

Humane Society/SPCA 
of Sumter County, Inc.

PO Box 67 Lake Panasoffkee, FL 33538 humane@sum.net www.hssPCA.org 352-793-9117

For Immediate Release: 9/11/2008

Today's Date: 9/11/2008

Contact: Sheri Evans, Humane Society/SPCA of Sumter County, Inc., Animal Cruelty Investigator Cell 352-303-3211 Office 352-793-9117

Title: **Severe Animal Neglect on Oxford Farm**

After an Oxford resident's anonymous tip, the Humane Society/SPCA of Sumter County Animal Cruelty Investigator, Sheri Evans, unfortunately was suspicious she knew who it was due to a history of neglect complaints on this farm. When Evans heard it was on CR 204 in Oxford, she had to return once again to witness it for herself and see that the animals' living conditions had worsened enough to take action. "We have had multiple neglect complaints since 2004 here and we would try to regularly monitor the status of the farm. Today, in addition to the state of the animals, we found it overrun with weeds, sand and garbage everywhere. It was reported to us in years past, that thin and dead horses were seen on the farm too often to be considered normal, though the farm owner had stated she took in the animals in poor condition to rehabilitate them and some just didn't make it.



Evans additionally comments that "law enforcement, Sumter County Animal Control and the Humane Society have all been called here before but this time, enough was enough." The Humane Society/SPCA's tip was that there were horses of all ages and breeds in deplorable condition tucked away in the back of the farm out of roadside view, some with untreated gaping facial wounds and some who were malnourished. She mentions "the property owner didn't seem to learn from our past advice on what is proper animal care and since its now a chronic problem with no signs of improvement, the Sheriff's Dept. arranged for a search warrant to access the property. Once we received that, we searched through all the debris and weeds for animals in crisis and as of late Thursday night, over 20 horses will be seized. A veterinarian has evaluated all their medical needs for their recovery.

Rescue efforts went into effect immediately with volunteers bringing their horse trailers and equipment. The seized horses, some critical, will be held in an undisclosed pastured site and will receive the medical and nutritional needs they have been long denied. This rescue effort was organized by the Humane Society/SPCA with assistance from the

Sumter County Sheriff's Dept., Animal Control staff and veterinary services arranged by the Humane Society/SPCA of Sumter County.

Once again, this stresses the critical fact that Sumter County does not have an adequate animal shelter facility to address large scale countywide needs and that the Humane Society/SPCA of Sumter County is working hard to raise money to build Florida's first 'Green' Animal Shelter. Fundraising Chairperson, Claudia Labbe' points out that "we are in great need of financial help to provide care for all these animals seized today along with our other daily operations and have noted that donations are low and animal neglect cases are on the rise. Medical, nutritional and legal expenses always take a large toll on our budget when we get hit with cases this large yet we can't turn our backs on the animals. They've already had that done to them by their supposed caregiver here and look what happened to them. Sometimes the public isn't aware that we can't respond to every call because as a non-profit, we're made up of ALL volunteers and operate SOLELY on donations. So, when we ask for your volunteer time and financial help, it's pretty serious because it's a constant struggle to serve the county's animals' needs as a charity group." Please send your donations to help these and other animals in their custody to the Humane Society/SPCA of Sumter County, Inc., PO Box 67, Lake Panasoffkee, FL 33538 earmarking funds towards the "Animal Care Fund" or reach them at humane@sum.net or 352-793-9117.