

Exhibit 27

Media articles

Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

From: Thomas Rowell <[Privacy]@primateproducts.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2015 6:27 AM
Subject: Media Coverage

<http://www.nbc-2.com/story/29836302/hendry-county-no-wrongdoing-at-monkey-businesses#.VdWqB6NRGAg>

<http://www.winknews.com/2015/08/19/hendry-county-monkey-farms-cleared-of-wrongdoing/>

Hendry County finds no code violations at monkey research operation

 MELISSA MONTOYA, MMONTOYA@NEWS-PRESS.COM 8:09 p.m. EDT August 19, 2015



A female macaque monkey and its baby sit in an enclosure at Primate Products in Hendry County on Wednesday 7/16/2015. Primate Products has a disaster plan in case of a storm or other event.(Photo: Andrew West/The News-Press)

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Hendry County officials announced no land use violations were found at two monkey farms that have been operating there amid controversy.

The investigations into Primate Products, Inc. and The Manheimer Foundation began in March and April after the U.S. Department of Agriculture sent documents to Hendry County commissioners.

The controversy began because the land is zoned for agricultural use which the county argues includes primates, but opponents disagree.

"That is not agricultural," said Jane Velez-Mitchell, a journalist who has reported on the monkey facilities. "There's no way monkey abortions can constitute agriculture."

The investigation by Hendry County officials included research from local, state and federal agencies, said Margaret Emblidge, planning and community development director for the county.

"This research was used in making the determination in these current cases," Emblidge said.

The investigation on behalf of the Hendry County commissioners is now considered closed.

However, as recently as last week the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare conducted a joint investigation into Primate Products, said President Jeff Rowell.

The joint inspection found the facility needs improvement in its sanitation and pest control, Rowell said.

The facility has been given a September deadline to make those improvements. Rowell added that previous inspections findings have been corrected.

Rowell said he is pleased with the results of the Hendry County Commission investigation.

"There was a tremendous amount of misinformation provided to the county and the public both in and outside of Florida," Rowell said.

Madeleine Doran, a concerned Lee County resident, said the investigation by county commissioners is a white wash.

"I think it is an outrage that they would say Primate Products and bioculture did nothing wrong," Doran said.

Doran said eyewitness accounts show that the monkeys were tortured. A video released by the animal rights organization People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals in June shows the primates on feces-smearred cement and yanked off chain-link fences by their tails along with questionable behavior by an employee.

"That is a clear violation of agricultural laws," Doran said. "Allowing the torture to continue just shows you the kind of leadership Hendry County has."

In a statement from PETA's director of the Laboratory Investigations Department, Justin Goodman said other authorities are looking to hold the primate facilities accountable.

Additionally, Goodman said, there is a lawsuit against the facilities and the county because of the way the county approved the facilities without public input.

"Hendry County's decision on this zoning issue will inflame the situation, not defuse it, and will certainly inspire even greater efforts to close down these monkey prisons," Goodman said.

Doran said the county investigation is outrageous.

"They have not heard the last from protesters, that is for sure," she said.

Rowell said the facility is used to protesters.

"I don't expect that that will change," Rowell said. "This is just part of the industry and just something we have to prepare for."

Thomas J. Rowell, DVM

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[HENDRY COUNTY MONKEY FARMS CLEARED OF WRONGDOING](#)



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Hendry County monkey farms cleared of wrongdoing

BY [ADAM WRIGHT](#) • AUGUST 19, 2015

HENDRY COUNTY, Fla. – Two monkey breeding facilities under intense scrutiny from animal rights activists have been cleared of any wrongdoing. Hendry County officials spent the last several months looking into claims of illegal activity at a facility owned by Primate Products, Inc., and another owned by Mannheimer Foundation.

Working with both state and federal agencies, the county investigated accusations that the facilities were conducting scientific research on their monkeys, not allowed under their current agricultural zoning. The county gathered dozens of documents and conducted one scheduled on-site inspection at each facility.

“We did not observe them doing any research, and because we did not observe it, we could not cite it... and so we are closing these investigations now,” Hendry County Administrator Charles Chapman told WINK News Wednesday.

The accusations of wrongdoing were brought forth by several animal rights activist groups. In response to the county’s conclusion, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) sent WINK News a scathing statement saying in part:

“*“If importing and experimenting on monkeys is ‘agriculture,’ then the pope is an atheist... Hendry County’s decision on this zoning issue will inflame the situation, not defuse it, and will certainly inspire even greater efforts to close down these monkey prisons.”*

Chapman says the county will keep an open mind, and if more evidence comes to light in the future, it will investigate accordingly.



ADAM WRIGHT

News Reporters

0 COMMENTS

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Hendry County: No wrongdoing at monkey businesses

Posted: Aug 19, 2015 5:32 PM EDT
Updated: Aug 19, 2015 10:02 PM EDT

By Dave Elias, Chief political reporter

Hendry County has completed its investigations into possible violations at two controversial monkey breeding facilities.

The county found no evidence that either Primate Products or Mannheimer Foundation were doing anything illegal as it relates to land development codes.

Hendry County Code Enforcement announced it would investigate the facilities last spring, after disturbing undercover PETA video showed monkey abuse.

While the USDA is investigating that, Hendry County said its investigation is over but animal rights advocates disagree.

"Both Primate Products and Manheimer are in compliance with their land development code," said Charles Chapman, Hendry County administrator.

