



April 29, 2020

The Honorable Tony Evers
Governor of Wisconsin

Dear Governor Evers,

In light of the news that the novel coronavirus has been found on two mink fur farms in the Netherlands, I'm contacting you with an offer that could help save lives: Shutter Wisconsin's mink farms and PETA will help retrain employees to grow snap beans, sweet corn, cranberries, cucumbers, carrots, cabbage, and other crops found in the state—and we'll even help pay for the start-up seeds.

As with swine flu before it, the coronavirus crisis—which originated in a live-animal market in Wuhan, China—is showing that cramming sick and stressed animals together in unsanitary conditions creates the perfect breeding ground for dangerous zoonotic diseases, which can jump from other species to humans, sickening and even killing them. When it comes to public-health risk, fur farms are no different from live-animal markets.

Animals on fur factory farms are confined next to each other, and urine, excrement, pus, and blood can easily contaminate adjacent cages. Animals resort to self-mutilation or cannibalization of their cagemates as a result of extreme stress, and infections, sores, and festering, open wounds invariably go untreated. In Wisconsin, a [PETA eyewitness exposé of Dillenburg Fur Farm, LLC](#), found thousands of minks warehoused in rows of filthy, wire-floored cages atop piles of their own waste that sometimes reached a foot high. One mink who was trying to escape chewed through a cage until her face was bloody.

Public-health experts will confirm that minks can carry or pass on a wide variety of zoonotic pathogens and diseases, including tularemia, LA-MRSA, hepatitis E, influenza, and salmonella.

Even before the current crisis, fur was out of favor. Almost all major designers and retailers—including Macy's, Prada, Coach, Gucci, Michael Kors, Versace, Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, and Giorgio Armani—have banned it. Countries around the world have ended fur farming, including Japan, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the U.K.

Minks, like all animals, value their lives. For their sakes and to protect human lives, we urge you to shut down all fur farms in your state now. We hope to hear from you.

Very truly yours,

Ingrid E. Newkirk
President

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