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JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, January 27, 2016

Chinese National Pleads Guilty to Conspiring to Steal Trade Secrets

Mo Hailong, aka Robert Mo, 46, pleaded guilty today to conspiracy to steal trade secrets before U.S. District Judge Stephanie M. Rose of the Southern District of Iowa, announced Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin and Acting U.S. Attorney Kevin E. VanderSchel of the Southern District of Iowa.

According to the plea agreement, Hailong admitted to participating in long-term conspiracy to steal trade secrets from DuPont Pioneer and Monsanto. Hailong further admitted to participating in the theft of inbred – or parent – corn seeds from fields in the Southern District of Iowa for the purpose of transporting those seeds to China. The stolen inbred seeds constitute the valuable intellectual property of DuPont Pioneer and Monsanto.

During the conspiracy, Hailong was employed as director of international business of the Beijing Dabeinong Technology Group Company, a Chinese conglomerate with a corn seed subsidiary company, Kings Nower Seed. Hailong is a Chinese national who became a lawful permanent resident of the United States pursuant to an H-1B visa.

Hailong is scheduled to be sentenced at a date to be determined later in Des Moines, Iowa. Conspiracy to steal trade secrets is a felony that carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000. As part of Hailong's plea agreement, the government has agreed not to seek a prison sentence exceeding five years.

The investigation was initiated when DuPont Pioneer security staff detected suspicious activity and alerted the FBI. DuPont Pioneer and Monsanto have fully cooperated throughout the investigation. The case is being investigated by the FBI. The case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Southern District of Iowa and the National Security Division's Counterintelligence and Export Control Section.

[Hailong Plea Agreement](#)

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National Security Division (NSD)
USAO - Iowa, Southern

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