

Six horses seized during West Texas traffic stop amid USDA livestock smuggling investigation

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By Amber Kite

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PRESIDIO COUNTY, Texas - Sheriff's deputies seized six horses during a traffic stop in West Texas as part of an ongoing livestock smuggling investigation, authorities said.

Horses seized in Texas

What we know:

Presidio County Sheriff's deputies intercepted the vehicle on FM 170 to verify the animals' [Coggins health papers](#). During the stop, the driver told deputies the horses had been picked up in Redford, Texas, an area known for unauthorized livestock crossings, and had entered the United States illegally.

Due to heightened biosecurity concerns over the New World screwworm, the horses were turned over to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for testing and quarantine.

What is a screwworm?

The screwworm is a destructive parasite that lays eggs in open wounds. Its larvae feed on the living tissue of hosts, posing a threat of severe injury or death to livestock. Authorities noted that the illegal movement of animals significantly increases the risk of introducing such diseases, threatening the region's agricultural economy.

What's next:

The Presidio County Sheriff's Office has recently increased its border security efforts under Operation Stonegarden and continues to investigate livestock smuggling activity in the area, according to Chief Deputy Sheriff Joel Nuñez Jr.