

3 arrested in raid of illegal Loxahatchee slaughterhouse

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LOXAHATCHEE, Fla. (WSVN) — Three men have been arrested following the raid of a property accused of operating as an illegal slaughterhouse in Loxahatchee, Fla.

The Palm Beach Sheriff's Office raided the property along North 145th Avenue and 43rd Road, Tuesday.

“This is not law enforcement’s job to come in here and investigate these properties,” said Richard Couto with the Animal Recovery

Mission. “It’s actually the USDA’s and the Florida Department of Agriculture’s.”

The Animal Recovery Mission had gone undercover for several months before the arrests, providing 7News with footage of the illegal slaughterhouse.

“The level of cruelty on this property is extreme, and they’ve been doing it for decades,” said Couto. “Animals being hung from meat hooks alive, being butchered alive, stabbed to death. They’re selling animals for Santeria, Palo Mayombe, Voodoo, black magic.”

According to the Animal Recovery Mission, the illegal slaughterhouse in Loxahatchee has been in business for quite some time, killing 1,500 to 2,000 animals a week.

The undercover investigation revealed that the animals were being tortured and slaughtered at the property to then be delivered to Miami-Dade and Broward counties.

“Lot, a lot of money, lot of cash flow was going in and out of this establishment,” said Couto. “It doesn’t look like much, but it’s a front.” The three men arrested in the raid now face multiple charges, including felony cruelty to animals, conspiracy to commit felony cruelty to animals and using inhumane methods to kill animals.

“These animals have been tortured behind me in this property for decades, and today they have finally seen justice,” said Couto. Copyright 2018 Sunbeam Television Corp. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.