

## Illegal Slaughterhouse, Rancho Garcia, Closed Following Animal Recovery Mission Investigation

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Puppies were kept on the farm as part of an alleged puppy mill

Hundreds of animals have been rescued from illegal slaughterhouses in what is being called the largest animal cruelty bust in US history. Slaughterhouse employees were captured on film abusing animals, including goats, pigs and ducks.

Following five months of undercover work by rescue group Animal Recovery Mission (ARM), authorities in Palm Beach, Florida, raided three illegal slaughterhouses in the town of Loxahatchee on Tuesday.

Six slaughterhouse owners and employees were arrested and about 1,000 animals were found alive by rescuers.

Rancho Garcia's illegal animal slaughter business was raided, as well as Medina Farm and G.A Paso Fino Farm.

Undercover operations from ARM revealed "extremely violent illegal acts of animal cruelty" and illegal animal slaughter.

Rancho Garcia, owned by Jorge Garcia, was filmed killing animals, as well as selling horse meat for human consumption, which is illegal.

The method of slaughter at the farms was described as "inhumane, primitive and frankly disgusting" by a veterinarian who viewed the footage.

ARM investigators described the terrible treatment of animals, as well as the poor hygiene conditions they lived in and the potential risk to the public's health.

ARM reports: "The animals on this property lived in deplorable structures and improper shelter. ARM investigators had never seen these animals fed or having food nor provided with clean water.

"The only food source they have available are intestines, blood and carcasses of newly slaughtered animals. Pigs have even been documented by ARM to be eating off the carcasses of hanging butchered animals, swarmed with flies and are awaiting customer sales.

"The property is extremely unsanitary as toxic waste, trash, animal remains, piles of entrails and bones of recently slaughtered animals, cover the entire grounds of Rancho Garcia, including the slaughter and packaging area. This was a major violation of multiple health and safety compliance codes.

"Streams of blood from slaughtered animals flowed into drains, which have been seriously potential hazards for contaminating the county's water supply.

"Animals kept on site were either slaughtered and sold for human consumption, sold for use in Santeria and black magic rituals, or used for animal fighting purposes."

Footage recorded by ARM showed pigs being shot with a small 22 caliber rifle then stabbed in the heart with a foot long blade, while the animals were still alive and breathing.

Animals were left to bleed out for several minutes before being "boiled in hot water tubs", said ARM.

Serious animal abuse towards ducks was also captured on camera, as employees were filmed stepping on their heads, wings or bodies, crushing their bones before finally slitting their throats.