



Lee Co. animal owner arrested after hog found without water

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By Cristina Mendez, Reporter



LEE COUNTY, Fla. -

A man was arrested for animal abuse overnight. Deputies found an injured hog owned by 46-year old Osmany Toledo Suarez with no water and confined in its pen.

The farm owner of several properties along Eastwood Acres Road, Roman Hernandez, gave deputies permission to go onto

the property. The suspect told deputies he owned a pig and several goats.

Investigators noticed food for the hog, but there was no separate, clean drinking source.

Neighbors say Suarez has worked on several farms in the area for years.

The founder of the Animal Recovery Mission or “ARM”, Richard Couto, also recognized the suspect. The organization conducted an undercover investigation at four of Hernandez’ farms and captured [allegations of severe animal abuse and inhumane slaughtering](#) on camera.

The State Attorneys Office could not use the disturbing footage to prosecute the suspected criminals. In a statement, the State Attorney’s Office explained the techniques ARM used to collect the evidence violates state law.

The videos of animal abuse sparked a massive protest in East Lee County Sunday.

Now, animal activists are planning a second protect this Sunday at 11:30 a.m.

“We’re just not going to stand for things like this that are inhumane,” said Ed Flanagan.

Rosy Hernandez, the daughter of the 70-year old farm owner, said the accusations being made against her father are hurtful. “He’s not a criminal; he’s the furthest from a criminal. He’s a dad that’s taking care of his family his whole life, and he’s not done it by doing things illegally,” said Hernandez.

Rosy adds that Suarez was renting out one of her father's farms and has been going through a six-month-long eviction process to remove the suspect from the property.

Suarez bonded out of jail Tuesday and is expected to be in court on May 8th.