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Subject: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (490): animal, Greece (EM) mink, 1st report, OIE, assessment

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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 UPDATE (490): ANIMAL, GREECE (EM) MINK, FIRST REPORT, OIE, ASSESSMENT

A ProMED-mail post

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International Society for Infectious Diseases

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In this update:

[1] COVID-19 in minks, Greece, 1st outbreaks

[2] OIE updated assessment of COVID-19 in animals

[1] COVID-19 in minks, Greece, 1st outbreaks

Date: Fri 13 Nov 2020

Source: Reuters via Aljazeera [edited]

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/13/greece-find-covid-19-among-mink-at-two-farms>

Greek authorities have found COVID-19 in mink at 2 farms in northern Greece, an agriculture ministry official said on Fri 13 Nov 2020.

The COVID-19 strain in mink had not mutated, the official said, adding that 2500 mink at one farm in the northern Kozani region would be culled.

The discovery comes days after Danish authorities launched a plan to cull Denmark's entire population of 17 million mink after discovering a different strain of coronavirus in the animals.

The breeder at the farm had also contracted coronavirus, and tests were being conducted on workers, the official said.

Fur trade is an important local industry in Kozani and nearby Kastoria, where the 2nd farm is located. The population of mink is estimated at hundreds of thousands in Greece

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[2] OIE updated assessment of COVID-19 in animals

Date: Thu 12 Nov 2020

Source: OIE press release [edited]

[https://www.oie.int/en/for-the-media/press-releases/detail/article/oie-statement-on-covid-19-and-mink/?](https://www.oie.int/en/for-the-media/press-releases/detail/article/oie-statement-on-covid-19-and-mink/?fbclid=IwAR3y6B84EzR7lhyFfH-Xly8zg8aafPXm0E0-6RdxBw7X103FzR5v0X9P4Ac&cHash=83a7e5fc23)

[fbclid=IwAR3y6B84EzR7lhyFfH-Xly8zg8aafPXm0E0-6RdxBw7X103FzR5v0X9P4Ac&cHash=83a7e5fc23](https://www.oie.int/en/for-the-media/press-releases/detail/article/oie-statement-on-covid-19-and-mink/?fbclid=IwAR3y6B84EzR7lhyFfH-Xly8zg8aafPXm0E0-6RdxBw7X103FzR5v0X9P4Ac&cHash=83a7e5fc23)

The risk of susceptible animals, such as mink, becoming a SARS-CoV-2 reservoir is generating worldwide concern, as it could pose a continued public health risk and lead to future spillover events to humans. Recent surveillance findings in Denmark suggest that the SARS-CoV-2 virus, introduced into minks through contact with humans, is evolving through viral mutation and has been reintroduced to humans.

The OIE acknowledges that such events could have important public health implications. While the COVID-19 pandemic is currently sustained through human-to-human transmission, there are concerns that the introduction and circulation of new virus strains in humans could result in modifications of transmissibility or virulence and decreased treatment and vaccine efficacy. Yet, the full consequences remain unknown, and further investigation is needed to fully understand the impact of these mutations.

Close collaboration between animal and public health authorities is imperative to better identify and reduce the impact of this disease. Furthermore, a global One Health approach is needed to understand risks for animal and human health as well as ecosystem health as a whole.

The OIE calls on countries to protect animal health and welfare, and consequently public health, by implementing effective risk management measures. Actions should be taken to:

- Prevent the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 between humans and susceptible animals, by implementing national risk reduction strategies;
- Monitor susceptible animals, such as mink and racoon dogs, as well as humans in close contact with them, for SARS-CoV-2 infection, adopting a One Health approach. Active monitoring is recommended as it might be difficult to detect early infections in these animals, especially mink;
- Report animal cases to the OIE through the World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS);
- Share genetic sequences of SARS-CoV-2 viruses isolated from animals and other research findings with the global health community.

