

POLICE RAID THREE HORSE-SLAUGHTER FACILITIES IN PALM BEACH COUNTY

BY CHRIS JOSEPH TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2015 | 2 DAYS AGO



screen grab from video courtesy Animal Recovery Mission

Palm Beach County authorities conducted the largest raid in extreme animal cruelty operations in U.S. history Tuesday when Animal Recovery Mission (ARM), the Palm Beach County State Attorney's Office, and Palm Beach County law enforcement raided three alleged illegal animal slaughter farms. These farms, authorities say, have been involved in selling horse meat, which is illegal. There are also accusations of pigs being boiled alive as well as animals being skinned alive, having their throats slit, and "drowning... in their own blood."

According to ARM, one of the farmers, Jorge Garcia, runs Rancho Garcia and has been purchasing horses from animal auctions and Craigslist for the purpose of slaughtering them and selling their meat for consumption.

Garcia, whose farm is located at 15703 Orange Blvd. in Loxahatchee, has been considered by authorities to be a leader of horse meat supply in the Loxahatchee and greater Wellington areas.

In July, a WPTV investigation on Rancho Garcia had many of Garcia's neighbors coming forward to say the smell coming from the farm was unbearable. There were complaints of constant sighting of goats and pigs being herded into the farm and neighbors reported always seeing trash strewn about the ranch.

Palm Beach County Animal Care and Control expressed concern over the farm and said it they had visited Garcia several times throughout the years. For his part, Garcia told the news station that his neighbors were making up stories.

"They are lying. Whoever is telling you these things needs to talk to me face to face," Garcia said at the time.

In addition to illegal slaughtering and selling of horse meat on the black market, authorities are saying that Garcia is also accused of selling animals for black magic and sacrificial purposes. There are also detailed accounts of severe animal cruelty, authorities say.

According to ARM, which is a nonprofit organization dedicated to investigating, exposing, and shutting down illegal and extreme animal cruelty, undercover investigators witnessed and captured footage of Garcia and his employees "selling large amounts of horse meat, violently stabbing pigs in the heart and boiling them alive, slitting throats of goats and rams before hoisting them by their hind legs, then skinning them alive, and brutally stomping on ducks." ARM also says Garcia uses a section of his ranch to run a puppy mill, where dogs are bred and sold.

Another farm in Loxahatchee, G.A. Paso Fino, located at 14873 Collecting Canal Rd. and owned and operated by Orlando Guzman, is being accused of running a decades-long slaughterhouse for horses. The farm has also allegedly been cruel to animals, including what ARM officials call "barbaric and ruthless ways in which chickens, pigs, and goats are brutally tortured and slaughtered by the employees of the farm."

The third ranch, Medina Farm, located at 2151 C. Road in Loxahatchee, has allegedly partaken in slaughtering and abusing animals. Authorities say agents witnessed and documented Media Farm employees slitting goats' necks while they are restrained on their backs and forced to suffocate in their own blood. The farm also allegedly was found slitting and severing the throats of cows with extremely dull blades before hoisting them by their hind legs and skinning them alive, often dragging out their death for more than 20 minutes.

ARM says that all three farms are being raided on Tuesday and are being permanently shut down. The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office says farm owners and their employees are being arrested. The animals are being seized and placed in Animal Recovery Mission's care.

The video below, courtesy of ARM, allegedly shows the illegal operations at Rancho Garcia and documents the operation conducted by Palm Beach authorities and ARM. (Warning: The video is graphic and may not be safe for work.)