

## JUSTICE NEWS

### Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

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## **Chinese National Sentenced to Prison for Conspiracy to Steal Trade Secrets**

Mo Hailong, a/k/a Robert Mo, 46, a Chinese national, was sentenced to 36 months in prison for conspiracy to steal trade secrets. Mo Hailong was also ordered to serve three years of supervised release following his term of imprisonment and was ordered to pay restitution in an amount to be determined at a later date. In addition, the Court ordered the forfeiture of two farms in Iowa and Illinois that were purchased and utilized by Mo Hailong and others during the course of the conspiracy. Mo Hailong is a Chinese national who became a lawful permanent resident of the United States.

The announcement was made by Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin and U.S. Attorney Kevin E. VanderSchel. The sentence was issued by U.S. District Judge Stephanie M. Rose.

During the course of the conspiracy, Mo Hailong was employed as the Director of International Business of the Beijing Dabeinong Technology Group Company, commonly referred to as DBN. DBN is a Chinese conglomerate with a corn seed subsidiary company, Kings Nower Seed.

According to the plea agreement entered on January 27, Mo Hailong admitted to participating in a long-term conspiracy to steal trade secrets from DuPont Pioneer and Monsanto. Mo Hailong participated in the theft of inbred corn seeds from fields in the Southern District of Iowa and elsewhere for the purpose of transporting the seeds to DBN in China. The stolen inbred, or parent, seeds were the valuable trade secrets of DuPont Pioneer and Monsanto.

The investigation was initiated when DuPont Pioneer security staff detected suspicious activity and alerted the FBI. DuPont Pioneer and Monsanto were fully cooperative throughout the investigation.

“Mo Hailong stole valuable proprietary information in the form of seed corn from DuPont Pioneer and Monsanto in an effort to transport such trade secrets to China. Theft of trade secrets is a serious federal crime, as it harms victim companies that have invested millions of dollars and years of work toward the development of propriety technology. The theft of agricultural trade secrets, and other intellectual property, poses a grave threat to our national economic security,” said U.S. Attorney Kevin E. VanderSchel. “The Justice Department and federal law enforcement partners are committed to prosecuting those who in engage in conduct such as Mo Hailong.”

This matter was investigated by the FBI. The case was prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Iowa and the National Security Division's Counterintelligence and Export Control Section, with assistance from the Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section.

National Security Division (NSD)

USAO - Iowa, Southern

**Topic:**

Counterintelligence and Export Control

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