

## \$22.3 Million Worth of Marijuana Found By GDA in Raid on Fish Farm

By Carol A. Gasser Moore

PIECE COUNTY, Georgia – A drug bust in South Georgia by two partnered agencies – Georgia Department of Agriculture (GDA) and the Pearce County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) has gone on record as one of the largest drug busts in Georgia history. Law enforcement and agents found over 11,000 marijuana plants worth \$22.3+ millions of dollars during the raid.

The two agencies held a press conference in which information about the raid was detailed.

The two agencies joined forces because the GDA originally supposed that the location in Pearce County, just about 60 miles northeast of Lanier County, was the location of an illegal food manufacturing plant. Instead, the raid revealed what is described as one of the largest indoor pot growing operations in the Southeast.

Over 11,153 plants were found inside the marijuana growing facility.

Tyler Harper, who is the Georgia Commissioner of Agriculture, has released the information that officials involved with the raid found a very sophisticated growing operation.

The raid came after a month long investigation. An undercover Pearce County Deputy learned of what he thought was an alleged illegal fish farm.

Pierce County Sheriff Ramsey Bennett has indicated that the investigating officials arrested three men and one woman during the raid. All four people arrested are said to be Chinese Nationals.

Evidence during the investigations suggests that the marijuana-growing operation began in 2022. Evidence also seems to indicate that the finished marijuana agriculture product was shipped to New York and Houston.

PCSO has stated that all four people arrested are in jail without bond. One of them is said to be "On hold" for immigration because he illegally entered the USA.



All four individuals will face charges of:

- Drug Possession
- Drug Manufacturing and trafficking

The ongoing investigation has now involved federal agencies. The FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) and the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) are now teamed up with the Georgia Department of Agriculture (GDA) and the Pearce County Sheriff's Office (PCSO).

# Lanier County News

Covering Lanier & Northern Lowndes Counties

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(The number of new Page Likes in the last 28 days.)

Considering the demographics of our local area are as follows

Lakeland, GA population = 2,691

Lanier County, GA population = 9,817

Total population of Lakeland/Lanier = 12,508

Total adult population of Lakeland/Lanier = 8,177

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