

Rash of pig head sightings around Omiya have residents squealing and police baffled

The Associated Press

Residents of Omiya, Saitama Prefecture, have come face-to-face with 150 bodiless swine in 16 separate pig-head sightings recently, according to police.

In the most recent pig-head sighting, a 28-year-old housewife found 10 heads in vinyl bags on a city road in Omiya on Aug. 28, Minoru Tsunoda, an official at the city's environment bureau, said last week.

"It's beyond comprehension," Tsunoda said.

But for the woman who found the swine craniums, it was traumatic. "I was so scared by the pig heads I got goose bumps," she was quoted as saying by a vernacular paper.

The bureau and police are planning a joint investigation into the rash of apparent ille-

gal dumpings, which pose a health hazard.

Annual pig head sightings have grown exponentially in Omiya since 1992, when a total of five cases were reported, followed by 10 last year.

Police say they are baffled because there is no apparent profit motive for abandoning

perfectly good pig heads, which provide delicacy meats to restaurants.

Nearby pig farms send livestock every day to several slaughterhouses in the area, which in turn deliver them to food processing companies.

The food processors pay an average ¥1,600 a head, the official said.

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