

WARNING! GRAPHIC CONTENT – Undercover video exposes shocking animal abuse at Indiana dairy farm

By NELSON OLIVEIRA | NEW YORK DAILY NEWS | JUN 08, 2019 | 12:32 PM



Fair Oaks Farms is one of the largest dairies in the U.S. and produces dairy products for the Fairlife milk brand - which is produced, marketed and distributed by the Coca-Cola Corporation. (ARM Investigations)

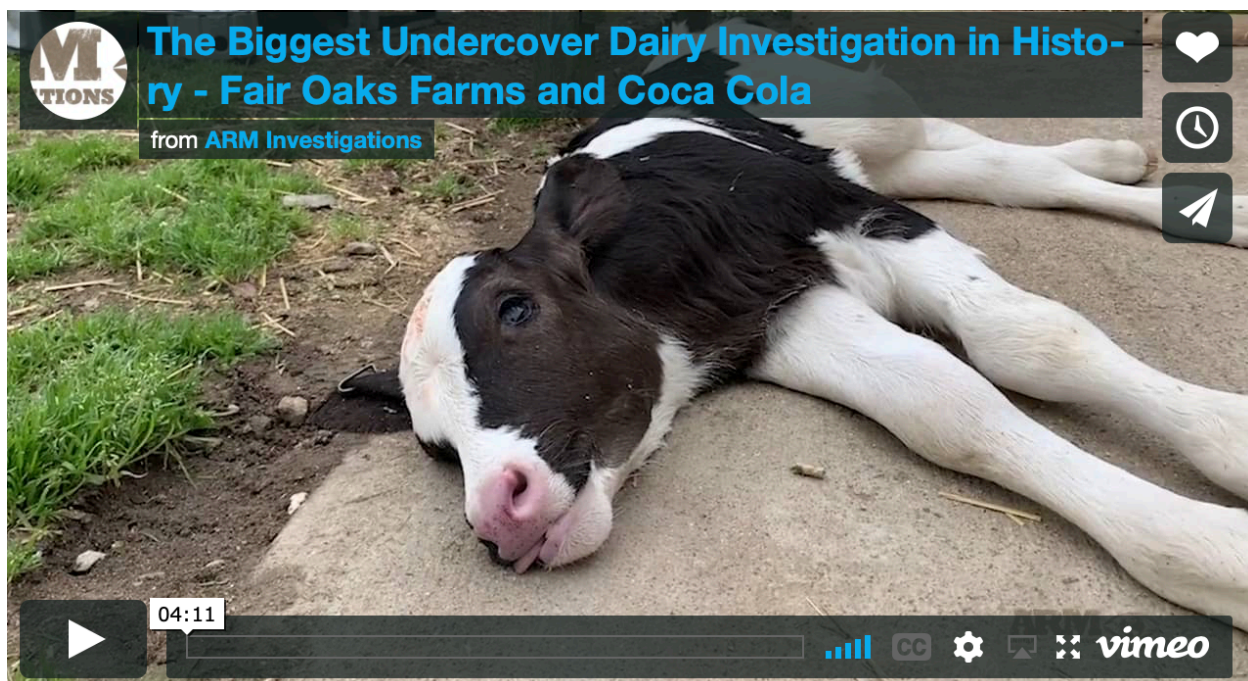
The biggest dairy producer in Indiana is under fire this week after an animal rights group released a shocking undercover video showing workers repeatedly kicking, punching, pushing and force-feeding calves, among other brutal incidents.

Fair Oaks Farms, which produces dairy products for brands like Fairlife, has since apologized and fired at least four employees. But several stores have pulled Fairlife products from their shelves even as the company claims to have suspended milk deliveries from Fair Oaks.

Animal Recovery Mission, a Florida-based nonprofit, released the video on Tuesday and described it as “the biggest undercover dairy investigation in history.” One of the group’s investigators was hired as a calf care employee at

Prairies Edge North Barn, one of Fair Oaks Farms' properties some 80 miles south of Chicago, and worked there between August and November 2018. The horrific footage shows workers hitting calves with milk bottles, dragging them by their ears, brutally throwing them into hutches and trucks, kicking them in the neck, burning them with hot branding irons, and other instances of abuse.

“The calf abuse is by far the worst baby abuse that we’ve seen ever, undercover, in any investigation, anywhere in the world,” ARM founder Richard ‘Kudo’ Couto said in a video this week. “The newborn babies... are so incredibly brutalized, not once a day, not twice a day – all day.”



[The Biggest Undercover Dairy Investigation in History - Fair Oaks Farms and Coca Cola](#) from [ARM Investigations](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Many of the animals appear to be newborn, some of whom look weak and malnourished. The video suggests several died from high temperatures. The footage shows at least one worker using illegal drugs on the property. The group also accused Fair Oaks of illegally growing marijuana on its grounds, a claim the company has denied. In a statement Wednesday, Fair Oaks owner and founder Mike McCloskey said the plants featured in the video are an invasive perennial species that is rampant in the Midwest.

In an accompanying video response, McCloskey apologized for the abuse seen in the undercover footage.

“Watching this video broke my heart and created a sadness that I will have to endure the rest of my life,” he said.

McCloskey said three of the employees who were seen “committing multiple instances of animal cruelty and despicable judgement” were fired months ago after the company first became aware it had been the target of an ARM probe. A fourth employee was fired Wednesday and a truck driver who worked for a third-party transportation company will not be allowed on Fair Oaks properties, McCloskey said.

He also said an internal review and a retraining process are underway.



The animal rights group has called on The Coca-Cola Company, which distributes Fairlife’s products, to cut ties with Fairlife and the veal industry. “This isn’t one of two bad apples,” Couto said. “This is everyone at Fair Oaks Farm that we had contact with.”

Fairlife said in a statement that it would suspend deliveries from Fair Oaks “until new assurances are in place,” increase the number of audits for suppliers to 24 a year, and invest in animal welfare training and support programs. But at least three Midwest store chains — Jewel-Osco, Family Express and Tony’s Express — have begun removing Fairlife products from their shelves, according to [NBC’s Today.com](#).

A 90-minute [extended cut](#) of the ARM video was posted online Thursday.