

Two Charged in Marijuana Grow Operations

Two central Massachusetts men have been charged in federal court in Springfield in connection with marijuana grow operations.

Peter Molle, 35, of Holland, was arrested today and charged with manufacturing marijuana and possessing marijuana with intent to distribute. On Dec. 15, 2017, Eric Vallee, 38, of Sutton was arrested and charged with manufacturing marijuana and possessing marijuana with intent to distribute.

According to court documents, Vallee was featured in a magazine article noting that he regularly harvests 10 pounds of marijuana based on a cultivation timetable that would result in his harvesting hundreds of pounds of marijuana per year. The article noted that Vallee worked with Molle. Both Valle and Molle used bank accounts that featured large amounts of cash deposits that were consistent with the proceeds of drug sales.

In February 2017, agents executed search warrants at a house in Auburn where Vallee then resided, at a house in Sutton where Vallee had previously resided, and at a house in Holland where Molle resided. At each location, agents discovered commercial-style marijuana grow operations. More than 100 marijuana plants were found at Vallee's Auburn residence, more than 100 marijuana plants at Molle's Holland residence, and more than 30 marijuana plants were found at the residence in Sutton.

It is alleged that Vallee and Molle continued to engage in substantial marijuana cultivation even after the execution of the search warrants. On Dec. 12, 2017, additional search warrants were executed at Vallee's house in Sutton and at

Molle's house in Holland. At both locations, significant commercial-style marijuana grow operations were found. In addition, marijuana packaged for sale was recovered at Vallee's residence.

Each defendant faces a sentence of no greater than five years in prison, a minimum of two years and up to a lifetime of supervised release, and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling and Michael J. Ferguson, Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration, New England Field Office, made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Abely of Lelling's Worcester Branch Office is prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendants are each presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.