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2004 Marijuana and Opium Poppy Estimates for Mexico

(Washington, D.C.) To monitor trends in the production of illegal drugs, and to assist in measuring the impact of its drug control efforts, the U.S. Government produces annual estimates of drug crop cultivation in countries where this cultivation affects the United States. These estimates are produced with survey-sampling techniques and satellite imagery, similar to techniques used to estimate agricultural crops.

The U.S. Government has completed its estimate of cannabis and opium poppy cultivation and potential production for Mexico for 2004. This estimate is particularly important because most of the Mexican-produced heroin, and a substantial portion of the marijuana, supplies the U.S. drug market.

Marijuana cultivation fell 23 percent between 2003 and 2004, to an estimated 5,800 hectares, down from 7,500 hectares in 2003. The Mexican government continued intensive efforts against the marijuana crop, eradicating 30,836 hectares for the year. Marijuana potential production fell to an estimated 10,400 metric tons (down from 13,400 the previous year).

Opium poppy cultivation likewise fell in 2004, declining 27 percent to an estimated 3,500 hectares from 4,800 hectares in 2003. Mexican government forces eradicated 15,925 hectares of opium poppy. Potential production of heroin fell to an estimated nine metric tons (pure heroin equivalent), down from an estimated twelve metric tons in 2003.

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