

Arrest Made in Florida Horse Killings

Miami police have arrested one man for killing privately-owned horses, but warn owners to remain on guard.

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Over the past several months, Florida horse owners have been on edge due to a spate of brutal killings where horses were butchered for their meat. Some resolution is finally in sight as Miami-Dade police made their first arrest in the case earlier this week.

18-year-old Luis Miguel Cordero was arrested on Tuesday, September 15 after police obtained information from a witness suggesting that Cordero was planning to slaughter a horse that evening. He confessed to killing a horse on the night of September 9, and faces charges including armed robbery, animal cruelty, and killing a registered breed horse.

Police are cautioning local horse owners to remain on guard, however, as they do not currently believe that Cordero was behind the earlier horse killings. At least 17 horses have been stolen and slaughtered in Florida this year.

The horse thefts have taken place in a widespread area, and have involved horses kept in both pastures and barns. According to an ABC News report, the common thread seems to be that the killings take place in more remote, low-traffic areas where there is less chance of an eyewitness.

Florida horse owners and enthusiasts have come together to help look out for the area horses. Owners and residents have set up Barn Watch programs to look out for suspicious people or activities in equestrian areas. Additionally, there are multiple cash rewards offered for information on the killings. For more information, visit the Miami Dade Crime Stoppers website.

There are several precautions horse owners can take to keep their horses safe at home. If you have gates that lead directly to the road, lock them at night. However, do not lock barn doors in case of fire or other emergency where horses would need to be evacuated. Install floodlights or motion-detector lights around the barn area and near the road. A well-lit, highly visible location is not attractive to thieves. Bring the horses in the barn or keep them confined in an area close to the house at night. Keep fences in good repair, and when possible, use board fencing near the road instead of wire or tape, which is easy to cut. Consider an alarm system for the barn, or a dog that will bark an alert when strangers show up on the property. Get to know your neighbors, horse owners or otherwise, and ask them to alert you if they notice strangers on or around your property when you're not there.

Read more horse theft prevention tips