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Taylor County Mink Test Positive for Coronavirus

MADISON — The National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) confirms that dead mink at a Taylor County mink farm have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 infection, the virus that causes COVID-19 in humans. This is the first confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection among Wisconsin's mink population.

The NVSL confirmed the positive result after preliminary testing was conducted by the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (WVDL). The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has quarantined all animals on the farm, meaning no animals or animal products may leave the premise. As this is an active investigation, no information about the farm or parties involved will be released.

DATCP is coordinating with the Department of Natural Resources, Taylor County Health Department, Department of Health Services (DHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Department of Agriculture, WVDL, and a local veterinarian to provide assistance to the farm. The response includes appropriate carcass disposal, cleaning and disinfecting the animal areas, and protecting human and animal health.

Wisconsin is the second state with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 at a mink farm; Utah confirmed its first cases on August 17. There is currently no evidence that animals, including mink, play a significant role in spreading SARS-CoV-2 to humans. However, people infected with the virus can spread it to mink and other animals.

People suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 are encouraged to avoid contact with pets and other animals while they are completing their home isolation to protect the animals from infection. DHS encourages everyone to follow these simple steps to stop the spread of COVID-19: wear a mask in public, keep 6 feet apart, wash your hands frequently, and stay home as much as possible. Learn more at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/protect.htm>.

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