That means the county believes they fit the definition of agriculture, since that is what they're zoned for.

"While we were walking through and observing what was taking place at these different facilities, our team was definitely cross-checking what they're looking for was agricultural typical processes," said Chapman.

He said his team saw nothing like what was depicted in the controversial videos shot by an undercover PETA worker whose video depicted animal abuse.

"Our team did not observe any of that experimentation that came up within those particular videos," said Chapman.

He said any of those types of violations are up to the USDA to find.

When asked why the county didn't ask for an independent investigation, Chapman said he had great confidence that his staff took every means necessary to make sure that it was a fair and equitable investigation.

Madeleine Doran said she was outraged by the findings. She said she isn't buying into the county's investigation.

"They gave them plenty of time to clean up their acts," exclaimed Doran.

The group opposed to the facilities believes that the investigation should have been a surprise visit.

"That is the best way to catch anyone doing anything," said Joann Knobloch, an animal rights advocate.

Well-known animal rights advocate Jane Velez-Mitchell called the county's investigation a scam.

"It's see no evil, hear no evil politics. It's backroom old boy school politics in the worst order," said Velez-Mitchell.

Thomas Rowell of Primate Products disagreed with Velez-Mitchell, saying he was pleased with the investigation.

"There was a tremendous amount of misinformation being provided to the county and the public by animal activists outside of Hendry County and the state of Florida," said Rowell.

However, protestors say the fight is far from over.

"In light of what they found you bet we're planning more protest," said Doran.

Animal rights advocates vow that their next demonstration will be the biggest yet, although no date is planned.

As far as the USDA investigation, we know that they've found eight safety violations in Primate Products handling of the monkeys so far.

Their investigation is ongoing.

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Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

From: Thomas Rowell [Privacy]@primateproducts.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 15, 2015 5:14 PM
Subject: <http://www.news-press.com/story/news/local/2015/08/15/monkeys-hendry-county-mark-lapp-primera-emails-peta/31787389/>

<http://www.news-press.com/story/news/local/2015/08/15/monkeys-hendry-county-mark-lapp-primera-emails-peta/31787389/>

Records show Hendry County's struggle over monkey farms

 AMY BENNETT WILLIAMS, AWILLIAMS@NEWS-PRESS.COM 4:57 p.m. EDT August 15, 2015



Buy Photo

A macaque monkey peers out from its enclosure at Primate Products in Hendry County. Farms say they have plans in place to prevent monkey escapes. (Photo: Andrew West/The News-Press) Buy Photo

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The printed-out emails alone strain a jumbo expanding file; the electronic ones take up two CDs.

After Hendry County announced, canceled, then didn't reschedule a private strategy session on a high-profile lawsuit alleging it secretly approved a primate farm next to Lee County, The News-Press requested thousands of public records relating to the controversial case.

The documents paint a picture of Hendry officials struggling to come to grips with a sudden rush of attention from residents, attorneys and the media — much of it unwelcome — as it dealt with a crisis unfolding in the local, national and international spotlight.

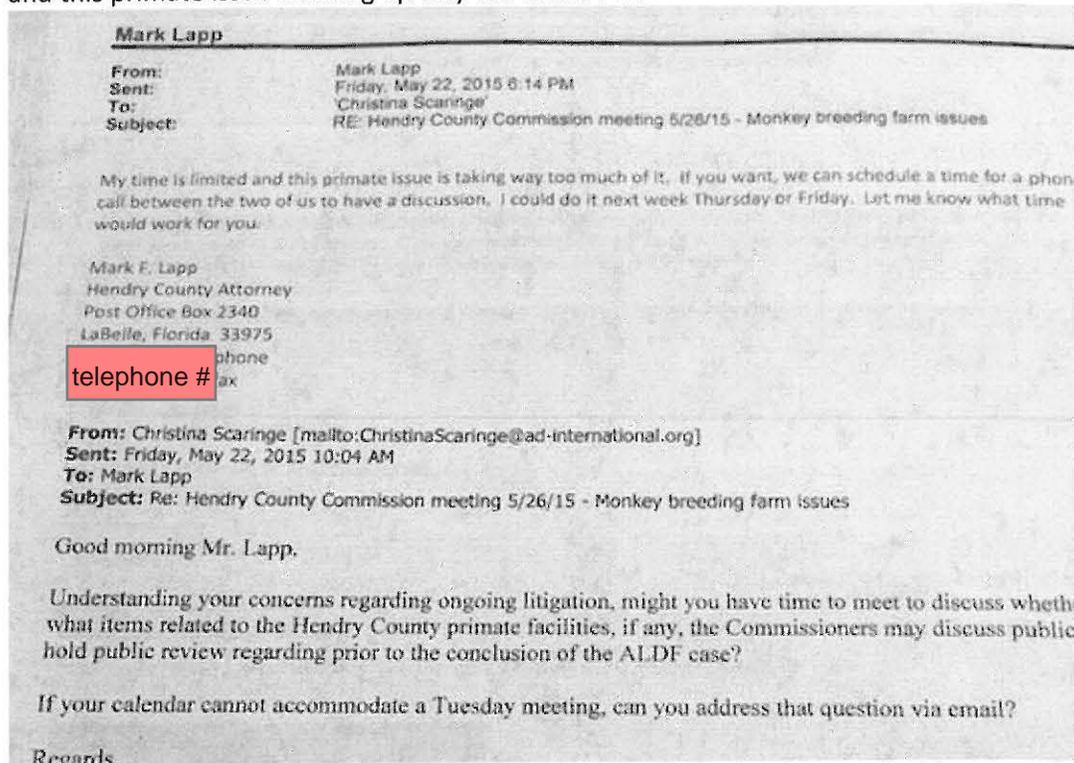
The reason for the scrutiny? Over the last decade, this rural community quietly became the nation's primate farming capital, with three facilities housing thousands of lab monkeys and a fourth — the one over which the county's being sued — in the works.

