

Pair arrested in horrific illegal slaughterhouse in Southwest Miami-Dade

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A couple face felony charges in connection with operating an illegal animal slaughterhouse on their property in Southwest Miami-Dade, Florida



On Thursday morning, the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office, the Miami-Dade Police Department, investigators from Animal Recovery Mission (ARM) and officers from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission raided the property located on 19400 S.W. 136 Street owned by Angel Ricardo Vargas, 45, and Mayelin Rodriguez, 41. Undercover investigations had been going on for seven months.

According to Animal Recovery Mission (ARM), the investigation was called Operation Gaff Hook, titled as such because of the sharp hooks attached to a pole commonly used in fishing, to insert into the animals' jaws and drag them to their deaths. Pigs, chickens, ducks and turkeys often died slow, horrific deaths from being boiled alive or slowly

having been tortured as their bones were broken one by one. The animals were sold to buyers who visited the home which is located in a residential neighborhood. According to NbcMiami, authorities suspect the "directing of potentially unhealthy meat into the food chain," industrial ovens and filthy conditions.

Several animals were recovered from the farm and are currently in the custody of ARM. Investigators scooped up into their arms several pigs who will be treated and cared for by the veterinarian staff. Richard Couto, the founder of ARM called this "one of the most vile, animal abusing, slaughter farms we've seen."

Angel Ricardo Vargas faces four counts of cruelty to animals and one count of conspiracy to commit cruelty to animals. Mayelin Rodriguez faces one count of cruelty to animals and one count of conspiracy to commit cruelty to animals.