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Canada - Pig farm scandal

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Inside a hog barn in southern Manitoba the unthinkable was happening. For two weeks, more than 2000 hogs were starving to death, roughly 500 died.

"The video footage I saw of what's inside there was pretty disturbing," said neighbour, Rheel Lesage. He lives next to the barn just outside the town of Notre Dame De Lourdes. A week ago, he noticed something wasn't right and told the man, who was taking care of the pigs for a nearby Hutterite colony, but nothing was done.

Then on Friday, the owner of hogs called RCMP after he noticed not enough feed had been ordered, and was denied access to the barn. Once inside he found dead and decomposing hogs.

"The Hutterite colony that owns the pigs there, they walked into the barn and there was a lot of death." said Lesage.

Before the dead pigs were discovered inside the barn, residents in the area noticed a smell in the air that was horrendous, it literally made them sick.

"Very bad smell. We were loading cattle back here and my son was puking in the pasture." said Lesage.

Some hogs were so sick they had to be destroyed. The province is investigating why the ventilation, feeding and water systems were not working.

The Manitoba Pork Council says it's shocked by what happened.

"We completely reject the actions of this kind and this is complete unacceptable to what our industry standards are," said Chair Karl Kynoch.

But what everyone, including residents wants to know is why the caretaker neglected the hogs.

"That's what we're all wondering, why," said Lesage, "I don't know how a person can do that."

No charges have been laid yet in the case. The penalty for this type of animal abuse ranges from a \$5000.00 fine to six months in jail.

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