[THE NEWS-PRESS](#)

Disaster plan keeps monkey farm residents safe

The emails show a small county government caught off-guard by impassioned advocates and persistent reporters. They include:

- One of the attorneys suing the county outlining what her side wants from a settlement: for the county to rescind the permits of two of its four monkey farms and to include public input on any future such projects
- Officials and staff wrangling over how much to tell the media.
- County attorney Mark Lapp telling an animal rights lawyer who'd repeatedly requested a meeting, "My time is limited and this primate issue is taking up way too much of it."



County attorney Mark Lapp's email response to an animal rights lawyer who'd repeatedly requested a meeting, "My time is limited and this primate issue is taking up way too much of it." (Photo: Special to news-press.com)

- The county administrator in June asking staff to be patient if he was slow to respond because he'd been targeted by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. "My inbox is literally flooded with approximately 22,000 emails since about 8 p.m. last night."
- Commission Chair Karson Turner wrestling with how to word a public statement, wondering, "If we raise an issue with infectious diseases, do we pour gas on it?"
- The county administrator vowing that on his watch, approval of such future projects will be transparent and include public input.

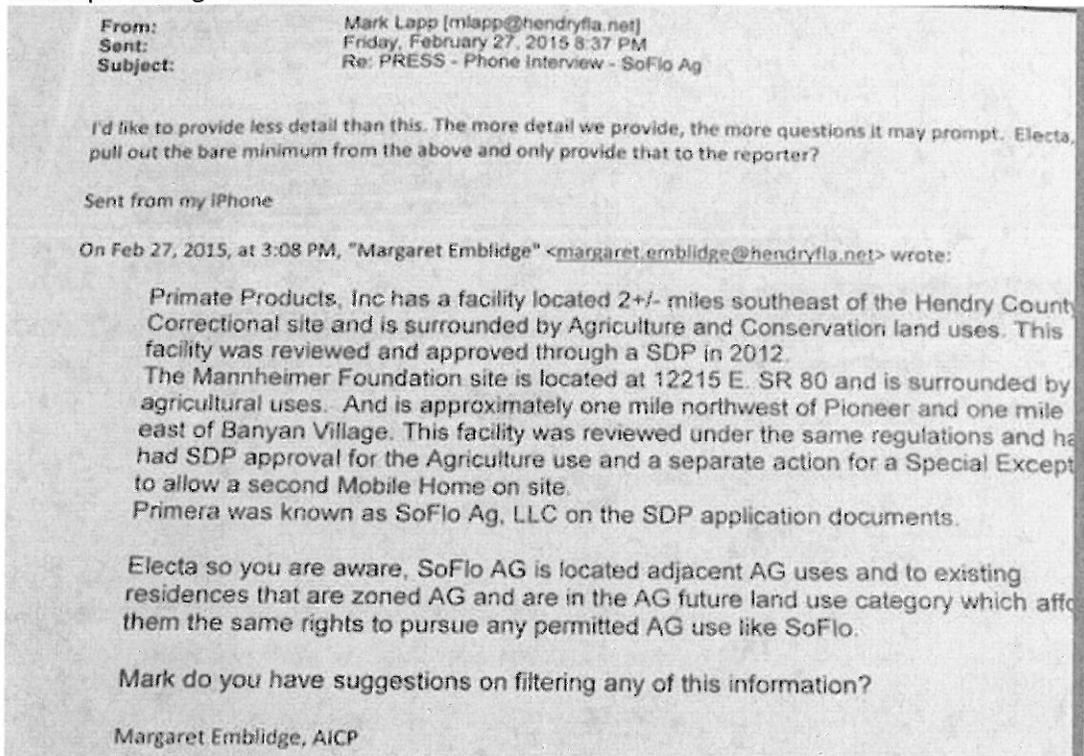
What had once been an almost unknown fact of Hendry life was suddenly breakfast-table conversation throughout the region. Radio morning show hosts snickered about it. Out-of-town activists crowding into commission meetings and picketing in parking lots.

THE NEWS-PRESS

Two nonprofits take aim at Hendry monkey farm

It was one of those groups, the nonprofit California-based Animal Legal Defense Fund, that filed the lawsuit on behalf of three plaintiffs who live near the new 34-acre facility known as Primera, PreLabs, Oak Creek Hammock, among other names. On the Lee County border, the site is partly bounded by Bedman Creek, which flows to the Caloosahatchee River. When she found out about it in 2013, neighbor Susan Campbell emailed the commissioners: "If this is being proposed in our neighborhood and we have not been contacted for our opinion...I can only speculate that this was Hendry County's plan. Keep the families out there in the dark until it is too late for us to stop this project," she wrote. "If this facility is allowed to proceed... (land) values will decline instead of increase."

In addition to fears about property values, neighbors' and activists' concerns range from ethics of confining large numbers of intelligent primates to how tons of their waste will be handled in an area with no public water supply or municipal sewage treatment.



