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## Trinidad rancher finds mutilated cow

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**TRINIDAD** - A cattle rancher made a horrific and mysterious discovery Sunday when he found the carcass of one of his cattle that was missing its udders and other female parts.

No one is sure what killed the cow on a pasture near the Purgatoire River, but Trinidad rancher Mike Duran said he definitely finds the death unusual.

Duran, 49, said Monday that after the cow had been missing for two days, he went to look for it in a pasture where he runs cattle a mile west of the town of Weston near Colorado 12.

"I last saw her Friday. She's an older cow so I thought she may have died.

"On Sunday, I spotted her near the (Purgatoire) river bottom and went and looked at her. She was on her side and it looked a little odd.

"When I took a closer look I saw that her udders had been removed," Duran said.

The cow had its udders cleanly cut off with no blood on or around the carcass, Duran said.

"It was a perfect circle almost like a laser cut," he said. "It's not like a knife. it seemed to be cut and sealed at the same time," he said.

This is not the first time Duran has found a mutilated cow on his ranch.

In 1995, Duran said he found a cow that had been mutilated the exact same way on the same pasture.

"The other cow's udders were snipped off the same way. It's hard to imagine what or who could have done this to me again," Duran said.

The mutilation in 1995 never has been solved.

Duran, who operates a 30-head cattle ranch, said that in both occurrences, there were no animal or human tracks around the carcasses.

"There was no blood around either and if you cut off an udder there would be a whole lot of blood," Duran said.

Cattle mutilation phenomena involve thousands of cases in North America in which cattle have been found mutilated under unusual circumstances. The cows are found dead (although the cause of death is undetermined), exsanguinated

(all their blood has been removed) and have had certain organs removed from

their bodies. Often their reproductive and rectal parts have been removed.

The thousands of reported cattle mutilations in the United States and around the world dating to the 1970s have spawned theories about aliens sent to Earth to slice up cows.

"I don't know if aliens are doing this or what, but whoever it is, I don't like it," Duran said.

"You look at cattle mutilations in other places and it's just really something that can't be explained. I don't know, maybe it's UFOs (unidentified flying objects) or maybe not," he said with a laugh.

Duran said neighbors near the pasture told him that they had not heard or seen anything this past weekend

Duran, who also is a teacher at Trinidad High School, said he is no expert on the subject of cattle mutilations, but has studied information on the Internet.

"I looked up some pictures and facts last night and there are similar occurrences to what has happened to me. Some are exactly the same," he reported.

Duran said he has notified the Las Animas County Sheriff's Department about the mutilated cattle.

Las Animas County Undersheriff Derek Navarette said his office takes cattle mutilations seriously, although no one has ever been charged with the crime.

"If it's someone here killing livestock, that's a crime," Navarette said. "The problem is that there's never any evidence around to support that anyone was there.

"It's an odd phenomenon. The cattle is just there dead," Navarette said.

There hasn't been a cattle mutilation case in the area for several years, Navarette said. The case is similar to most around the United States.

"The same body parts were removed. The place where the cow was found Sunday is almost impossible for a vehicle to get to.

"It's an unusual place," he said.

Navarette said his office will continue to investigate the case.

"This is simply a mystery and it is very odd," he said.

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