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Re Update situation with respect to SARS-CoV-2 infections in mink in The Netherlands

Our ref.
DGA-DAD / 20213776

Your ref.

Dear Director General, dear Dr. Eloit,

Encl.

I herewith would like to update you, based on article 1.1.6.1 of the TAHC of the OIE, about the situation with regard to the SARS-CoV-2 infection in mink in The Netherlands.

Currently we have 29 infected mink farms in the Netherlands. Twenty four are located in the province of Noord Brabant, and five in the province of Limburg. On eight farms the owner noticed clinical signs and reported the suspicion to the competent authority whereas the other infections were detected through the early warning system (obligation to send in dead animals weekly).

As mentioned before, the route "infected employee to mink" seems likely for the majority of the farms, but for other farms the source of infection is unknown. The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine is currently carrying out additional tracing work and we hope that these examinations will reveal insight in possible introduction routes, and epidemiological links between the infected premises.

We have consulted the outbreak management team for zoonoses (OMT-Z) on 17 July. They explained the still continuing infections as a result of the labour-intensive period in June and July because of vaccination and weaning of the pups. However, they did not see an increased risk of infected farms for public health at the short term. They concluded that when outbreaks keep occurring after mid-August, either employees are not able to adhere to the hygienic measures sufficiently or a still unknown route of introduction or risk factor applies.

We continue the EWS the next couple of weeks and I will keep you informed about future developments.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Christianne Bruschke
Chief Veterinary Officer of The Netherlands