Hendry County public records emails show officials and staff wrangling over how much to tell the media. (Photo: Special to news-press.com)

How had a place with such huge potential impact been approved, they asked, with no public input and no zoning hearings? The county maintains no engagement with residents was necessary: The facility is agriculture, and such endeavors are routinely approved without resident involvement, it argued.

Then in May, the lawsuit expanded to include a second monkey farm, which plaintiffs said also was approved and permitted in secret.

Other facilities

The amended complaint added Bioculture; another Hendry facility near Immokalee with the capacity to house several thousand macaques destined for biomedical research. Bioculture rents space from Panther Tracts, a one-square-mile facility that's also home to Primate Products, Hendry's largest and oldest monkey farm. Its 15-year-old permits include the ability to expand and take on other tenants, such as Bioculture.

The county should have sought resident input before any such enlargement, the suit contends. Instead, Bioculture began operating below the public radar.

The suit, which is scheduled to go to trial next February, asks the court to shut down both farms and to not allow any more such facilities without public input.

THE NEWS-PRESS

Representatives to HHS: Investigate Hendry monkey farm

That's also what the plaintiffs asked for in the email attorney Justine Cowan sent to the county in June. In the one-page letter, she also made a one-time offer to waive the payment of attorney's fees if the parties could reach an agreement "before any significant discovery has been undertaken."

Now, more than two months later, Cowan says she's gotten no response from the county "so we're slogging through discovery."

However, work at the Primera site seems to have halted, something Cowan says makes sense.

"They are wise to stop when there are clear issues of law to be determined," Cowan says, "because they proceed at their own risk."

Excerpts from the monkey files

•“I’d like to provide less detail than this. The more detail we provide, the more questions it may prompt...Can you pull out the bare minimum from the above and only provide that to the reporter?”

— **Hendry County Attorney Mark Lapp to Electa Waddell, county spokeswoman, and County Administrator Charles Chapman, Feb. 27**

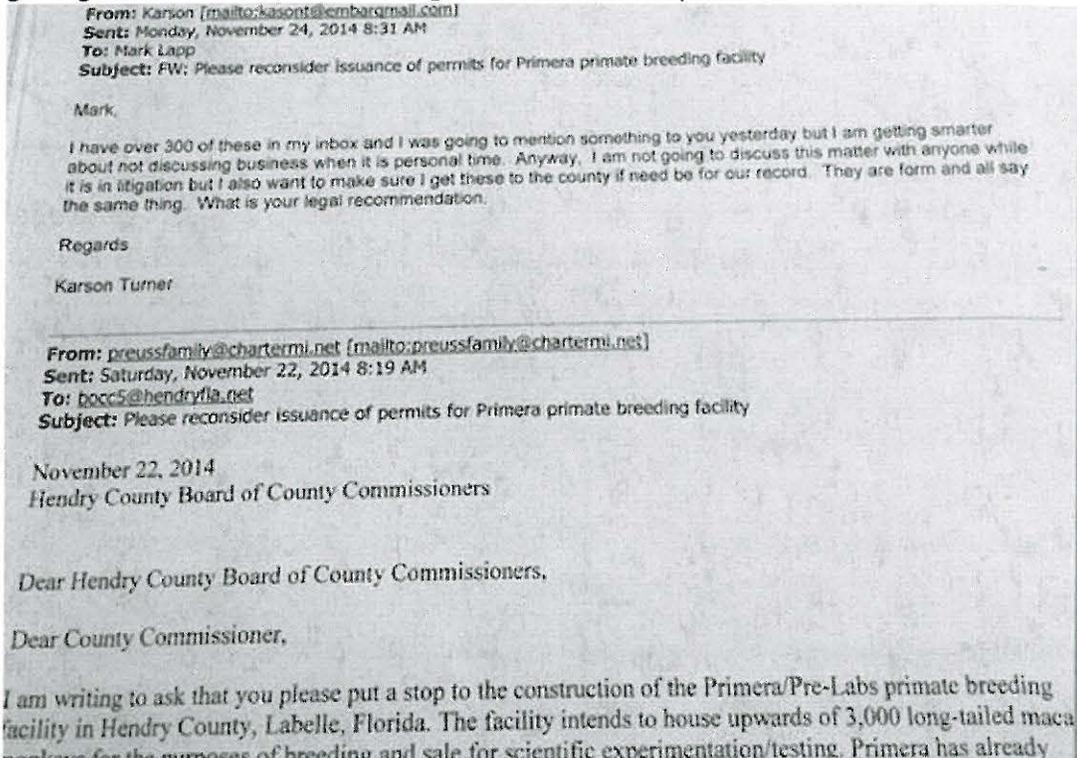
•“While I uphold the prior administration’s decisions to process these projects by administrative review, controversial projects under my administration will be processed differently and highlight our agencies’ commitment to improving transparency.”

— **Memo by Chapman, March 23**

•“Unless we are willing to put out a statement that...we believe we are innocent then I don’t think we need to comment more until we have a chance to work through putting together a press release.”

— **Chapman to Lapp Nov. 7, 2014**

•“I have over 300 off these (protest emails) in my inbox and I was going to mention something to you yesterday but I am getting smarter about not discussing business when it is personal time.”



