

Two Massachusetts Men Indicted by Federal Grand Jury for Manufacturing Marijuana

Two central Massachusetts men were charged in separate indictments yesterday in federal court in Worcester in connection with marijuana grow operations. The defendants allegedly cultivated marijuana after federal search warrants were executed.

Peter Molle Jr., 35, of Holland, was charged with two counts of manufacturing marijuana and possessing marijuana with intent to distribute and one count of money laundering. Eric Vallee, 38, of Sutton, was charged with two counts of manufacturing marijuana and possessing marijuana with intent to distribute. Molle and Vallee were arrested in December 2017 after being charged by criminal complaint.

Vallee and Molle were featured in a magazine article that noted that Vallee harvested 10 pounds of marijuana based on a cultivation timetable that would result in his harvesting hundreds of pounds of marijuana per year. According to court documents, Vallee and Molle's bank activity included large cash deposits, which is consistent with the proceeds of drug sales.

Search warrants were executed in February 2017 at Vallee's home in Auburn; a home in Sutton where Vallee previously resided; and Molle's residence in Holland where commercial-style marijuana grow operations were discovered. 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.

Following the execution of the search warrants, Vallee and Molle allegedly continued to engage in substantial marijuana cultivation. 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 and marijuana packaged for sale was recovered at Vallee's residence.

Each defendant faces a mandatory sentence of five years and up to 40 years in prison, a minimum of four years and up to a lifetime of supervised release, and a fine of \$5 million. 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. 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.