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Campaign Against Marijuana Planting Seizes Record \$1.3 Billion Worth of Plants During 2000 Season
Total of 345,207 plants seized; more than half seized in Central Valley counties

October 23, 2000
00-131
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(MADERA, Calif.) – Attorney General Bill Lockyer announced today that the 2000 California Campaign Against Marijuana Planting (CAMP) seized a record number of illegal marijuana plants worth more than \$1.3 billion. There were 345,207 marijuana plants seized during the latest CAMP season, 43 percent more than the previous record of 241,164 plants set in 1999.

Lockyer made the announcement in the City of Madera to recognize that in recent years, enormous marijuana operations are increasingly being found in areas other than California's north coast region.

"More than half of the CAMP seizures this year were in Central Valley and Sierra foothill counties stretching from Calaveras to Kern. The largest single raid in the 18-year history of the program occurred this season when more than 59,000 plants worth more than \$230 million were seized in Kern County," said Lockyer. "Several raids this year uncovered 8,000 to 15,000 plant operations. These large operations, directed by Mexican drug organizations, utilize a corporate approach, with different branches for production and distribution, unlike the traditional owner-operated small business gardens with a few hundred plants."

Lockyer, joined by representatives from Central Valley law enforcement agencies and the U.S. Forest Service, also pointed out a dangerous emerging trend. "About 60 percent of all CAMP seizures this year were made in state or national forests or other land available to the public. This presents a very dangerous situation for hikers, campers and hunters who may accidentally stumble upon an armed garden-tender under orders to 'defend' their illegal crop."

During the 2000 CAMP season, law enforcement officers from more than 70 local, state and federal agencies, under the supervision of the California Department of Justice Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement, conducted 263 raids in 25 counties from late July through mid-October. Officers seized 345,207 marijuana plants, worth an estimated \$1.3 billion, made 16 arrests, and seized 24 weapons. More than 174,000 plants were seized in Calaveras, Kern, Fresno, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Tulare, and Tuolumne counties.

Law enforcement authorities are also discovering that methamphetamine is produced and sold by Mexican drug organizations, and the profits are used to finance more lucrative marijuana operations. "These marijuana operations are so lucrative that a large organization can lose 15 of their 20 gardens and still make a large profit. It is very disturbing that methamphetamine, a drug that is ruining lives and threatening our environment, is being sold in order to finance a different illegal drug operation," said Lockyer.

"Just to show the value of marijuana, gold currently sells for about \$4,400 a pound, just a bit more than the \$4,000 per pound that is commonly paid for California-grown marijuana. The 345,000 plants that our CAMP program seized this year could produce more than 310 million joints; or two for every Californian, and one for every other person in the United States," said Lockyer, who

continued "We have no estimate of how much marijuana is grown and sold in the state, but we believe that our CAMP program, combined with year-round narcotics efforts by law enforcement agencies throughout California, has had an effect on the amount that is available. When the supply is down, the price goes up on the street. We hope that the price continues to rise so as to discourage many children and teens from using the drug."

Since 1983, CAMP teams have worked each year to locate, seize, and eradicate large outdoor marijuana operations. More than 2.3 million marijuana plants with an estimated wholesale value of \$7.8 billion have been seized since the program began. A summary of CAMP seizures is [attached](#).

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2000 CAMPAIGN AGAINST MARIJUANA PLANTING STATISTICS

County by County Breakdown of 2000 CAMP Season

<u>County</u>	<u>Plants Seized</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Plants Seized</u>
1. Kern	59,015	14. Monterey	9,197
2. Mendocino	31,583	15. Calaveras	8,534
3. Madera	28,934	16. Napa	7,453
4. Fresno	26,276	17. Sonoma	4,844
5. Santa Cruz	25,187	18. San Benito	3,683
6. Tuolumne	24,422	19. Santa Clara	3,030
7. Tulare	24,175	20. Merced	2,875
8. Butte	17,220	21. Santa Barbara	1,896
9. Humboldt	15,260	22. Trinity	1,292
10. Lake	14,419	23. San Bernardino	568
11. San Mateo	12,934	24. Glenn	389
12. San Luis Obispo	11,405	25. San Joaquin	385
13. Colusa	10,134		

2000 CAMP Season Summary

Total No. of Plants Seized.....	345,207
Estimated Wholesale Value.....	\$1.3 billion
No. of Plants Seized on Public lands.....	203,964
No. of Plants Seized on Private lands.....	141,243
Total No. of Raids.....	263 in 25 counties
No. of Arrests.....	16
No. of Weapons Seized.....	24

CAMP Program History

<u>Year</u>	<u>Plants seized</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Plants seized</u>
1983	64,579	1992	92,338
1984	158,493	1993	66,386
1985	166,219	1994	82,694
1986	117,277	1995	74,769
1987	144,661	1996	94,221
1988	107,297	1997	132,485
1989	147,518	1998	135,960
1990	79,441	1999	241,164
1991	85,189	1983-2000	2,335,918 (\$7.8 billion wholesale value)