“I have over 300 off these (protest emails) in my inbox and I was going to mention something to you yesterday but I am getting smarter about not discussing business when it is personal time.” (Photo: Special to news-press.com)

— **Hendry Commission Chair Karson Turner to Lapp Nov. 24, , 2014**

•“If we raise an issue with infections diseases do we pour gas on it? The reality is these animals will not be exposed to these possible diseases. It is a moot point but I don’t want to say it like that, thoughts please?”

— **Turner to Chapman and Lapp April 28, 2014**

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Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

From: Thomas Rowel [Privacy]@primateproducts.com>
Sent: Monday, July 27, 2015 10:27 AM

<http://www.naplesnews.com/news/local-news/campaign-underway-to-persuade-canadian-us-governments-to-cut-ties-with-monkey-breeder-45995074>

Opponents of an embattled Hendry County monkey breeder want the Canadian and U.S. governments to consider severing ties with the company in the wake of a federal inspection that found numerous violations of animal welfare laws.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals has written to the Canadian Minister of Health Rona Ambrose about the Primate Products compound, east of Immokalee, and three members of South Florida's congressional delegation have written a similar letter to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell.

PETA's letter, dated July 16, is one of about 30 the group has sent to agencies, universities and pharmaceutical companies asking that they conduct their own investigations and review whether they should still do business with Primate Products.

The decision goes beyond ethics, PETA's senior laboratory oversight specialist Alka Chanda said.

Issues of contract law can come into play, or even whether a company wants to risk buying monkeys that could be frightened of humans or not healthy, she said.

"Naturally, they're going to think seriously about it," Chanda said.

She said Ambrose, the Canadian health minister, should research whether international trade laws would prohibit Canada from buying monkeys from Primate Products.

"We hope she'll do a sincere and thorough search to ensure the letter and spirit of the law isn't being broken," Chanda said.

In an email last week, Primate Products President Thomas Rowell wrote that PETA's tactics with the Canadian government and other clients are part of a strategy to "undermine the mission" at Primate Products.

He said a PETA undercover video that triggered the USDA inspection is backfiring on the group because Primate Products has cooperated with the investigations that followed.

"If anything, the attention has helped the business," Rowell wrote in his email. "People are more apt to judge you based on your response rather than the events portrayed in a politically motivated video which was obtained and narrated to achieve a specific goal, which is ending the use of all animals in biomedical research."

Rowell wrote that Primate Products' "clients are doing their own due diligence visits and follow-up, which is often the case."

The USDA inspection in late May found about two dozen violations of eight different regulations under the federal Animal Welfare Act.

An initial inspection report cited monkeys electrocuted by a chewed wire, monkeys killed in bear attacks, monkeys left outdoors in freezing temperatures that caused two to lose parts of their tails to frostbite and monkeys undergoing veterinary procedures in nonsterile areas.

Primate Products is one of four monkey breeders that have come under fire as Hendry County becomes a hub for the supply of monkeys for medical research.

The Animal Legal Defense Fund has filed a lawsuit over zoning approvals for two of the monkey farms and has filed a complaint with the state's Department of Business and Professional Regulation.

Hendry County code enforcement officers are conducting their own investigations into whether monkey farms are violating their zoning.

The PETA video and USDA inspection are the basis for a second letter, dated June 26, co-signed by Rep. Ted Deutch, D-Boca Raton; Rep. Alcee Hastings, D-Fort Lauderdale; and Rep. Lois Frankel, D-Boca Raton.

The letter calls for HHS to conduct its own inquiry at Primate Products and review its contracts with the company "to determine whether an action should be taken" pending the outcome of USDA's ongoing investigation.

Primate Products has been awarded contracts worth more than \$13 million from the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Department of Defense, the letter states.

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Hendry monkey farm reacts to PETA's unde



AMY BENNETT WILLIAMS, AWILLIAMS@NEWS-PRESS.COM

6:56 p.m. EDT June 3, 2015



(Photo: Special to The News-Press)

Holding the monkey upside down, the man with the blurred-out face sticks a gloved finger into the animal's bloody bottom, bouncing it up and down as he does.

This is just one of several gasp-inducing moments in a video released Monday by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, a video that also shows monkeys at Primate Products in Hendry County cowering on feces-smeared concrete, being yanked off chain-link by their tails and trying to drink from a dried-up water spigot.

Filmed by a PETA worker who went undercover for eight months as a husbandry technician at the monkey farm, the video sparked a USDA investigation of the facility, which houses some 3,200 monkeys destined for biomedical research. Primate Products is already the subject of a county complaint for potential zoning violations.

MORE: [USDA inspects monkey farm after undercover PETA video](#)

[\(/story/news/local/amy-williams/2015/06/01/peta-images-appear-show-cruel-conditions-monkey-farm/28336003/\)](#)

"It's clear that the spotlight is now on this company, even more than it already has been," said Dan Paden, a manager in PETA's cruelty investigations department. "But at the end of the day, the only way really to prevent animals from suffering in facilities like that hellhole is to urge the federal government to earmark research funds for things besides penning monkeys up."

Primate Products president, veterinarian Jeff Rowell, has stepped into the swirl of news surrounding the video, releasing to The News-Press the USDA's report, which records eight findings of noncompliance with the Animal Welfare Act.





Dan Paden, PETA (Photo: Amy Bennett Williams/The News-Press)

"I can't just sit on my hands," Rowell said. "I'm accountable to clients; I'm accountable to the county and I'm accountable to the public. And I take that seriously. If that means releasing the report, that's what we're going to do."

