

Massive Honey Smuggling Sting Signals Continued Crack-Down on International Trade Fraud

[Michael J. Coursey](#)

March 31, 2013

The U.S. Government recently announced another round of record-breaking criminal charges filed in "Honeygate," the largest food fraud investigation in U.S. history, and the latest example of the increased attention that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has given to domestic producer complaints of customs and international trade fraud. It also marks the most aggressive and sophisticated tactics used to date to uncover such fraud as well as very strict and comprehensive deferred prosecution agreements (DPAs) with defendant companies and individuals.

Dozens of other commodities are imported into the United States under false descriptions or origins, costing the U.S. taxpayer billions of dollars in lost import duties. In this article, published in *Practical Trade & Customs Strategies*, partner [Mike Coursey](#) explored the case known as "Honeygate," and the increasing trend of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and private citizens fighting customs fraud under the False Claims Act, which allows private citizens to sue on behalf of the United States and share in any recovery if they provide the government with the necessary information and evidence.