



Department of Justice

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**CUNNINGHAM PLEADS GUILTY TO MAKING FALSE CLAIMS
THAT ADULTERATED SOUP HE FED HIS CHILDREN
WAS FACTORY CONTAMINATED**

Atlanta, GA - WILLIAM ALLEN CUNNINGHAM, 41, of Stockbridge, Georgia, pleaded guilty today in federal district court to communicating false information, relating to a claim that soup he fed his children was contaminated by its manufacturer, when in fact CUNNINGHAM himself tampered with the product.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said of the case, "The defendant pleaded guilty today to committing a terrible crime. He admitted that he put potentially life-threatening foreign substances into soup which he fed to his two young children and then placed a call to Campbell's Soup Company falsely claiming that the soup had been contaminated. It is tragic that a parent would intentionally harm his own children in an attempt to reap a financial gain. We have prosecuted this case federally, using the available federal statutes, to ensure that Mr. Cunningham will serve a significant prison sentence without possibility of parole."

According to United States Attorney Nahmias and the information presented in court: On January 1 and January 15, 2006, CUNNINGHAM fed his children, then ages 3 years and 18 months, Campbell's soup at the family home. Prior to feeding them the soup, CUNNINGHAM tampered with the soup by placing foreign substances, including hot peppers and lighter fluid, into the soup. On both of those occasions, the children became ill and had to be taken to a local emergency room for treatment. On January 20, 2006, CUNNINGHAM contacted the manufacturer of Campbell's soup and falsely claimed that the soup he fed his own children had been tampered with, knowing that in fact he had put the foreign substances into the soup. Later that month, on July 29, 2006, CUNNINGHAM again forced his children to eat Campbell's soup, which he had contaminated this time with prescription drugs. As a result of that poisoning incident, his son was treated at the local hospital and daughter was rushed by life-flight helicopter to a hospital in Atlanta.

CUNNINGHAM was indicted in July 2006 on six counts, including mail fraud, product tampering, and communicating false claims that products had been tainted. He

pleaded guilty today to one count of communicating false claims that a consumer product had been tainted. The federal sentencing guidelines for this crime provide for a prison sentence of 18 to 24 months. However, under the terms of this plea agreement, CUNNINGHAM has agreed that he could be sentenced to the statutory maximum of 5 years in federal prison, to reflect the aggravated circumstances of the offense. The government will recommend that CUNNINGHAM receive the maximum sentence. There is no parole in the federal system.

Sentencing is scheduled for April 19, 2007, at 4 p.m., before United States District Judge Julie E. Carnes.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of Food and Drug Administration, Investigators of the United States Department of Agriculture, and Detectives of the Clayton County Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorney Aaron M. Danzig is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.