The USDA report sets a timeline to correct each problem and outlines future standards. But that's just one step in the process, Rowell said.

"We clearly expect to be fined down the road. That's a separate process through the investigative arm of the USDA (but) the biggest consequences is losing public trust," he said. "This is much harder to recover, but we are determined to try."

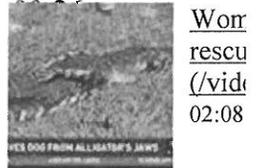
Some of what the video depicts appears damning because it was taken out of context, Rowell said.

In-depth: [Monkey farming in Hendry: Boon or bust? \(/story/news/local/amy-williams/2015/04/24/monkey-breeding-hendry-county-florida-boon-bust-farm-macaque-primate-products/26310169/\)](http://www.news-press.com/story/news/local/amy-williams/2015/04/24/monkey-breeding-hendry-county-florida-boon-bust-farm-macaque-primate-products/26310169/)

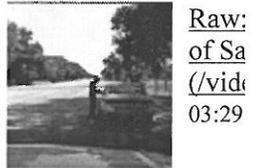
For example, scenes of damp, manure-strewn enclosures were filmed first thing in the morning. "They film at 7:30 in the morning, then they claim the animals are living in filthy conditions," Rowell said. "Well of course the cage looks its worst at 7:30 in the morning. Trust me; those cages are cleaned every day. It's all about the context."



[Police: 5 dead teens in custody \(/videos/news/44\)](#)



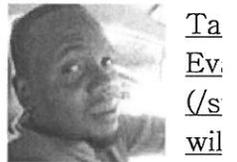
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Hendry monkey farm reacts to PETA's undercover video

He admits other scenes, though, clearly depict problems, such as the technician using a dry finger to push in the monkey's prolapsed rectum, commonly caused by the stress of captivity



A thin monkey crouches in a corner of a cage at Primate Products in this photo, taken by an undercover PETA investigator. (Photo: Special to The News-Press)

"I was shocked by it too," Rowell said. "Now was he intentionally tormenting that animal? No. Did he have evil intentions? Absolutely not. Did he not know what he was doing? Absolutely. He thought he was doing the right thing, but that doesn't make it right. And that doesn't absolve him or the organization of responsibility for how that animal is treated."

As for the scenes of monkeys with open or sutured wounds mingling in cages with others, "There are a number of animals that are treated in their cages," Rowell said, "because separating from the group can be added stress ... With that said, there are opportunities to improve on our program — and we are determined to do just that."

PETA's Paden doubts Rowell's sincerity. "We see a culture of indifference among facility managers," he said. "Think about it — you have animals with exposed bones in their tails — their vertebrae — sticking out. You have animals who had exposed finger bones. Those animals were left in that condition for a week at a time ... Animals who were desperately thin, emaciated, with open wounds, being attacked, etcetera."

Paden says what the video shows is typical; the undercover investigator didn't cherry-pick extraordinarily bad situations.



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THE NEWS-PRESS

Jane Velez-Mitchell, monkey protesters crash summit

[\(http://www.news-press.com/story/news/local/2015/05/11/jane-velez-mitchell-monkey-protesters-crash-summit/27115105/\)](http://www.news-press.com/story/news/local/2015/05/11/jane-velez-mitchell-monkey-protesters-crash-summit/27115105/)

"The video we published and the findings we described are representative of the daily plight of about 2,000 animals at that facility. (They're) representative scenes," he said. "This video accurately depicts the unrelenting fear and misery and deprivation and pain that those animals live in between the times when men are sticking needles in their spine to collect fluid, drawing blood from them to sell or tearing them off of cages and stuffing them into wooden transport crates."

Ultimately, PETA would like to see Primate Products shut down and its resident monkeys sent to shelters to live out their days. "And we would bend over backward to help USDA find placement for any animals PPI wants to get rid of," Paden said.

For its part, Hendry County issued a release that said simply that it was aware of the video and of the investigation.

"Hendry County has been working diligently on our investigation into the potential violation in the form of land use or activity inconsistent with the zoning," spokeswoman Electa Waddell wrote in a release. "The final USDA report into the ongoing investigation will be considered when making a determination into our investigation. Once all items requested have been received and all investigative findings have been reviewed, a final determination will be issued."

2015-05-15 USDA Complaint Redacted (https://www.scribd.com/doc/267485103/2015-05-15-USDA-Complaint-Redacted)

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Two nonprofits take aim at Hendry monkey fa



AMY BENNETT WILLIAMS, AWILLIAMS@NEWS-PRESS.COM

2:51 p.m. EDT July 16, 2015



(Photo: Andrew West/The News-Press)

Two different animal advocacy nonprofits fired shots at a Hendry County monkey farm today.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals asked Canada's government to sever ties with Primate Products, from which it buys macaques for biomedical research, and the Animal Legal Defense Fund filed a complaint with Florida's Department of Business and Professional Regulation against the company for alleged "serious mistreatment of animals and apparent violations of Florida's Veterinary Medical Practice Law."

"The Canadian government should not be doing business with a company like Primate Products that has physically and psychologically abused monkeys and fatally neglected them in violation of the law," Canadian citizen and PETA Senior Laboratory Oversight Specialist Dr. Alka Chandna said in a release.

