SARS-COV-2 Confirmed in Minks Farmed for Fur in the Netherlands

Scientists have confirmed that minks on two fur farms in the Netherlands contracted SARS-COV-2 and passed the disease back to humans. Farmers in the south of the Netherlands noticed minks exhibiting respiratory symptoms in April and had veterinarians test the animals for SARS-CoV-2, influenza A, adenoviral infection, *Escherichia coli*, and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. All tests came back negative – except for SARS-COV-2. Both farms had had workers that had shown symptoms of coronavirus or had been hospitalized. Wim van der Poel, veterinarian and one of the author's of the study published in *Eurosurveillance*, speculates that the disease spread through the air.

> *The animals are in cages with wire tops and closed walls between them…So it probably spread through droplet or aerosol transmission, from the top of one cage to another, when an animal is coughing or heavily breathing."*
>
> *Wim van der Poel*

There is also evidence to suggest that the virus was passed back to humans from minks on the farms.

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> *At NB2, one worker had been diagnosed with SARS-CoV-2 infection and hospitalised on 31 March (Figure 1). A clinical sample was retrieved, but the viral load was too low for sequencing analysis. At farm NB1, one person who stayed on the farm, showed mild respiratory disease and was diagnosed*

> *with SARS-CoV by 28 April. Based on preliminary sequencing results, this person was assumed to have attracted the virus from mink.”*
>
> *Eurosurveillance*

Since the news, the Dutch government has announced that all mink farms in the Netherlands will be screened, and all employees are required to use protective clothing. In addition, more than 500,000 minks have been culled to prevent the potential spread of coronavirus to humans.