



Video Shows Pile Of Dead Cows At Florida Dairy Farm

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Animal Recovery Mission released a video Thursday morning of a pile of dead cows it claims came from a Florida dairy farm in the same town where another farm was recently accused of inhumane treatment.

ARM investigators are expected to speak more about this video and their investigation at Burnham Dairy Farm in Okeechobee. The video shows a worker force-feeding seemingly malnourished animals. It also shows the cows being kept in flooded cages.

ARM investigators said the milking barns' walls and equipment are covered in feces, and many of the calves are kept in enclosures with dead cows.

In a statement released to NBC6 Randy and Douglas Burnham say they are "appalled" to see the images in the video.

"While some of them reflect our struggle in the face of historic severe weather in Florida, we also can't deny that others reflect a failure of our farm policies and management. We are taking immediate action regarding our employees," the statement continued. "At the same time, we are working with animal care experts in our industry to change our on-farm practices because we need to do better by our customers, our community, and most of all, our animals."

The National Milk Producers Federation statement:

"Southeast Milk, Inc., a cooperative of family-owned dairies, was made aware on Nov. 15, 2017 of allegations of mistreatment of dairy cows at Burnham Dairy Farm of Okeechobee, FL, which is one of our members. Working in collaboration with national animal care experts, we immediately initiated our own review to assess the validity of the report of mistreatment.

Animal abuse of any kind is never tolerated at SMI. While some of the conditions depicted at Burnham Dairy reflect our farming community's struggle to deal with the aftermath of the historic Hurricane Irma, others clearly show a breakdown in the adherence to our SMI protocols, as well as our broader dairy community standards.

Our organization has a zero-tolerance policy for animal abuse, which mirrors the expectations of proper animal care outlined in the National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) Animal Care program, the dairy industry's comprehensive animal care program. Any employee of a farm marketing its milk through SMI who is found to have violated our animal care guidelines, as well as any employee who witnessed abuse and failed to report it, should be terminated.

SMI is working with the FARM Program, which has activated its official protocol for Willful Mistreatment requiring an inspection by an outside, 3rd-party auditor. The program has placed Burnham Dairy Farm on probationary status, pending the completion of any and all corrective actions deemed necessary by the third-party auditor and the FARM Program. These actions demonstrate SMI's ongoing commitment to the proper care and responsible treatment of our member farms' animals.

Animal care and well-being is paramount to our operations at SMI and its dairy farmer owners and we will work with our member dairies to do better, for our customers, our community and our cows."

Earlier this month, ARM exposed beatings at [Larson Dairy Farm](#) (also in Okeechobee). Surveillance video captured abuses that included workers kicking and beating cows with a rod.

After the video surfaced, Publix Supermarkets announced they would no longer stock their shelves with milk from the farm.