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District Attorney

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Approved: LOL
Date: Wednesday, October 27, 2021
Release No.: 21-109

Camarillo Resident Pleads Guilty in Government Fraud Case

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Jose Refugio Carbajal (DOB 11/25/66), of Camarillo, pled guilty to multiple felonies including public benefits fraud, identity theft, money laundering and conspiracy. The charges were related to his leadership in a scheme to fraudulently accept more than 3.8 million dollars in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Carbajal was the CEO of the corporation that owned Four Way Meat Market on East Date Street and Carniceria 4 Caminos Market, both in Oxnard. In June 2016, the USDA suspended Carbajal's right to accept SNAP benefits at both locations. After the suspension took effect, Carbajal continued to work at both markets and accept SNAP benefits. In August 2019, the District Attorney's Office Government Fraud Unit executed search warrants in this case. Evidence obtained at the search warrants proved Carbajal conspired with other individuals to reconfigure the point-of-sale devices at both markets which allowed each location to accept SNAP benefits without detection.

Carbajal is expected to be sentenced to one year in jail and be placed on probation for two years after he serves his sentence. Upon pleading guilty, Carbajal paid \$1,390,985 in restitution to the USDA and agreed to not contest the forfeiture of \$242,020 in cash that was seized during execution of the search warrants. Prior to Carbajal's guilty plea, the court determined \$1,390,985 constituted full restitution in this case.

Criminal charges remain pending in this case against Carbajal's wife, Adelina Carbajal (DOB 03/01/65), of Camarillo, Karla Orellana (DOB 09/19/78), of Sun Valley, and Antonia Penalzoza-Penalzoza (DOB 06/13/65), of Panorama City. An early disposition conference is set for the codefendants on November 30, 2021, at 1:30 p.m., in courtroom 23 of the Ventura County Superior Court. Carbajal's

sentencing is scheduled for January 4, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 23 of the Ventura County Superior Court. This case was investigated by the District Attorney's Office Government Fraud Unit, the USDA Office of the Inspector General and the Southern California High Tech Task Force.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 290 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.