

Florida farm raided after illegal slaughter claims

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FORT PIERCE, Fla. (CBS12) — A farm in Florida where an animal rights organization claimed animals were being illegally slaughtered was raided, according to officials in St. Lucie County.

Warning: Footage in this story can be disturbing to watch

The organization, Animal Rights Organization (ARM), released a statement Wednesday morning indicating the sheriff's office was joined by state and federal agencies, as well as its own members, are [involved in the raid](#), which happened in the 200 block of Godwin Road.

"We are grateful to the Sherriff's Office response for their rapid response in investigating these allegations and welcome the opportunity to collaborate in any way that ensures the welfare of animals in this community is prioritized and crimes against animals are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law," ARM founder Richard Couto said.



In its statement, ARM explained Wednesday's actions are the culmination of its six-month-long undercover investigation. The organization alleges its sting operation discovered violations of the Humane Slaughter Act, which requires animals to be treated humanely and killed in quick and effective way.

Its members claimed to have found goats hoisted upside-down and having their throats slashed before being skinned alive. Pigs who are not resisting were being held down and stabbed in the heart multiple times, ARM alleged. Additionally, the organization stated it found evidence of animal fighting and training.

ARM provided graphic video of its findings, which [can be seen here](#).
(Warning: the video can be disturbing to watch)

The sheriff's office has not confirmed if anyone has been arrested or any potential charges the suspects may face. However, ARM stated arrests were made on counts of animal cruelty resulting in death, operating an animal slaughter farm without a license, and other egregious crimes.

As for the animals, which reportedly include dogs, cats, pigs, goats, sheep, cows, and birds, ARM noted they will be taken to a sanctuary and will receive care for the rest of their lives.



Authorities conducted a raid on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at a St. Lucie Co. farm where an animal rights group described as an illegal slaughterhouse. (WPEC)