

## Horse found slaughtered at NW Miami-Dade farm

Thursday, January 8, 2015



Police are searching for the person or people who, they said, slaughtered a South Florida family's pet horse for its meat.

According to police, the owner of the horse found the animal's decomposing carcass tied to a pole on his Northwest Miami-Dade farm, Wednesday night. "We loved her, you know? She was a part of the family," said owner Rolando Serrano.

Investigators said the animal was sliced down its spine for its meat. "It was butchered alive. It looks like it was stabbed in the heart area, obviously signs of struggle over here. You know, the horse suffered, for sure," said Richard Couto, the founder of the nonprofit investigative organization Animal Recovery Mission.

Couto added that the perpetrators were amateurs because they could have taken 500 pounds of horse meat but only sliced off about 100. "It was basically a snatch-and-grab kind of situation," said Couto. "They wanted to harvest ... the better cuts of meat that were down the spine and get out of here as fast as possible. It could have taken them under a half an hour. It could have taken them 20 minutes to do this."



Horse owner Rolando Serrano

The owner of the horse said he is devastated by their pet's barbaric slaughter. "When I found her, it was hard for me and for my family, because I was with my wife and my two kids," said Serrano. "It was hard. My wife was crying, and my kids, too," said Serrano. Couto said this is the second time in the past year that this farm has been targeted for horse meat, and both horses were killed in the exact same way. "It's an eerie similarity, the horses butchered in the same fashion, led over to the same area," he said. Couto said whoever is responsible must have been familiar with the farm. "This is a very secluded property," he said. "Someone knew that these horses lived here. You can't see this farm from the side of the street."

Serrano said he's not waiting for the killers to strike again, confirming he has already moved his other two horses to another farm. "I don't know how they do this with animals, an animal like this, a horse. They have to be in jail."

On the black market, horse meat can yield about \$40 a pound. If captured, the people responsible for the slaughter will face felony charges.

If you have any information on the slaughter of this horse, call Miami-Dade Crime Stoppers at 305-471-TIPS. Remember, you can always remain anonymous, and you may be eligible for a reward.