Stephen Wells, executive director of the Animal Legal Defense Fund, said in a release: "The Department of Business and Professional Regulation should open an investigation and consider disciplinary action based on apparent incompetency and misconduct related to the practice of veterinary medicine."

Primate Products is the oldest and largest such facility in a county that's become the primate farming capital of the U.S.

Last month, the USDA cited the company for violating the Animal Welfare Act after an undercover PETA investigator produced video of numerous examples of apparent mistreatment of the farm's resident macaques and green monkeys, which usually number between 1,000 and 3,000.

In an email to The News-Press, Primate Products' president, veterinarian Jeff Rowell, wrote: "Your readers should understand three things:



FBI: Too early Chattanooga radicalized



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Teenager's video investigation

Two nonprofits take aim at Frydry monkey farm
The goal is to snuff out all research that utilizes live animal models or their tissues and ultimately end the use of all animals for food production, recreation, etc. (PETA condemns catch-and-release fishing, for example.)



"The strategy is to create uncertainty and doubt by persistent attacks at all levels of oversight and public perception.

"Clearly the tactics are to create every possible accusation, even if false or made up, so as to gain another news cycle."

Rowell said each allegation is being addressed with the appropriate regulatory bodies.

"I believe (the nonprofits) are overreaching, and in the end this will prove beneficial to us and the industry as a whole.

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July 22, 2015, 10:32 a.

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Congress Members Ask HHS to Investigate Primate Breeding Facility

By [TOPHER FORHECZ \(/PEOPLE/TOPHER-FORHECZ\)](#) · JUN 26, 2015

[Twitter \(http://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fp4tz7ml&text=Congress%20Members%20As](http://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fp4tz7ml&text=Congress%20Members%20As)



http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/wgcu/files/styles/x_large/public/201506/monkey4.jpg

CREDIT TOPHER FORHECZ/WGCU

Note: Audio to come.

UPDATE:

Primate Products President Thomas Rowell said today a subdivision of Health and Human Services is already looking into the company.

That's because the Office of Laboratory

Animal Welfare or OLAW sent Primate

Products a list of allegations more than

three weeks ago. OLAW is an office within

the National Institutes of Health, which is

part of Health and Human Services.

"I think in a sense this is kind of redundant," Rowell said about the letter.

He said the company plans to respond to OLAW's query this week.

"Basically, it's the list of allegations that the PETA informant made while she was employed," he said.

Rowell said the list of requirements to come back into compliance with the Animal Welfare Act under the USDA's investigation have been met except for one. They expect to complete that requirement by its end of July deadline.

He also said the number of violations mentioned in the letter is incorrect. Rowell said there are a total of nine. USDA documents first provided to the News-Press also show a total of nine violations.

An HHS representative referred WVCU to NIH. NIH has yet to respond to questions about the investigation.

Members of Congress sent a letter to Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Burwell Friday, asking her to investigate the treatment of animals at a Hendry County-based primate breeding facility.

Primate Products, Inc. sells primates for behavioral, psychological and medical research. It's currently under investigation by the U.S. Department of Agriculture over findings of noncompliance with the Animal Welfare Act.

The USDA initially investigated (<http://news.wvcu.org/post/usda-inspects-primate-breeding-facility-wake-undercover-footage>) the company after a member of the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals secretly recorded practices at the facility while working there for eight months until late May.

The video appeared to show animals huddling together for warmth and being roughly handled by workers – among other things.

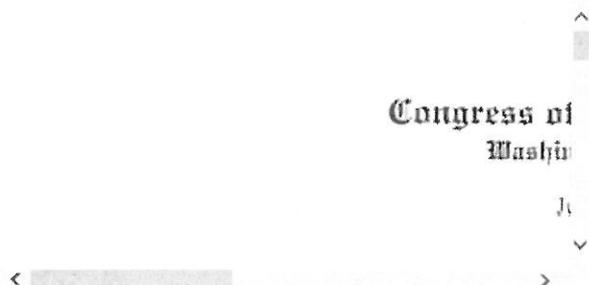
U.S. Reps. Ted Deutch, Alcee Hastings and Lois Frankel wrote in the letter that Primate Products has received in excess of \$13 million from agencies such as the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Defense.

In the letter, the Florida Democratic representatives asked that HHS “conduct its own inquiry into possible animal abuse at PPI, and review your contracts with the company to determine whether action should be taken pending the results of the USDA’s investigation.”

Primate Products is one of four such facilities either operating or being built in Hendry County. Animal activists and locals have protested the facilities in recent months over concerns about the animals' treatment.

The attention has also caused Hendry County to investigate (http://news.wvcu.org/post/hendry-county-investigates-debate-over-primate-breeding-facilities-continues) Primate Products and another company – the Mannheimer Foundation – over possible violations of their agriculture permits.

Read the letter sent to HHS:



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Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

From: Thomas Rowell [redacted] <[redacted]@primateproducts.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 27, 2015 7:42 AM

Representatives to HHS: Investigate Hendry monkey farm



AMY BENNETT WILLIAMS, AWILLIAMS@NEWS-PRESS.COM 10:28 p.m. EDT June 26, 2015

According to PETA, this monkey at Primate Products was "chronically sick. (Photo: Special to The News-Press)
76 CONNECT 3 [TWEETLINKEDINCOMMENTEMAILMORE](#)

Three U.S. representatives from Florida are asking the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate a Hendry County monkey farm already under scrutiny by the USDA and county officials.

