



Rubio's Pig Pic Not Kosher: Miami Activist

Senate candidate's Miami swine slaughter doesn't sit well with SPCA

By [Brian Hamacher](#) Friday, Jan 29, 2010



Just days after jumping ahead of [Governor Charlie Crist](#) in the newest Florida Senate poll, underdog [Marco Rubio](#) is taking heat for a photo he posted on his Twitter page showing a pig being slaughtered for Christmas dinner.

The picture, taken on Christmas eve and posted over a month ago, show four men surrounding the swine and in the beginning stages of the pig slaughter.

"Working on the 2009 Rubio family Christmas eve pig. Warning picture not for the faint of heart," Rubio captioned the photo.

Regardless of whether it's in bad taste, the problem for the [Miami](#)-born Rubio is that animal rights activists are claiming that the slaughtering was done at one of Miami's illegal slaughterhouses.

"This is not a USDA approved slaughter farm. This is not his home. This is an illegal operation," [Richard Couto](#), an investigator with Animal Recovery Mission, [told tampabay.com](#). "Most of the illegal farms have these wooden tables. You have four guys holding this pig down. It looks like this hog is still alive. The only time four men hold down a hog is when it is being slaughtered alive."

Rubio's spokesman, Alex Burgos, said the controversy is all hogwash. He said the picture was taken on a farm and that the pig was killed beforehand.

"This is a Rubio family tradition enjoyed by thousands if not hundreds of thousands of people of Cuban-American descent every Christmas Eve," [Burgos](#) said. "It's Marco's way of giving insight into how his family spends Christmas Eve."

The Christmas Eve celebration in which the pig is consumed, called Noche Buena, has long been a tradition in the Cuban community.

Couto, who has helped lead a crusade to bust the illegal slaughterhouses throughout Miami-Dade, said he wants more proof Rubio didn't visit an illegal operation.

The Republican Rubio, who just eight months ago trailed Gov. Crist by 34 percent in the polls, now leads Crist 47-44 percent among Republican voters, according to a Quinnipiac University poll released earlier this week.