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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 UPDATE (382): NETHERLANDS, ANIMAL, FARMED MINK, SPREAD, CONTROL

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A ProMED-mail post

<http://www.promedmail.org>

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[https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-netherlands/netherlands-to-close-mink-farms-after-coronavirus-outbreaks-idUSKBN25N2W2?utm\\_source=reddit.com--](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-netherlands/netherlands-to-close-mink-farms-after-coronavirus-outbreaks-idUSKBN25N2W2?utm_source=reddit.com--)

More than 100 mink farms in the Netherlands will be ordered closed by March [2021] after animals at dozens of locations contracted the coronavirus, Dutch news agency ANP reported on Thursday [27 Aug 2020].

Hundreds of thousands of the [minks], which are bred for their fur, have been culled in the Netherlands and other European countries since the virus outbreak.

The Netherlands had already intended to halt its mink breeding industry by 2024 but decided to bring forward the closures after several farm employees contracted COVID-19.

The government has set aside 180 million euros [USD 212 million] to compensate farmers, the ANP report said, citing sources.

According to the Dutch Federation of Pelt Farmers, the Netherlands exports around 90 million euros [USD 101 million] worth of fur a year for use in China and globally. The country had roughly 900 000 mink at 130 farms, Statistics Netherlands' data said.

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[On Fri 28 Aug 2020, the Dutch ministers Schouten (agriculture) and De Jonge (health) informed the House of Representatives about the updated situation regarding SARS-CoV-2 in mink and explained the conclusions and advice received [on 24 Aug 2020] from the Outbreak Management Team Zoonosen (OMT-Z) and the Administrative Coordination Consultation on Zoonoses (BAO-Z). The above "letter to the parliament" (in Dutch, 8 pages) is available at

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2020/08/28/stand-van-zaken-sars-cov-2-bij-nertsen-omt-z-advies-en-voorgenomen-beleid-nertsenhouderij>.

The introduction, addressing the current state of affairs of COVID-19 in Netherlands' minks, says:

"Infections with SARS-CoV-2 have now been detected on 42 mink farms. The most recent infection took place on 27 Aug 2020 in Ottersum (municipality Gennep) on a farm with about 400 mother animals. This infection came to light by the reporting of disease signs in the mink. All infected farms have been vacated. They are located in North Brabant (31 outbreaks), Limburg (10) and Gelderland (1). Of the 42 outbreaks, 15 were discovered due to the "duty to report disease signs" requirement, while 27 outbreaks were detected due to the "early warning (EW)" mode, prescribing weekly submission of dead animals to the laboratory. So far, the origin of infections on mink farms could not be definitely traced, with the exception of the 2 companies at the beginning of the outbreak where infected employees may have introduced the virus. The research addressing the virus distribution routes will be continued in the coming weeks."

From other parts of the letter, we hereby present the letter's segments addressing Dutch research into COVID-19 in cats, dogs and rabbits.

#### 1. Dogs and cats

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This study looked at the number of animals with antibodies to the virus as an indication of a transmitted infection. In total, 1000 blood samples were examined; 500 for dogs and 500 for cats. These were samples collected by veterinarians and sent to the diagnostic laboratories of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Utrecht University for regular diagnosis and, therefore, not in any connection with COVID-19 suspicion or due to the animals' contacts with human COVID-19 patients.

Antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 have been detected in 2 of the 500 cats (0.4%) and one of the 500 dogs (0.2%). The prevalence within this tested population is low, indicating that infections in cats and dogs are occasional, probably due to human spread.

Cats have been studied in the 1st 5 positive mink farms; in 10 animals, antibodies were detected.

Research into SARS-CoV-2 infections within other populations of dogs and cats, including cats in shelters and dogs and cats with known contact with COVID-positive owners, is still running.

#### 2. Rabbits

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The serological screening of the remaining rabbit holdings has been completed. All blood samples tested negative. That means that SARS-CoV-2 has not been found to have circulated in any of the rabbit holdings in the Netherlands. Also, internationally, there are no indications of SARS-CoV-2 infections in rabbits, be they commercial rabbit enterprises or pet rabbits.

This last observation may be seen as a response to ProMED-mail's recent request for information on the results of the Dutch rabbit serosurvey (20200828.7726781). The issue was raised following the publication of a preprint paper presenting experimental infection trials in rabbits in which sero-survey/screening afield for SARS-CoV-2 infections in rabbits were advocated. - Mod.AS

HealthMap/ProMED map:

Netherlands: <https://promedmail.org/promed-post?place=7730463,104>

## See Also

COVID-19 update (379): animal, rabbit, exptl infect, Netherlands, screening 20200828.7726781

COVID-19 update (376): animal, ferret, mink, comment 20200827.7721923

COVID-19 update (374): animal, ferret, research, epidemiology 20200825.7715862

COVID-19 update (366): animal, USA (UT) mink 20200818.7692815

COVID-19 update (365): Germany case data, countries, WHO, global 20200818.7690696

COVID-19 update (364): USA (NC,NY) animal, dog, comment 20200818.7689234

COVID-19 update (363): animal, Denmark (ND) Netherlands (NB,LI) mink, spread 20200817.7687830

COVID-19 update (360): USA (NC, NY) animal, dog, comment 20200815.7681907

COVID-19 update (340): animal, China, envir monitoring, Netherlands (NB), mink 20200801.7635820

COVID-19 update (334): animal, Netherlands, mink, spread, UK, cat, 1st rep, OIE 20200727.7617582

COVID-19 update (324): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, spread 20200719.7591013

COVID-19 update (317): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, spread 20200716.7578453

COVID-19 update (307): Netherlands (NB), Denmark (ND) farmed mink, spread, control 20200708.7553067

COVID-19 update (301): Denmark (ND) Netherlands (NB) farmed mink, spread, control 20200703.7536980

COVID-19 update (284): Denmark (ND) animal, farmed mink, spread, dog 20200624.7506728

COVID-19 update (281): Netherlands (NB, LI) farmed mink, spread, animal, global 20200623.7502849

COVID-19 update (266): Denmark (ND) animal, farmed mink, 1st rep 20200617.7479510

COVID-19 update (251): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, culling 20200610.7453845

COVID-19 update (248): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, mink, spread, culling, cat 20200609.7446478

COVID-19 update (236): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, culling 20200604.7427849

COVID-19 update (230): Netherlands (NB, LI) animal, farmed mink, spread, control 20200602.7420433

COVID-19 update (215): Netherlands (NB) animal, mink-to-human, epidem., control 20200527.7385049

COVID-19 update (209): Netherlands (NB) farmed mink, animal-to-human, cat, epid 20200525.7375359

COVID-19 update (198): Netherlands (NB) farmed mink, animal-to-human infect susp 20200520.7359976

COVID-19 update (189): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, research, cat, dog 20200517.7344274

COVID-19 update (177): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, Spain (CT) cat susp 20200512.7328587

COVID-19 update (174): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, comment 20200511.7323845

COVID-19 update (169): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, spread, rabbit susp 20200509.7316646

COVID-19 update (154): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, research 20200503.7294846

COVID-19 update (146): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, epidemiology 20200501.7286113

COVID-19 update (135): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink 20200427.7272289

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