enforcement Administration

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives

Immigration and Customs Enforcement