



# U.S. Department of Justice

**United States Attorney James T. Jacks  
Northern District of Texas**

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## **BUSINESSMAN ADMITS SELLING CONVENTIONAL CROPS AS ORGANIC**

**LUBBOCK**, Texas — Basilio Coronado, 45, an owner of Sel-Cor Bean and Pea, Inc., in Brownfield, Texas, pleaded guilty today before U.S. District Judge Sam R. Cummings to one count of false statements and documents, announced U.S. Attorney James T. Jacks of the Northern District of Texas. Coronado faces a maximum statutory sentence of five years in prison, a fine of \$250,000, and restitution. Judge Cummings ordered a pre-sentence investigation with a sentencing date to be set after that report is completed. Coronado remains on bond.

Sel-Cor conducted most of its operations from its facilities in Brownfield, Texas, and Coronado, a/k/a “Bossy,” as the managing owner of Sel-Cor, ran and managed its everyday operations. He managed all employees and was responsible for purchasing and selling organic products and maintaining records related to the purchase and sale of organic products. Organic food products are grown without synthetic pesticides, insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, hormones, fertilizers or other synthetic or toxic substances for a three-year minimum. The food product may only contain organically produced ingredients, and no artificial flavors or colors can be included.

Primarily, Sel-Cor cleaned, bagged and shipped conventional and organic produce. They also negotiated the purchase and sale of various types of produce grown in Texas and New Mexico. Sel-Cor, registered as an organic distributor by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), was authorized to represent products they distributed as organic if the products complied with all the National Organic Standards related to production and handling of organic products.

During an investigation by the TDA in late June 2008, Coronado furnished the TDA investigator several false documents/statements relating to his source of organic commodities. These documents/statements were false in that they represented that Sel-Cor was purchasing/selling large quantities of organic grain, beans, and peas when in fact, the products were not organic. The documents/statements included:

1) a document stating that Sel-Cor sold Edison Grain 1,187,000 pounds of organic milo in 2005, and 2,481,470 pounds of organic milo in 2006, when as Coronado well knew, only approximately 351,490 pounds of the milo sold by Sel-Cor to Edison Grain during 2005 and 2006 was actually organic;

2) a document stating that during 2005, Sel-Cor purchased from Houston Wall, in Causey, New Mexico, 1,144,380 pounds of organic milo, 396,120 pounds of organic pinto beans, and 60,410 pounds of organic garbanzo beans, when as Coronado well knew, in 2005, Sel-Cor had only purchased approximately 351,490 pounds of organic milo, and did not purchase any organic pinto beans or organic garbanzo beans;

3) a document entitled “New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission Certified Organic Product List,”

which stated that Wall Farms, operated by Houston Wall, in Causey, New Mexico, was certified by the New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission as a producer of organic peas and beans during the time of September 1, 2005, through September 1, 2006, when as Coronado well knew, Houston Wall and Wall Farms were not certified producers of those crops during that time period; and

4) a false statement that the pinto beans being shipped to American Health and Nutrition were organic beans purchased from Houston Wall, Causey, New Mexico.

The case is being investigated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with assistance from the FBI and the TDA. Assistant U.S. Attorney Steven M. Sucsy of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Lubbock is prosecuting.

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