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Tuesday, October 4, 2016

## Texas Man Pleads Guilty to Conspiracy in Scheme to Steal USDA Funds Intended to Feed Hungry Children

LITTLE ROCK—Christopher R. Thyer, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas, announced today that Waymon D. Weeams, Jr, 35, of the Dallas-area of Texas, pled guilty to an Information charging him with conspiring to commit wire fraud. Weeams conspired to steal money intended to feed children in low income areas during the school year.

Today's plea hearing took place in Little Rock before United States District Judge Kristine G. Baker, who will sentence Weeams at a later date.

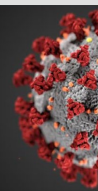
The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funds the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program, which includes an at-risk after school component. In Arkansas, the feeding programs are administered by the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS). Sponsors who want to participate in the feeding programs must submit an application to DHS for approval. After they are approved, they can provide meals as part of the feeding program, and they are reimbursed for the eligible meals they serve.

Weeams was a sponsor for a feeding program through an organization called "SJ&B Outreach Program." Weeams had three approved feeding sites which were located in Wynne, Forrest City, and Marianna, Arkansas. Between all three sites, he claimed as many as 872 children were fed each day. No children were ever actually fed at the Forrest City site, and Weeams now says that approximately 10 to 50 children were fed at the other two sites. Because of the inflated claims, SJ&B Outreach Program received approximately \$697,236.41 in USDA funds that were intended to feed children in need.



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Weeams admitted that he was recruited by Anthony Waits, who has been indicted on similar charges in Case No. 4:14CR00250 JM. Waits’ wife, Gladys King Waits, worked for DHS and approved Weeams’ application. She was charged in the same indictment as Anthony Waits, and in March 2016, she pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud as charged in that indictment. The plan was for Weeams to pay Anthony Waits a percentage of the money Weeams received. Out of the money Weeams received, he withdrew approximately \$475,000 in cash. Weeams paid Anthony Waits approximately 40% of the total amount of money he received.

Weeams is the eleventh person to plead guilty concerning the theft of USDA feeding program funds for children. Previous charges filed in this investigation detail alleged fraud involving over \$11 million in USDA feeding program funds.

The statutory penalty for conspiracy to commit wire fraud is not more than 20 years imprisonment, not more than a \$250,000 fine, or both, and not more than three years supervised release.

The investigation is ongoing and is being conducted by the USDA–Office of Inspector General, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service–Criminal Investigations, and United States Marshals Service. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Jana Harris, Allison W. Bragg, and Cameron McCree. If you are aware of any fraudulent activity regarding these feeding programs, please email that information to [USAARE.FeedingProgramFraud@usdoj.gov](mailto:USAARE.FeedingProgramFraud@usdoj.gov).

**Topic(s):**  
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**Component(s):**  
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