



HERNANDO COUNTY

# Animals seized at Brooksville farm at center of animal mistreatment investigation

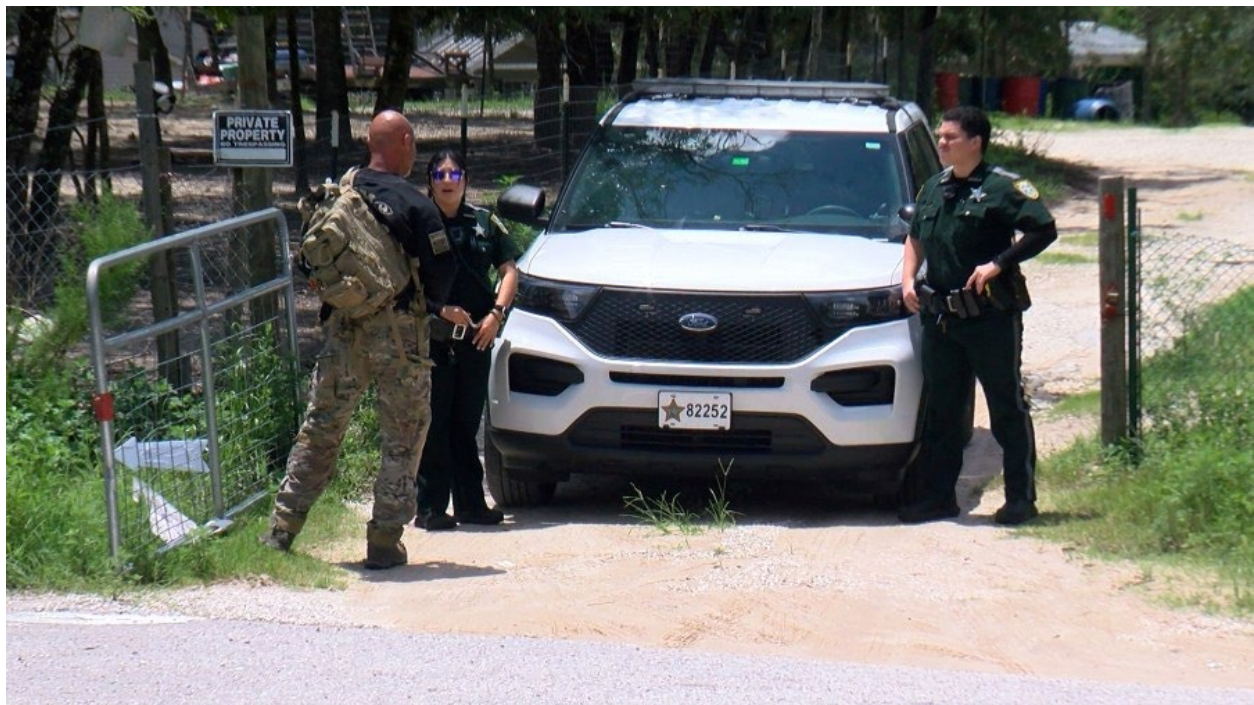
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Posted: Jul 29, 2024 / 05:17 PM EDT

Updated: Jul 29, 2024 / 05:19 PM EDT

HERNANDO COUNTY, Fla. (WFLA) — Deputies rescued farm animals from a property in Brooksville [at the center of an animal mistreatment investigation](#), much to the disappointment of animal rights' group Animal Recovery Mission.

“Disgusting,” said Richard Couto, president of ARM.



Couto said the owner of the property, who is not accused of mistreating animals, had agreed to give him the remaining animals Monday afternoon.

Couto planned to take them to his animal sanctuary.

“Knowing that we were going to be here at 2:00, they came here this morning and started rounding up animals not know where they’re going,” Couto said.

The sheriff’s office took five small pigs, one dog and several roosters and chickens.

One dead pig was located on the property.

Couto has been calling for legal action against the operators of the farm for eight months.

He said he recorded videos, while undercover, which show the final moments of several animals’ lives.

He said the operators, who leased the land for their farm operation, inhumanely and illegally slaughtered animals, including a racehorse named Funny Biz.

In recent days, he said the operators vacated the property.

“They are in hiding. They’re in hiding. Because the sheriff’s office dropped the ball and didn’t arrest them, they went into hiding,” Couto said.

The investigation by the Hernando County Sheriff’s Office continues.

“Animal Enforcement Officers will remain engaged with the property owner throughout the investigation of this case,” said a sheriff’s office spokesperson.

News Channel 8 attempted to contact the farm operators but were told it was the wrong number.

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