

## UPDATE: Bail set for three men accused of running illegal slaughterhouse

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From left: Chico Allen Cabrera, Ricardo Cabrera and Roberto Llorente (PBSO)

10:15 a.m. Friday UPDATE: Palm Beach County Circuit Judge Ted S. Booras on Friday ordered Ricardo Cabrera held in lieu of \$139,000 bail on the 40 charges, six of them felonies, during a bond hearing at the Palm Beach County Jail.

Booras also ordered Chico Cabrera, Ricardo's son, held in lieu of \$84,000 for the 28 charges, four of them felonies. He ordered Llorente, identified as an employee at the operation, held in lieu of \$73,000, with an option of house arrest.

Booras also ordered the three men have no contact with each other.

The judge ordered the Cabreras, who own the slaughterhouse operation in Loxahatchee Groves, to undergo a hearing to show the defendants would not pay bail with money gained from the alleged crimes. Prosecutors said investigators seized \$120,000 during their raid.

Original story: Sheriff's deputies Thursday made three arrests at what they are calling an illegal slaughterhouse in Loxahatchee Groves, according to the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office.

Sheriff's deputies Thursday made three arrests at what they are calling an illegal slaughterhouse in Loxahatchee Groves, according to the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office.

A father, his son and a third man were arrested Thursday for five animal-abuse related charges after a raid at the property, off Global Trail and 43rd Road, the office said.

Loxahatchee resident Ricardo Cabrera, 57, and Chico Cabrera, 29, were arrested with 65-year-old Roberto Llorente, for whom no place of residence was immediately available. Additional charges are possible, a PBSO spokeswoman said.

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According to county property-appraiser records, Ricardo Cabrera and his wife have owned the property for about 18 years.

Animal Recovery Mission, a group based in Miami, discovered the slaughterhouse from a tip and began the investigation, according to Richard Couto, the leader of Animal Recovery Mission. Couto said the meat from the slaughterhouse was used for human consumption.

"This is a very, extremely violent illegal slaughterhouse," he said on Thursday.

Couto said goats were being hung by meat hooks alive and stabbed to death, among other practices. All kinds of animals were found on the farm,

including dogs, though Couto said it is unclear if they were sold for consumption and sacrifices.

His team's investigation was four months long, and information was given to the sheriff's office and the Palm Beach County State Attorney's Office about a month ago, he said.

Investigators say the slaughterhouse was on the farm's property in the back yard.



Palm Beach County Animal Control officers and deputies at an alleged illegal slaughterhouse in Loxahatchee Groves Thursday morning, August 2, 1018. (Lannis Waters / The Palm Beach Post)

According to the group's website, Animal Recovery Mission aims to be an "uncompromising defending force for the welfare of animals."

In October 2015, sheriff's deputies arrested six people and seized 750 animals from three Loxahatchee farms.

Couto said he estimates hundreds of thousands of animals were killed at the farm, which he believes has illegally operated for about a decade. The property was surrounded by houses as well as farms, plant nurseries and

equestrian training areas. Investigators say the slaughterhouse was on the farm's property in the backyard.

According to the group's website, Animal Recovery Mission aims to be an "uncompromising defending force for the welfare of animals." The website estimates there are nearly 1,000 illegal slaughterhouses in rural Florida.

In October 2015, sheriff's deputies arrested six people and seized 750 animals from three Loxahatchee farms. Deputies said the people were torturing animals and selling horse meat for human consumption.



Horse trailers are driven away from an alleged illegal slaughterhouse in Loxahatchee Groves Thursday morning, August 2, 1018. (Lannis Waters / The Palm Beach Post)