

Russia To Vaccinate Mink Against Coronavirus Amid Mutation Fears

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The World Health Organization advised countries to enhance surveillance for Covid-19 at mink farms.
Mads Claus Rasmussen / EPA / TASS

Russia plans to vaccinate its minks against the coronavirus after a mutated form of the virus found on mink farms prompted mass culls in Europe, the Defense Ministry's Zvezda news channel [reported](#) Monday.

Earlier this month, Denmark [said](#) it will cull its entire population of about 17 million mink after discovering a mutated Covid-19 strain in the animals that can spread to humans. The coronavirus has also been [found](#) on mink in several other European countries and the U.S., sparking fears that mink-related mutations could undermine the effectiveness of vaccines currently being developed to stop the pandemic.

Related article: [Russian Mink Farmers Unfazed by Coronavirus Mutations](#)

Russia's federal agricultural watchdog Rosselkhoznadzor is currently testing a coronavirus

vaccine for mink and will start vaccinating the animals once trials are complete, Russian state mink enterprise owner Ivan Nesterov told Zvezda.

Russian mink fur producers previously [told](#) The Moscow Times that they have no plans to follow the lead of their European colleagues in destroying their mink populations as there have been no confirmed coronavirus infections among mink in Russia.

“Russia does not have any verified scientific data about the disease being transmitted from minks to humans. We conducted research and did not find any Covid-19 [among the animals],” Nesterov told Zvezda.

Nesterov did not specify the mink vaccination timeline or whether it will coincide with Russia’s mass coronavirus vaccination in humans that is due to [start](#) in 2021.

The World Health Organization [said](#) it hasn’t found major differences in symptoms, severity or transmission between the mink-related mutation and other Covid-19 strains.

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