



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

---

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

[www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)

---

**NOVEMBER 20, 2003**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **WARRENSBURG DEALER PLEADS GUILTY TO \$368,000 FRAUD AGAINST JOHN DEERE**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a former equipment dealer in Warrensburg, Mo., pleaded guilty in federal court today to a \$368,000 scheme to defraud John Deere.

**David E. Roberts**, 57, of Warrensburg, Mo., waived his right to an indictment and pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Dean Whipple this morning to a six-count federal information.

**Roberts** owned Roberts Equipment in Warrensburg and was an authorized dealer of John Deere equipment. According to the plea agreement, a \$368,703 loss to John Deere as a result of **Roberts'** scheme to defraud can be readily proved by the government.

Each of the six counts of the federal information charges **Roberts** with a separate act of wire fraud in furtherance of his scheme to defraud John Deere, which lasted from November 1997 through Dec. 11, 1998.

**Roberts** admitted that he e-mailed false reports and mailed copies of false sales invoices and false purchase orders to John Deere, claiming that equipment had been sold and that as part of the sale there had a trade-in of other equipment. As a result, Graves explained, Roberts reduced his payment obligation to John Deere on the sale of the new equipment and delayed payment of the amount owed until the false trade-in equipment was sold, or for up to six months.

When **Roberts** sold or reported the sale of new or used equipment, instead of paying John Deere the amount due under the terms of a financing agreement, he created false trade-ins to offset the amount of the payment due John Deere for the sale. **Roberts** admitted that he failed to report sales of new equipment and failed to pay John Deere the amount due for new equipment sales.

When John Deere representatives visited Roberts Equipment to verify inventory, Graves said, **Roberts** falsely represented that inventory had been sold, was out on loan or on rental, was being used as demonstrators, or for some other reason was not then present at the dealership.

As a result of today's guilty plea, **Roberts** could be subject to a sentence of up to 30 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$1,250,000 and an order of restitution. His sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Linda Parker Marshall. It was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

\*\*\*\*\*

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at  
[www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)