

Arizona Department of Agriculture investigating reports of abuse at dairy farms

MCSO says it was made aware of allegations last month; a class-action lawsuit has also been filed

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A class action lawsuit has been filed and multiple Arizona agencies are investigating reports of animal cruelty and neglect at Arizona dairy farms that supply products nationwide.

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office says the [Animal Recovery Mission](#) contacted them in February regarding allegations of abuse at two dairy farms.

MCSO started the investigation into Butterfield and Rainbow Valley dairy farms and advised the Arizona Department of Agriculture, who then took over the investigation since it concerns "abuse and mistreatment of livestock."

“MCSO remains committed to ensuring that those responsible for any acts of cruelty face appropriate consequences, and we will continue to support the Department of Agriculture as they proceed with this investigation,” the sheriff’s office said.

A class action has since been filed against the dairy farms in question, which reportedly supply products for the fairlife brand, which boasts sustainable practices and humane animal treatment.

According to a complaint filed late last month, undercover investigations resulted in video evidence showing “systemic widespread egregious animal cruelty, cruel standard practices, and extreme neglect, including at the hands of and with the awareness of management.”

Arizona’s fairlife brand suppliers show “the worst, most widespread, egregious, systemic, frequent, and extreme cruelty and neglect yet—by workers and management across multiple locations,” according to the complaint.

Some cited incidents include the dumping of carcasses near waterways that border a subdivision and a recreational park near Phoenix, violent mistreatment of living animals, lack of proper veterinary care, and more.

[Reader discretion is advised: See the full complaint, which includes graphic evidence and descriptions, here.](#)

According to the Animal Recovery Mission, fairlife responded to the allegations saying: “The mistreatment of animals depicted in the recent videos at Butterfield Dairy and Rainbow Valley Dairy is unacceptable. Effective immediately, we have suspended all business with these suppliers and are looking into the circumstances surrounding these videos. We have zero tolerance for animal abuse. Although we operate as milk processors and do not own farms or cows, we mandate that all our suppliers adhere to stringent animal welfare standards, and we expect nothing less.”

The investigations are ongoing.