



Finnish Fur Breeders' Association – FIFUR  
Press release

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## **The fur industry is developing a corona vaccine for mink and Finn raccoon with a research group at the University of Helsinki**

**The Finnish Fur Breeders' Association FIFUR and researchers at the University of Helsinki are developing a corona vaccine for mink and Finn raccoon. The goal is to have a vaccine that protects farm animals against covid-19 as soon as possible for widespread use and distribution.**

"The SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes the Covid-19 disease, is not just a new infectious disease that poses a serious threat to human health. Its spread to animals in agriculture, the fur industry and wildlife in Finland must be prevented quickly and effectively. This may require exceptional, very rapid action that we have seen regarding the human vaccine, says **Tarja Sironen**, Assistant Professor of Threatening Infectious Diseases at the University of Helsinki, whose research team aims to combat the spread of SARS-CoV-2 virus in Finnish society.

Of the fur animal species, the mink and Finn raccoon are particularly susceptible to covid-19 infection. An effective vaccine must prevent the emergence of the SARS-CoV-2 virus on Finnish fur farms, says **Jussi Peura**, research director leading the corona contingency and vaccine project at FIFUR. "Experimental animal experiments and verifications related to vaccine development take time, but we are working to get a working vaccine ready and distributed to producers as soon as possible," says Peura.

"Finns have responded responsibly to the new coronavirus threat with their own actions, and fortunately vaccination on humans has already begun. We are now developing an animal vaccine with FIFUR's partner network to ensure the safety of fur breeding for many years to come., States FIFUR's CEO **Marja Tiura**.

"Preliminary immunization results from fur animal experiments are now also promising. This project provides important research information about the effectiveness of vaccines and protects the health of animals and people who take care of animals, says Professor **Olli Vapalahti**.

### **The fight against corona continues in full force**

The fur breeders have successfully followed the strict guidelines for protection that have been drawn up together with the Finnish authorities since the spring and summer of 2020. The results of the Food Authority's mink test have been negative, ie so far no Covid-19 infections in fur animals have been detected on Finnish fur farms.

"We will continue to fight the corona with all our might in cooperation with the authorities. In Denmark, a hasty decision was made in the autumn to kill the country's minks and thus the base for the industry in Denmark. With the vaccine project, we are working responsibly to ensure the success of the Finnish industry now that the prices of fur have also shown signs of rising, Marja Tiura continues.

### **Additional information:**

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