

## Video reveals abuse of animals in dairy farm

The Associated Press November 10, 2017

**A secretly recorded video on a dairy farm in Florida shows workers cows kicking and hitting them on the head with metal poles.**



Authorities launched an investigation into the events at the farm Larson Dairy, said the police chief Okeechobee County, Noel Stephen.

Publix supermarket chain announced that it has suspended the sale of that brand, in a statement expressing its "amazement" by the abuse revealed in the video.

Publix also said it has contacted the Florida Department of Agriculture to report abuse.

"We are disturbed by these images and amazed by the cruelty against animals showing" the company said in a statement.

We are aware of the undercover video taken at Larson Dairy and are shocked and disturbed by the cruelty shown toward the animals. We are suspending deliveries from raw milk that farm. Also we are in contact with the FL Dept of Agriculture, and they have advised us they ... 1/2

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... will be visiting Larson Dairy as possible to as quickly ensure the safety and well-being of the animals. At Publix, we are committed to animal welfare and are focused on working with suppliers share the same goals WHO. ^ ML 2/2

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The video was made by a researcher of **Animal Recovery Mission**, an activist group based in Miami Beach which began operations on the farm in August.

"The workers beat, stabbed and tormenting cows with steel bars," says the narrator of the video. "The metal rods cut and penetrate into the bodies of cows, which are kept away from visitors to the farm."

In a statement, Jacob Larson, owner of the farm, said an employee seen in the video abusing cows was already fired and that "the unjustified use of force is simply unacceptable in our farm or anywhere else."

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"We have strict protocols for animal care and behavior displayed in this video goes against everything we are and this will not be tolerated," Larson said. "The employee shown in the video has been fired. More measures will be taken if necessary as we analyze the video and investigate what happened. "

Larson, whose family has been working in the dairy industry since 1947 and Okeechobee County since 1971, questioned the tactics of the advocacy group of animals.

"We are equally disturbed by the way this video came to our attention," Larson said. "If this employee 'clandestine' we would have alerted as soon events occurred, we could have avoided further abuse."

Richard Couto, founder of the advocacy group of animals, said they did not know in advance about the abuse in Larson, but less than an hour after starting the covert operation detected "strong indications of abuse against animals".

"We wanted to know what was happening generally in the dairy industry-wide state of Florida," said Couto.