To support countries in the implementation of these measures, the OIE has developed guidelines for people working with susceptible farmed animals as well as with wild mammals in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The OIE will continue to engage with its members, experts and partners, notably the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), to update technical guidance as new scientific findings and information become available.

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[Greece has become the 7th country detecting COVID-19 in its farmed minks (map presenting the 2 locations, at <https://tinyurl.com/yyypujrh>). It follows Netherlands, Denmark, Spain, USA, Italy and Sweden. The situation in other mink-farming countries is yet to be revealed.

There is no direct reference to farmed minks in OIE's Code; the reporting of COVID-19 in minks is based upon its definition as an "emerging" disease and of mink as being an "animal." OIE is intensively engaged in combatting this emerging zoonotic disease in animals (details in OIE's COVID-19 Portal at <https://tinyurl.com/wfpedwb>).

OIE's WAHIS interface presents, in the section "country information" the sub-section "animal population," in which the figures submitted by each member country in its obligatory annual report are presented. The downloaded table, per country, includes animal numbers, density, and number of their establishments in the country/region (See https://www.oie.int/wahis_2/public/wahid.php/Countryinformation/Animalpopulation; select a region/country/year). Minks are not included, though being farmed in some countries for generations (e.g., in North America since the 1860's, in Denmark since the 1920's), and known to be currently farmed in dozens of countries.

Allowing the inclusion of minks in the WAHIS database and encouraging member countries to submit the relevant figures (numbers of breeding minks and of their farms/holdings) deserve to be considered; this may support the implementation of the actions recommended in the above OIE document; in particular, active monitoring and reporting.

The Greek cases in minks, including their epidemiological and clinical aspects, are yet to be reported to the OIE. - Mod.AS

HealthMap/ProMED map:

Greece: <https://promedmail.org/promed-post?place=7944705,83>

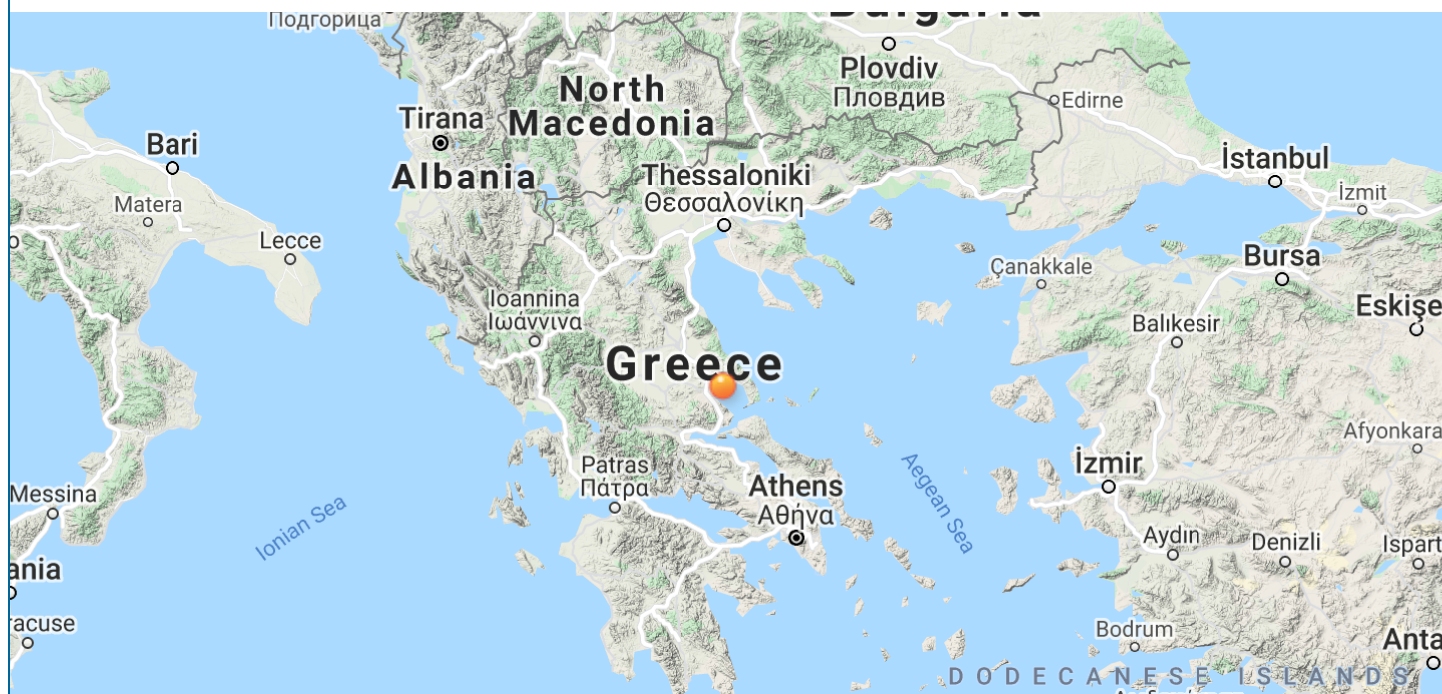
See Also

COVID-19 update (487): Denmark, animal, mink, zoonotic, risk assessment ECDC 20201112.7939110
COVID-19 update (485): animal, Italy, dog 20201111.7934864
COVID-19 update (482): animal, Denmark, mink, zoonotic, eradication, discussed 20201109.7929573
COVID-19 update (480): animal, USA (WI) mink 20201108.7923387
COVID-19 update (479): farmed animals, guidance, OIE 20201108.7926649
COVID-19 update (478): genome, mink, mortality rates, FDA, WHO, global 20201108.7925666
COVID-19 update (477): animal, Sweden, mink, spread, genotyping 20201107.7924269
COVID-19 update (475): animal, Denmark, mink, spike protein sequences 20201106.7922587
COVID-19 update (473): animal, Denmark, mink, mutation, eradication, RFI 20201105.7918210
COVID-19 update (471): animal, Denmark, mink, zoonotic, eradication 20201104.7916300
COVID-19 update (468): animal, Sweden, mink, 1st rep, OIE 20201103.7912846
COVID-19 update (464): animal, Denmark, mink, control, One Health 20201101.7906484
COVID-19 update (461): animal, Sweden, mink, 1st case, RFI 20201030.7903582
COVID-19 update (458): animal, Italy, mink, RFI 20201028.7897986
COVID-19 update (445): animal, Netherlands, Denmark, mink, spread, epidemiology 20201019.7873326
COVID-19 update (439): animal, Denmark, mink, spread, control 20201014.7861560
COVID-19 update (437): animal, Netherlands, Denmark, mink, spread, control 20201013.7858915
COVID-19 update (433): animal, Denmark (ND, MJ) farmed mink, spread, control 20201010.7851707
COVID-19 update (430): animal, USA (UT) mink 20201009.7847704
COVID-19 update (425): animal, Denmark (ND) farmed mink, spread, control 20201004.7835635
COVID-19 update (414): animal, Netherlands (LI), Denmark (ND), farm mink, spread 20200925.7813579
COVID-19 update (406): animal, Netherlands (LI), Denmark (ND), farm mink, spread 20200918.7794239
COVID-19 update (401): Netherlands (NB), Denmark, farmed mink, spread 20200914.7777661
COVID-19 update (394): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink, spread 20200908.7759382
COVID-19 update (387): Netherlands, mink, animal & public health, research 20200902.7740793
COVID-19 update (382): Netherlands, animal, farmed mink, spread, control 20200830.7730463
COVID-19 update (376): animal, ferret, mink, comment 20200827.7721923
COVID-19 update (366): animal, USA (UT) mink 20200818.7692815

COVID-19 update (363): animal, Denmark (ND) Netherlands (NB,LI) mink, spread 20200817.7687830
 COVID-19 update (340): animal, China, enviro 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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