Democrats Ted Deutch, Lois Frankel and Alcee Hastings sent a letter Friday to HHS chairwoman Sylvia Mathews Burwell, urging the department to open its own investigation. The request comes after People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals released an undercover video earlier this month showing numerous incidents of alleged cruelty at Primate Products, which supplies monkeys for biomedical research.

"We hope that HHS takes the Congress members' concerns seriously," Nick Atwood, of the nonprofit Animal Rights Foundation of Florida said in a statement. "We were disturbed at the neglect and mistreatment of animals revealed in PETA's investigation... ARFF believes that government contracts with Primate Products should be suspended while the USDA's investigation is open... Primate Products is largely a taxpayer-funded facility. It is encouraging that members of Congress from Florida are demanding accountability from the federal government."

[Congressional Letter to HHS \(Deutch Hastings Frankel\)](#)

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The report issued by the USDA set a timeline to correct each problem and outlined future standards.

Primate Products president Jeff Rowell said his company has already completed all but one of the USDA's required corrections and will finish the last one — providing extra heat — by the July 31 deadline.

"I'm pretty confident that we are on track to satisfy the concerns of the regulatory agencies," Rowell said in an email.

Hendry County has issued a release saying it was aware of the video and of the investigation while it continued to investigate allegations of zoning violations by the company.

"Hendry County has been working diligently on our investigation into the potential violation in the form of land use or activity inconsistent with the zoning," spokeswoman Electa Waddell wrote in a release issued earlier this month.

"The final USDA report into the ongoing investigation will be considered when making a determination into our investigation. Once all items requested have been received and all investigative findings have been reviewed, a final determination will be issued."

Thomas J. Rowell, DVM
President/Chief Operating Officer

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Jun 1, 7:51 PM EDT

APNEWSBREAK: FEDS INSPECT FLA. MONKEY FARM AT PETA'S BEHEST

BY TAMARA LUSH

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is investigating a monkey breeding facility in southwest Florida after an animal welfare group said an undercover worker found sick and injured monkeys living in inhumane and unsanitary conditions.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals released a video Monday purporting to show conditions at Primate Products Inc. in Hendry County. PETA spokesman Dan Paden said the video was taken by a PETA employee who was hired to work undercover at the facility. PETA first gave the video exclusively to The Associated Press.

After meeting with PETA, inspectors from the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service went to Primate Products Inc.

Tanya Espinosa, a spokeswoman for the USDA, said in an email Monday that Primate Products Inc. has three weeks to appeal the USDA inspectors' report, which won't be made public until that process is complete.

Espinosa said that the USDA does "currently have an open investigation into this facility."

The seven minute video released by PETA showed workers holding rhesus macaque monkeys with protruding rectal tissue by the tails. The video also purports to show monkeys in feces-covered cages, monkeys without working water dispensers, and primates with broken bones and exposed wounds. A monkey also allegedly died from hypothermia because of cold temperatures, and another was injured by a bear. The monkeys are kept in outdoor cages.

"Primate Products has been awarded federal contracts worth more than \$13 million of taxpayers' money and ships monkeys to massive testing laboratories and universities," said Dan Paden, a PETA spokesman. "Its customers, like our own National Institutes of Health, need to watch this footage and decide whether they want to continue to bankroll this cruelty and these animals' violent capturing, pain, terror and deaths."

Hendry County, in the southwestern part of the state near Naples and Fort Myers, is something of a mecca for primate breeding facilities. Three monkey breeding farms containing thousands of primates operate in the small, rural county, and a fourth is in the works.

The companies say they're doing nothing wrong, they're properly permitted agricultural facilities and they're in the area with the blessing of authorities.

In November, the Animal Legal Defense Fund filed a lawsuit against Hendry County officials who approved that Primate Products Inc. could hold as many as 3,200 long-tailed macaques, a species linked to outbreaks of infectious disease. The lawsuit said Hendry County approved the controversial project behind closed doors with only the facility's supporters present and failed to hold the public hearing required by the state's Sunshine Law. Last week, the lawsuit was expanded to include a second farm that rents space on the property.

Thomas J. Rowell, a veterinarian and president of Primate Products Inc., told The Associated Press on Monday that "the inspection was thorough."

"This is part of the process in which we fully cooperated," Rowell wrote in an email. "I'm not aware of who provided the video. We welcomed the USDA's visit. It's good when you get the opportunity to review your operation through the eyes of others. We are always looking for opportunities to improve upon our program and appreciate the corrective actions and timelines provided by the USDA. Staff looks forward to working together with the aim of improving upon our animal welfare program."

Primate Products uses two species of macaques from China, Cambodia, Mauritius or Vietnam. The animals are quarantined upon arriving in the U.S.

Primate Products then breeds the monkeys for resale and distribution to research institutions, pharmaceutical companies and the federal government, according to a company spokesman. The monkeys sell for about \$3,200 each.

Activists and residents say that the facilities shouldn't be covered under the county's agricultural zoning regulations. Monkeys, they say, are very different from cows or horses.

"As seen in the video, the company takes spinal fluid and blood from these wild animals, which can in no way be considered the 'agriculture' use that the company's land is zoned for," Paden said. "Hendry County can and should put an end to this cruelty and shut Primate Products down immediately."

PETA filed a formal complaint with the USDA, asking the agency to look into alleged violations of animal welfare and protection laws.

Follow Tamara Lush on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/tamaralush>

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