



## 9,000 Animals Rescued From Sickening Conditions in Illegal Slaughterhouse

by Abigail Geer March 27, 2015 5:30 pm



One of the most horrific animal abuse cases of all time was uncovered by Animal Recovery Mission (ARM), where more than 9,000 animals have been found at an illegal slaughterhouse in Florida.

ARM were tipped off about the inhumane practices being undertaken at a legally registered farm enterprise called Coco Farms. Led by the experienced founder of the group Richard Couto, an undercover team infiltrated the farm to gain footage of the cruel and illegal activities that were taking place.

The Operation:

ARM led a five month operation, where they discovered thousands of animals starving to death, deprived of water, and eventually being slaughtered in the most sadistic and painful ways imaginable.

The 200 acre farm has a licence to sell live animals, a factor which allowed their illegal activities to go undetected for so long. Customers would enter the farm, pick out their animal and have it illegally slaughtered on site.

Couto explained to The Dodo, “we went in as customers and basically befriended them. We slowly create relationships with them until they would do their regular activities on the property in front of us, until they felt comfortable enough to start killing animals.”

The bust was conducted by the Miami-Dade Police and the States Attorney’s Office, along with the aid of volunteers of Animal Recovery Mission, and within the first 24 hours more than 3,000 cows, pigs, goats and dogs had been rescued and taken to safety. A further 3,000 have since been rescued, but unfortunately many animals were in such poor condition that they had to be euthanized, and the land was scattered with dead and decaying bodies.

Couto was shocked by the scenes he witnessed at the farm, saying that “they were boiling animals alive. They were drowning animals in boiling water. They were skinning animals alive — and I’m talking about completely skinning animals while they were alive. They hung goats upside down, stabbed them in the throats, and then twisted their heads completely off while they were still alive. I’ve never seen anything like the ongoings at this property.”

The Disturbing World of Illegal Slaughterhouses:

The horrific scenes witnessed at this disturbing Florida location are estimated to have been going on for the past 45 years, with up to 300 animals being killed everyday, something which was only made possible and profitable by the demand for their illegal meat.

Far from being a small scale operation, Couto explains that “we are finding out now that they were huge advertisers in Asian papers locally. They probably did 40 to 50 percent of their business with Asian restaurants in the area, selling meat to them illegally. They slipped through the system because it was legal for them to have animals on site.”

Sadly this is not an isolated incident, as he continued to explain that “we have a hundred farms that we’re just waiting for the manpower to stop right now. There are probably over 500 of these farms in the state of Florida. There are certainly small farms like this found throughout the country, but in Florida, it is a full blown industry. It is millions and millions of dollars. This is organized crime.”