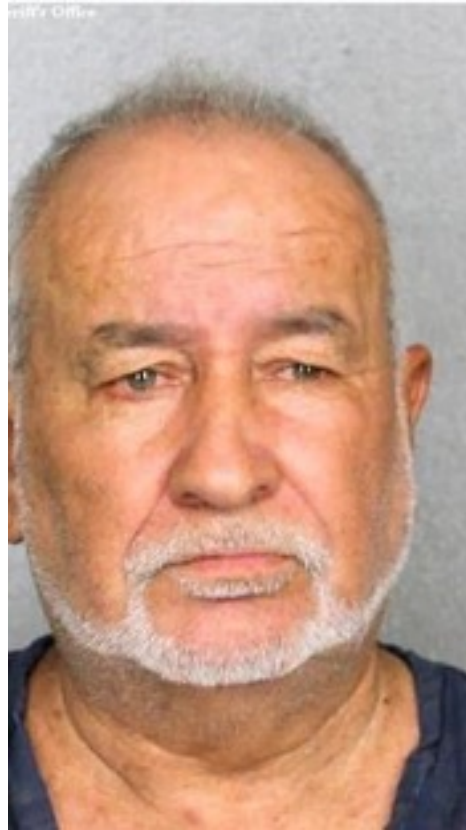


## Animals seized from Davie petting zoo property



Alvaro Ramirez

About two dozen animals were taken Monday evening from a petting zoo in Davie

Police seized horses, pigs and other animals from a barn in Davie late Monday and arrested their owner while investigating a case of potential neglect.

In recent weeks, detectives have been making unannounced visits to the barn in the 7300 block of Southwest 39th Street and on Monday returned to find no food or water accessible to the creatures, Capt. Dale Engle said.

"The condition of the animals was so deplorable [the investigator] thought it in their best interest to have them removed," he said.

The animals' owner, Alvaro Pio Ramirez, 70, was taken into custody while the animals were being removed after he repeatedly confronted volunteers and police, authorities said.

He was charged with resisting an officer without violence and driving with a suspended license. Ramirez has not been charged with animal neglect, but Engle said detectives and the Broward State Attorney's Office are reviewing the case for possible animal-related charges.

Investigators opened the case over a month ago after a tipster complained about animals that were possibly malnourished and mistreated.

Before his arrest, Ramirez told reporters that his animals are not unhealthy and that he is just trying to make a living.

"I'm not stealing ... I 'm working hard," Ramirez said.

He remained jailed on Tuesday.